

27/09/2018

# **Blossom Lower School, Upper House & Post 16 Provision**



## **HOLISTIC CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

**EYFS, Primary, Secondary, Post 16**

**Last reviewed September 2018 Vikki Langford**

**Next review due September 2019**

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## **Staff**

The holistic provision set out in this policy is overseen by the Principal, **Joanna Burgess**

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### **Abbreviations:**

- *SLT*: Speech and Language Therapy
- *OT/PT*: Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy
- *ATCP*: Arts Therapy and Child Psychotherapy
- *EYFS*: Early Years Foundation Stage
- *KS*: Key Stage

## **Mission Statement**

We are committed to providing a holistic educational environment where children and young people can grow in knowledge and understanding, working towards reaching their social, emotional and individual potential.

We aim to support our pupils as they learn to accept the difficulties they may face, alongside knowing how to use their individual strengths to overcome these within school, and within the wider community. In the same way that therapy, in its many forms, is embedded through the curriculum at Blossom House, our curricular, therapeutic and pastoral programmes promote fundamental British values. Our staff are all skilled and trained to ensure that the values of law, democracy, liberty and tolerance are not undermined, but are upheld and promoted across the age range.

We believe that with the right support, our children and young people can take a positive place within society. To this end the school takes a long-term view on individual progress, whereby the pupils' social and emotional development is as important as their academic scores.

We aim to teach less measurable, but equally important skills such as perseverance, resilience and independence, as part of the individual's learning journey through Blossom House School.

## **Philosophy**

*Our school philosophy provides an overall framework for general and more specific whole school aims, and is the foundation from which all aspects of our school community develop. Our aims are:*

- To create high but realistic standards of learning experiences for all pupils, providing access to all areas of the National Curriculum
- To create a lively and stimulating therapeutic learning environment
- To create a caring, secure environment where self-esteem is nurtured and given as much value as achievement
- To develop a care for the environment
- To create a partnership with parents in supporting their child's learning
- To develop a positive place for the school within the community

- To create a 'feel good' factor, so that each individual feels good about themselves, about what they do and about the school
- To create a place where children, their families and their carers are welcome and valued with the encouragement of dignity, respect, tolerance and understanding
- To actively promote the pupils' understanding of and willingness to engage with British values, including respect for the democratic process, law and order, diversity and equality. The school does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and belief.

***To enhance self-esteem and the ability to value each person's own worth through a caring, secure environment.***

- To develop an awareness of self and self-confidence
- To develop sensitivity to others
- To develop self-discipline
- To develop self-esteem
- To develop acceptable behaviour
- To develop cooperation

***To develop the natural curiosity that children exhibit about themselves and their world, and use their curiosity to foster positive attitudes to learning.***

- To develop an enquiring mind
- To be able to make reasoned judgements and choices
- To develop independent thought
- To develop perseverance
- To be able to identify problems, investigate and find solutions
- To be able to plan independent work and organise their own time
- To encourage creative thinking
- To learn how to acquire information from various sources and record this in a variety of ways
- To be able to communicate ideas and information in a variety of ways for different occasions and purpose

*To achieve these we need:-*

- To develop each individual to his/her potential through offering a wide range of high quality experiences.
- To provide differentiated learning to meet individual needs
- To provide equal opportunity for all
- To extend individual talents and interests
- To develop pupils as autonomous learners

***To develop social awareness, group responsibility and empathy through the social context of learning.***

- To enjoy the same experiences regardless of sex, race or colour
- To be sensitive to the needs of others
- To develop a set of beliefs and values
- To develop confidence to make and hold moral judgements
- To develop respect for religious and moral values of other religions, races and ways of life

***To provide first-hand experiences which enable children to acquire concepts and skills which will help them to understand themselves, their culture and the world in which they live.***

- To develop a questioning attitude towards the environment
- To develop respect and care for themselves, their environment and the wider world
- To understand the growth and development of society, including local and national heritage
- To develop an understanding and appreciation of the world in which we live
- To be aware of other times and other places

***To develop children's imagination and creativity by offering a wide range of experiences.***

- To develop the skills to use music, drama and the arts etc, as a means of expression
- To develop the ability to express feelings through the creative arts
- To appreciate all aspects of the arts

***To promote a health conscious environment.***

- To understand the importance of health, hygiene and safety
- To involve pupils in regular exercise and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

***To develop positive relationships between home, school and the community.***

- To involve parents in their child's learning
- To develop a partnership between home and school
- To develop a partnership between school and the community
- To involve parents in school life
- To develop links with other agencies
- To develop links with other schools and education groups

***To provide a broad, balanced and personalised curriculum for all pupils.***

- To provide a variety of differentiated experiences to support the above
- To provide a balance of core and foundation subjects
- To develop policies and schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum, core, foundation, themes, issues and dimensions

**Introduction:**

At Blossom House Primary, Upper House Secondary and Post 16 provision we have devised our own curriculum policy based upon a four part model. This model and its delivery is regularly reviewed with new ideas and improvements incorporated under the supervision of the Principal and the Heads of Therapies and Academic Departments.

The aim of this model is to ensure that each pupil receives a holistic curriculum which targets his or her academic, therapeutic, emotional, and social and communication needs through use of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. We seek to support all of our pupils in achieving their individual potential as well as aiming to enable them to use their learning functionally within the wider community.

As all of our pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties, as well as some co-morbid diagnoses, it is vital that the curriculum which they receive is devised, planned, administered and assessed using a holistic approach. Throughout the Key Stages, equal importance is placed upon social and emotional progress as well as academic gains.

Therefore, our curriculum policy is based upon four strands which are as follows:

- **Academic Curriculum**
- **Therapeutic Curriculum**
- **Social and Emotional Communication Skills**
- **Adapted Curriculum and Transitional Pupils**

Each of these four strands will be described further in the following subsections.

## **THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

### **Introduction**

The school's academic curriculum is based upon providing access to the National Curriculum which is modified as appropriate, and which takes the pupils' speech, language and communication difficulties into account. The aim is to enable each pupil to receive the National Curriculum to his or her individual level in order to ensure personalised success, build upon existing knowledge, extend understanding wherever possible, consolidate skills and bridge 'gaps', working towards the longer term aim of formalised qualifications in Key Stage Four and transition onto Post 16 education. The school actively works towards preparing the pupils for the next stage of their academic journey.

### **Academic Curriculum Content**

#### **Foundation/Early Years**

The foundation stage follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, covering the seven areas of learning. This is detailed in the school's '*Foundation Stage Policy*'.

<S:\POLICIES\2018-19 POLICIES\Early Years>



There are two main provisions within the Early Years Foundation Stage, Cherry class (nursery/reception) and Robin House (three groups of mixed ages). The provision within Cherry and Ash classes is for children whose primary need is speech, language and or communication. The focus within this provision is on developing attention, language, play and social communication skills. The provision within Robin House is for children who present with complex social communication disorders and/or a diagnosis of ASD. The focus within this provision is on developing early attention skills, pre-linguistic and linguistic language skills, social communication and play.

The Primary and Secondary school's curricula are based upon the 'Seven Areas of Learning':

- **English**
- **Maths**
- **Science**
- **Technology (Art, DT and Computing)**
- **Humanities (Geography, History and RE)**
- **Creative and Ascetic (Art, Drama, DT and Music)**
- **Physical**

### **Rationale**

The school considers the National Curriculum's Seven Areas of Learning to be vital to the pupils' academic education. However, as all pupils attending this specialist school have speech, language and communications difficulties (as well as co-occurring diagnoses and needs) it is vital that the planning, delivery and assessment is modified to take this into account. *The overall aim is to ensure that all pupils are able to reach their academic potential according to their individual needs.*

### **Structure of Lessons**

There are 6 lessons in the school day which are of 45 minutes duration except year 1 who follow a foundation stage curriculum. The day for all pupils begins with a 45 minute session of Group Time with their Group leader and/or Therapist. Primary also finishes the day with 45 minute session of Group Time with their Group leader and/or Therapist. This period focuses on enabling positive relationships to be forged and maintained between staff and pupils and ensures that pupils receive a positive and supported start

to their day. These sessions also cover aspects of PSHE and RE, Volunteering, Independent study and Citizenship for secondary. For secondary and Post-16 pupils, the school is affiliated with Votes for Schools, a forum through which pupil voice is captured on a weekly basis through enabling every pupil a vote on a current theme or relevant issue. Duke of Edinburgh sessions are sometimes linked into Group Times.

Each of the Seven Areas of Learning are taught through single or double sessions, delivered by a teacher and usually supported by an TA or Therapist as a form group or streamed group. The school's timetable and structure of lessons is reviewed annually by the leadership and management teams. The number and range of subjects, as well as lesson times, may be amended according to changes in the National Curriculum and the needs of the pupils at each Key Stage.

For the current academic year (2018-19) the lesson times will remain 45 minutes per session; a recent survey with pupils shows that the majority of our pupils feel that 45 minutes is 'just right'. The school chose the 45 minute option in part with the pupils' communication needs in mind, as they can become easily overloaded by language content which impacts upon their attention, memory and levels of understanding.

The aim or intended learning outcome of every lesson is written onto the board at the beginning of the lesson and is clearly explained to the pupils. A visual timetable is then provided to outline what will happen in that lesson, usually with visual aids to support understanding, memory and focus.

Two minute learning breaks are taken about half way through each lesson whereby the adult leads the pupils in carrying out 3 sets of movements or exercises designed by the onsite OT team. This is to maximise attention and support thinking skills. This is applied consistently throughout Primary and Key Stage 3, but application may be adapted in Key Stages Four and Five, according to the learning styles of each given cohort within each subject. This flexibility also allows greater preparation for transitioning on into Further Education.

A full plenary is not always be appropriate for the needs of our pupils; therefore the plenary will usually consist of referring back to the aim of the lesson, supporting the pupils in deciding whether the aim has been achieved or not and how they know, usually through structured questioning, and then a short evaluation. The evaluation's purpose is

to facilitate the pupils' ability to reflect upon and take responsibility for their own learning.

The teacher or therapist leading the lesson is expected to carry out formative assessment during the main body of the lesson and through the plenary. This is to be recorded on a form which best suits the individual (such as a chart to record when lesson objectives are achieved) and used to inform subsequent teaching, target setting and longer term measures of progress. For example, in Primary, TAs are trained to monitor social targets for IEPs. Marking is in accordance with the school marking policy which would inform future planning and areas to develop in subsequent lessons. Where possible marking will involve the pupils, that is to say, most marking is done during the lesson whilst the pupil is in class.

There is a strong emphasis throughout the school upon involving the pupil in his or her own learning; whether that be through assessing their progress on their IEP targets or through individualised NC objectives. Key Stage Four and Five pupils are actively involved in understanding how their progression relates to their specific qualifications and are given direction about how to develop this further. Such assessment for learning is delivered dependent upon the individual's levels and needs and current functioning. Pupils are aware of levels (steps) and targets in accordance with the School Assessment System

Assessment and marking procedures are outlined in the *Marking Policies* for Primary, Secondary, Post 16. This includes procedures for ensuring that pupils receive feedback from the teacher or therapist on their learning progression, as well as the opportunity to act upon it.

### **Vocabulary Reinforcement**

Learning, retaining and understanding subject specific vocabulary can be very challenging for our pupils due to their language needs. Therefore, as part of integrating Speech and Language Therapy into the curriculum a 'Vocabulary Reinforcement' approach has been devised. The aim is to provide the pupils with a format that enables them to categorise a new word in as many different ways as possible.

A 'Walk the Word' resource is used to introduce and recap new vocabulary is represented in visual memory (pictures) as well as auditory memory (phonological properties). The

semantic representations of a word are explored. Firstly the word is defined, then words 'that go with it' (semantic links) are listed. The topic or subject (category) in which the word falls into is given, and a picture is drawn. The phonological properties of the word are then discussed (number of syllables, first sound and rhyming words), as well as what type of word it is (part of speech). This process has been adapted to ensure it is appropriate for both Primary and Secondary pupils.

## **Planning**

Each subject has a Scheme of Work (a rolling programme which outlines the topics which will be covered each term over the course of the year by each cohort) which is based upon a modified version of the National Curriculum. The lessons are then more fully described and modified specifically for each group in the six week plans. This allows for each pupil receiving this Seven Areas of Learning but in a much more individualised and differentiated manner. Cross-curricular links are made throughout all subjects as far as possible in order to support the transference and generalisation of learning; a thinking skill which many of our pupils find challenging. High engagement (visual before verbal) activities are outlined within each lesson plan for Years 2-6, in order to develop the attention maintenance and shared interaction skills of the pupils.

## **Year Groups**

**Primary:** Depending upon the numbers and ability range in each cohort, Primary teaching groups tend to be divided into year groups which from 2015/16 has involved Yr1 being incorporated into the Early Years curriculum. This has been continued into 2018/19. Year 1 will follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum to support the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals before moving onto the National Curriculum. However, it is sometimes necessary to combine years differently, depending upon the numbers, levels, needs and dynamics within the given year groups, in order to deliver a needs led holistic curriculum. For example, there are both Yr 6 classes and also a Yr 5 and 6 mixed group for 2018/19 based on social and academic ability.

**Secondary:** Each Year Group is taught as a specific year group rather than mixed, as with Primary) and follows their own Scheme of Work and 6 week plans. KS3 pupils are streamed according to their numeracy and literacy strengths. For Key Stage Four, teaching groups are divided according to their GCSE/BTEC/ELC/ASDAN options.

Throughout the whole school, Literacy, Maths and Communication Skills (Primary SLT) and Life Skills (Secondary SLT) are taught in groups of between 4 and 8 pupils. Each group follows the Scheme of Work, but the 6 week planning is tailored to the individual group's needs.

### **Post 16:**

Depending upon the numbers and ability range in each cohort, Post 16 students are usually taught in small groups of mixed ages (16-19). Students complete Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English at Level 1 or 2 dependent on their abilities, as well as a BTEC qualification in Work Skills at Level 1 or 2. Most P16 pupils spend two days in one of three colleges, supported by Blossom House staff who remain onsite. During 2018-19, P16 will be supporting a group of learners with a gradual transition to college, through accompanying them as a group to a weekly taster sessions every Friday. At Nescott College.

### **Lesson Content**

Throughout the whole school, lesson content is based upon the National Curriculum, but the rate and level of delivery is individualised according to the group's levels and needs. All language content is modified with planned recapping, revision and consolidation considered. Differentiation is in place for individual needs. Cross-curricular links and assessment procedures as also planned for.

Lessons start with 'high engagement' (visual before verbal) activities, according to the cohort. 'Assessment for learning' techniques, including referral to IEP targets (where appropriate) are incorporated across the curriculum, in order to involve the pupils in their learning progression as much as possible. This also informs teacher assessment. (see [Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting](#) policy).

These details outline the amount of lessons that are usually allocated to each of the Seven Areas of Learning. Differences specific to Key Stage 4 are set out at the end:

## **English**

The English curriculum and planning is based upon the National Curriculum and SpLD teaching methods. The school has produced its own programme of study and hierarchical learning objectives, which informs planning and teaching.

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### **English lessons**

- **Primary:** 5 x 45 minute lessons per week, including in needs-led classes support by a therapist. Some pupils also receive individual SpLD lessons.
- **Secondary Overview:** 5 x 45 minute lessons per week,, which are mainly delivered jointly by a teacher and SLT therapist. In Key Stage 4, pupils may receive some English lessons as double periods to enable time for controlled conditions and extended coursework. Some pupils also receive additional individual SpLD lessons. From Sep 2018 the course of study for English will be English Language and/or English Literature GCSE (previously a joint award)
- **Post-16 Overview:** Assessments are through Functional Skills and GCSEs (for those pupils who previously attained a Level 3 grade).

### **Maths lessons**

- **Primary:** 4 x 45 minute lessons per week. Some pupils also receive individual SpLD lessons.
- **Secondary Overview:** 5 x 45 minute lessons per week. In Key Stage 4, pupils may receive some Maths lessons as double periods to enable time for controlled conditions and extended coursework.
- **Post-16 Overview:** Assessments are through Functional Skills and GCSEs (for those pupils who previously attained a Level 3 grade).

### **Science lessons**

- **Primary:** 2 x 45 minutes sessions weekly
- **Secondary:** Years 7 - 3 x 45 minute lessons, Years 8 and 9 - 3 x 45 minute lessons, Years 10 and 11 – 4 x 45 minutes

## **Technology and Computing**

- **Primary:** Computing 1 x 45 minutes sessions weekly
- **Secondary:** Yr 7, 8 and 9 1 x 45 minutes, Yr10 x 2, Yr11 – 2/3 dependent on ability

ICT is also incorporated into most lessons across the school, for example through use of the Interactive Whiteboard, Touch Typing Programmes, specialist SpLD ICT software and the use of laptops/iPads in lessons such as English.

## **Humanities (Geography, History and RE)**

- **Primary:** For 2018/19, Ys 2-6 receive 4 x 45 minute Topic sessions weekly, in collaboration with a SLT. These lessons incorporate History, Geography, Art, DT and Music. Each term, pupils will spend one whole day immersed in the study of one or more world religions.
- **Key Stage 3:** Humanities (combining Geography, Citizenship and History) are 2 x 45 minute lessons each.

Through 2018/19, Religious Education will be threaded through planning within the Humanities curriculum in KS3 as well as with off-timetable curriculum days.

## **Creative and Ascetic (Art, Drama and Music)**

- **Primary:** This is incorporated in Topic (as above) for 2016/17
- **Secondary:** Key stage 3 Art 2 X 45 mins and DT 2 X 45 mins , Music – 1 x 45 minutes

There are also drama lessons timetabled 1 x weekly for KS3. Drama and role play is often included within the SLT, PSHE and English sessions.

- **Physical**
- **Primary:** PE 3 x 45 minute lessons weekly plus sporting activities during morning break and lunchtime for example football and basketball.
- **Key Stage 3:** PE (2 x 45 minute lessons) in the Sports Hall plus sporting activities during morning break and lunchtime for example football and basketball.
- **Key Stage 4:**
- PE is compulsory for all pupils, this is in the form of (2 x 45 minute lessons) In Year 11 PE continues to be compulsory for all pupils. All students are given the

opportunity to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award that includes orienteering, long distance walking, cooking and camp craft.

The PE department organises whole school special events such as:

- Sports Day(s)
- Athletics Day
- Sports Relief Fun Run
- The Big Dance Week
- Activity Week.

The PE and OT/PT Movement departments also organise several charity fundraisers that encourage physical activity for example “The Skipathon” for the British Heart Foundation and “The Bounce” for the Happy Days Charity.

A variety of sport-based Clubs are available including Football Club, and Dance Club. The football club is jointly run by Post 16 students, who have done sports coaching qualifications.

External Specialists are regularly brought in to add variety and different forms of physical activity, such as:

- Judo Workshop
- Forms of Dance (including Chinese dancing & African dancing)
- Cheerleading Workshop
- Fencing Workshop
- Capoeirah Workshop
- Karate Workshop

The PE department also takes part in physical projects offered by the community and links to other schools:

- Mini Olympics with Hollymount



- Merton Schools' Sports Partnership (Primary Indoor Athletic Championship, Challenge Run, Championship Run)
- Clapham High School Community Gymnastics Project
- John Muir Award (Post-16)

Several outings and trips are also organised around the theme of staying physically active for example:

- Tooting Lido" (swimming)
- clip and climb" (rock climbing and abseiling)
- air-hop" (trampolining)
- Tolworth Gym (Gymnastics)
- Bowles" Year 6 Residential Trip (dry ski-slope, zip-wire, raft building, abseiling, canoeing)
- PGL Year 7 Residential Trip (zip-wire, raft-building, giant swing, sensory trail, assault-course).
- -Tenpin bowling (6 week course)
- -Secondary Devon camping (hiking, swimming, forestry, den building)
- Valencia"Year 11 trip (swimming, walking, water park – vestibular stimulation)
- -Year 8 trip (rollercoaster etc – proprioceptive and vestibular stimulation)

The school benefits from a large sports hall and smaller studio tailor-built for PE lessons. Both areas are equipped with large storage rooms containing a wide variety of Sports Equipment. The school also has three different sized therapeutic gyms that include soft play mats and suspended equipment for Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy sessions. (Please see therapy section for more details) Upper House also has a gym, which is equipped with portable and fixed apparatus for weight training, aerobic exercise and stretching. There is also a storage area in this room containing relevant sensory equipment. The Playground has basketball nets, trampolines, tyres, skipping ropes, cones and hoops to encourage physically active games. There are also several pull up bars dotted around the school where students can increase their upper body strength. There is a public park nearby. Students are able to use this area during PE lessons, OT and PT sessions. The park has outdoor circuit training equipment, rock climbing, basketball courts, tennis courts and a cycle path. Unfortunately many of the students who attend Blossom House School do not live locally. However the students who do are encouraged to use their bicycles or walk.

Staff aspire to be positive role models for the students. Staff aim to take part in physical activity whenever possible, for e.g. taking part in playground games with them. Staff often use the gym with students to demonstrate “staying active” life choices. LSAs and teachers support students in lessons to complete physical learning breaks and to complete activity programmes devised by the Occupational Therapy team (if deemed appropriate).

## **Key Stage 4**

### **Options**

The type and frequency of Option choices offered to pupils at the end of year 9 varies from year to year. For example, in 2017/18 there were three options blocks due to the amount of pupils; this year 2018/19, the cohort is smaller but with a higher level of complex needs so three option blocks have been offered again as follows:

<b>Block A</b>	<b>Block B</b>	<b>Block C</b>
<b>Cooking BTEC</b>	<b>Science GCSE</b>	<b>Art GCSE</b>
<b>Graphics GCSE</b>	<b>DT</b>	<b>English Literature</b>
<b>Photography GCSE</b>	<b>Science Entry Level</b>	<b>Creative Arts ELC</b>
		<b>Life skills challenge</b>

This table also illustrates the range of GCSE and ELC options available to Key Stage 4 pupils for the academic years 2018-19. See the *Careers Policy* for more information regarding the “options” process.

The amount and type of provision allocated for the Seven Areas of Learning – in lessons of 45 minutes duration - is outlined here:

<b><u>Year 10</u></b>	<b><u>Year 11</u></b>
English – x 5	English – x 5
Maths – x 5	Maths – x 5
Option A – x 4	Option A – x 4
Option B – x 4	Option B – x 4
Option C – x 4	Option C – x 4

Life Skills - (1 of which is ASDAN based) - x 2	Life Skills (1 of which is ASDAN based) - x 2
ICT – x 2	ICT – x 2 (x 4 for GCSE)
PSHE – x 1	Group Time x 5
PE – x 2	PE – x 2
Functional Skills - x 1	PSHE x 1
Group Time x 5	Functional skills x 1
<b><u>Total: 35</u></b>	<b><u>Total: 35 (37 for ICT GCSE pupils)</u></b>

## R.E. for KS4

Special days are recognised throughout the year in Group Times, assemblies and the general curriculum.

S:\Departments\RE\Secondary RE\Schemes of work\Key stage 4 -RE scheme of work

## THE THERAPEUTIC CURRICULUM

### Acronyms:

*SLT*: Speech and Language Therapy

*OT/PT*: Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy

*ATCP*: Arts Therapy and Child Psychotherapy

### **Introduction**

The school strongly believes in the value of therapeutic input for our pupils, as it works towards reducing or removing the academic barriers which they may face as a result of their SLCN.

As a result of their speech, language and communication difficulties, Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) is always included as part of the pupils' Statement of Special Educational Needs. Occupational Therapy and/or Physiotherapy (OT/PT) is often detailed on the EHCP, and occasionally Arts Therapy or Child Psychotherapy (ATCP) is also included. The school always delivers *at least* the amount described in the individual's Statement; in most cases the amount of therapeutic provision is over and above what is mandatory. The Policy on '*Individual Provision*' clearly sets out any variances from this.

The school also places strong emphasis upon the vital importance of access to an integrated therapeutic approach to supporting our pupils, so that it is part of the daily curriculum. It is embedded into the ethos of the school and forms a crucial part of the multi-disciplinary and holistic approach to enabling our pupils to achieve their potentially academically, socially and emotionally. As the pupils progress through the school and Post 16, the emphasis becomes more functional, so that the young people can be equipped to the best of their abilities for the future.

### **AIMS OF THERAPY**

#### **Our range of Therapies**

The school employs a range of professionals who are fully trained and qualified according to their discipline. This includes:

- **Speech and Language Therapists**
- **Paediatric Occupational Therapists (Sensory Integration trained)**
- **Paediatric Physiotherapist**
- **Arts Therapists and Child Psychotherapists**

Other professionals may be employed on a consultation basis. These include:

- **Clinical Psychologist**
- **Educational Psychologist**
- **Child Psychiatrist**
- **Behavioural Optometrist**
- **CAMHS**

## **Amount of Therapeutic Provision**

The amount of therapy which each pupil receives is dependent upon age, cohort and individual need. The following provides an overview:

### **Foundation Stage & Year 1**

Pupils in Cherry class receive 5 x 30 minute group therapy sessions each week known as 'Speaking and Listening'. In addition, the SLT supports the development of language and play skills and their social interaction during daily 'free play' sessions each morning. This occurs five times a week and the SLT is there to provide this integrated support in order to help pupils to generalise skills. The SLT is also present within the curriculum sessions at least twice per week for the duration of 30 minutes to provide in-class support to develop vocabulary skills and to reinforce topic based vocabulary within the classroom. Within the Robin House provision, the SLT spends the entire morning within the classroom. The children receive 5 x 30 minute group therapy sessions each week also known as 'speaking and listening'. The SLT supports the development of language and play skills and their social interaction during daily 'free play' sessions each morning. The SLT provides integrated support across the morning and is present across all sessions in order to support and develop the children's early language and communication skills.

Pupils in Year 1 receive 5 x 30 minute group therapy sessions each week known as 'Speaking and Listening'. In addition the SLT is present in the classroom for group times and for the children's topic sessions daily, providing integrated classroom based support during these times. In addition to this, the children receive one weekly 30 minute PSHE session and one weekly joint literacy session delivered by the SLT and Teacher. The SLT is also present during the children's free play sessions on a daily basis to provide support for the children to develop their language and play skills and their social interaction.

Across the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and within our Robin House provision, the Speech and Language therapists are available to offer support and advice across the day, as well as to provide individual therapy. Direct group speech and language therapy sessions link to the weekly EYFS topic set for the group, and to the EYFS areas of learning, with a particular focus on Communication and Language and PSED.

Any child within the Foundation Stage who has a significant speech delay/disorder receives two to five individual sessions per week. The frequency and duration of

individual/paired therapy sessions for children is based on the nature of the pupil's difficulties. The attached SLT will assess this as part of their baseline assessment when a child starts within the Foundation Stage.

### **Primary aged pupils**

All primary groups have an attached, fully qualified Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) who works collaboratively with teaching staff, assistants and Occupational therapists to ensure all pupils' speech, language and communication needs are identified and met, and that their targets are generalised across all contexts. The teachers working with the specific class group will be able to call on the therapist's advice and expertise and refer for intervention for specific areas of the curriculum where necessary. Delivery of curriculum based sessions are planned and delivered collaboratively throughout the week for years 2-6.

Primary pupils in years 2-6 receive group Speech and Language Therapy Sessions known as 'Communication Therapy' or 'CT'.

Children in year 2-6 receive the following amount and type of support:

- 1 x 45 minute literacy support session per week
- 2/3 x 40 minute play/social intervention per week (Clubs/Skills)
- 3 x 45 minute CT sessions per week
- 1 x 45 minutes session of PSHE (joint SLT and Group Leader/Teacher)
- 1x 45 minutes session of Daily Living Skills (joint OT and SLT)
- 3 hours of SLT sessions of integrated curriculum support (collaboratively run with a teacher)
- Individual therapy on a needs-less basis unless otherwise stipulated in statement

### **Secondary aged pupils**

All secondary groups have an attached, fully qualified Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) who works collaboratively with teaching staff, assistants and Occupational therapists to ensure all pupils' speech, language and communication needs are identified and met, and that their targets are generalised across all contexts. The teachers working with the specific class group will be able to call on the therapist's advice and expertise and refer for intervention for specific areas of the curriculum where necessary..

In Key Stages 3 and 4, SLT group sessions, called 'Life Skills', is delivered twice per week. The programme delivered includes: developing pupils understanding and use of language skills, developing pragmatic language abilities, developing functional language skills and supporting the pupil's ability to access the National Curriculum. The comprehensive Self Awareness Programme aims to support the pupils in identifying their strengths and difficulties and understanding how these will impact upon their futures and as well as develop strategies that will best support them. This is delivered in a group and on an individual basis where appropriate.

'Functional Skills' sessions are delivered once per week and focuses on supporting the pupils with everyday practical activities such as money management, telling the time and independence skills. It is planned and delivered collaboratively by Occupational Therapists and SLTs.

Teaching staff and SLTs work together to support the pupil's understanding and use of grammar in groups or individually depending on the pupil's needs. These joint sessions use either explicit teaching of grammar support or 'Shape Coding'- a visual way of supporting pupils' understanding of grammar.

SLTs work collaboratively with teaching staff in order to support the generalisation of language skills into the classroom and also to support pupils to access the curriculum. In Key Stage 4, the SLTs work closely with the teaching staff to support pupils to access exam curriculum content and develop vital study skills.

### **Post 16 students**

The Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy provision for Post 16 pupils is aimed at supporting the development of functional skills and independence. This provision includes:

- Small group Speech and Language therapy in the form of weekly discussion groups
- Weekly Reading groups on a needs led basis.

- SLT input integrated into the curriculum which may include English, Maths and Work Skills.
- Speech and Language Therapists also support students on site at each pupil's local Further Education (FE) College (e.g. Nescott, South Thames, Kingston) to monitor functional progress on an on-going basis. This support also included indirect support e.g. liaison with College Link Mentors (CLMs)
- Small group Occupational Therapy in weekly functional group sessions
- Students have access to individual SLT and OT input on a needs-led basis and are taught and encouraged to self-refer. Staff who work with the students have access to the Speech and Language and OT Therapists for support and advice when required. There are four SLTs and one Occupational Therapist working specifically with P16 students.

### **Individual therapy**

For all age groups, relevant children are prioritised for individual therapy over and above the group therapy provision. The quantity, frequency and type of therapy is allocated according to individual need.

### **Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy:**

**EYFS:** 1 x 30 min combined OT and/or PT, 2 x 30 minute group OT and 2 x 30 minute group PT.

#### **Primary:**

Year 1: 1 x 30 min combined OT and/or PT, 2 x 30 minute group OT and 2 x 30 minute group PT

Year 2, 3 : 1 x 45 minute group OT and 1 x 45 minute group PT and 1 x 45 minute SLT/OT Daily Living Skills group.

Years 4, 5, 6: 1 x 45 minute group OT and 1 x 45 minute group PT and 1 x 45 minute SLT/OT Daily Living Skills group



**Whole Primary:** Daily Programme of pre-writing and handwriting practice throughout the primary school - devised and overseen by OT department

**Secondary:**

Whole of Secondary: 1 x 45 minute group SLT/OT functional skills. Year 7 an additional 1 x 45 min group OT targeting sensory self-regulation strategies

Whole school takes part in sensory-rich physical learning breaks devised and monitored by OT/PT department

**Post 16:** 1 x 45 minute group or individual OT session

Some pupils/students will also receive individual therapy on a needs led basis. The focus moves from encouraging effective sensory processing and physical development in the early years towards functional life, community and independence skills as they grow older.

**Delivery of our Therapeutic Provision**

The delivery of the therapeutic provision varies according to age, cohort and individual need. As set out above, therapies are delivered in small groups where appropriate with individual provision available. Arts Therapies and Child Psychotherapy on the whole tend to be delivered on an individual basis due to the nature of the input, however, small groups area also in place where this suits the needs of the cohort.

▪ **Speech and Language Therapy:**

All 'Speaking and Listening' 'Communication Therapy' and 'Life Skills' groups are planned and delivered by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist, with the support of the Speech and Language Therapy Assistant where appropriate. This is delivered through a combination of small group therapy and individual therapy with an SLT according to need. There is an SLT 'attached' to every form group in order to meet the additional and individual language and communication needs of the individual.

▪ **Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy:**

All OT/PT groups are planned and delivered by a qualified Paediatric Occupational Therapist and/or a qualified Paediatric Physiotherapist who are trained in Sensory

Integration. This is delivered through a combination of small group therapy and individual therapy with an SLT according to need.

### **Travel Training Y10 onwards:**

As part of our provision for Upper House pupils, we offer an extended Travel Training Scheme to help pupils to develop the skills needed to travel independently between home and school. This training is offered in the form of a 6 week programme which takes place at the end of the school day. Pupils also attend a classroom based preparatory session with an SLT to plan their journey and go through some hypothetical scenarios. The training is carried out in stages as outlined in the provision mapping documentation (<S:\Travel Training\Resources\Travel Training Phases.docx>). Parent collaboration is essential for pupils to get exposure to different journeys and situations, helping them transfer skills developed by the programme.

### **Arts Therapy and Child Psychotherapy (ATCP):**

- Individual sessions take place following a referral from the wider school team and a subsequent assessment period, where individualised aims and desired outcomes for the therapy are set. The majority of individual therapy that takes place is described as long term (more than one year), and is reviewed annually. Recommendations are then outlined for further work. Sometimes the therapy will be set up on a short term basis (less than one year), where aims are more focussed and specific. Therapists aim to help the pupil to work through and process emotional issues that can be inhibiting them in their wider experiences at home and school. Group sessions are set up to address issues that are being experienced by a group of students of similar age or where it is deemed that individual work would not be suitable for a particular student. For example, the provision for Foundation stage and Post 16 pupils is mostly delivered in group sessions as this is a more developmentally appropriate intervention for these students.
- ATCP provides a confidential space where pupils are offered a different way of relating and communicating beyond the confines and pressures imposed by the classroom environment, the learning situation and verbal language, by using the creative arts (art, drama, music, therapeutic play). All members of the ATCP team have relevant psychotherapeutic training and are registered with and abide by the

recommendations of their relevant professional bodies (e.g BAAT, BADth, BAMT, HCPC etc.)

- The ATCP team also aims to undertake other supportive roles within the school and MDT on a needs-led basis, and undertakes new projects regularly. For example, the ATCP team have been involved in fathers' groups, lunch-time clubs, siblings' groups, staff training, and in collaborating with SLTs to deliver work around mental health.
- Representatives from the ATCP team attend Heads of Curriculum and Therapies meetings to ensure continuity of provision and ongoing awareness of all in-house discussions, projects, concerns and initiatives

### **Therapeutic Policies**

Please refer to these policies for further information:

- *Speech and Language Therapy* ([Foundation](#), [Primary](#), [Secondary](#), [Post 16](#))
- [Fine Motor](#), [Gross Motor](#) (OT/PT)
- [Arts Therapies and Child Psychotherapy](#)

### **Other Policies of relevance:**

These policies may also provide useful information:

- *Discipline and Behaviour Policy* ([primary](#) and [secondary](#))
- [Physical Intervention Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

## **THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMMUNICATION CURRICULUM**

### **Introduction**

The nature of our pupils needs means that social and communication skills are a vital part of the holistic curriculum and this is embedded into the school's ethos.

## ○ **Rationale**

The school's aim is to enable each pupil to achieve his or her own potential during his or her time here. This potential should be viewed as holistic and therefore achievement cannot be measured by academic progress alone. Our pupils also need to be equipped with the skills to be able to cope functionally within the wider community.

Therefore, the Social and Communication Curriculum is considered to be very important as it facilitates access to the Academic Curriculum and learning progression. However, these strands do not occur in isolation; therefore the principle of developing each pupil's social and communication skills is also embedded into the Academic and Therapeutic Curricula. Furthermore, academic progress can have a positive impact on social and communication skills and vice versa.

The terms 'Social' and 'Communication' should be assumed to include aspects of social interaction, behaviour, emotional needs, self-awareness, self-management and intrapersonal understanding, and interpersonal skills. This can include issues involving friendship, bullying, self-esteem, emotional issues, behaviour management and social interaction on different levels.

## **Delivery**

The Social and Communication Curriculum is delivered through a combination of:

- Timetabled, session, teacher led subjects (such as PSHE/Citizenship).
- Sex and Relationship Education sessions, led by members of staff and/or external professionals (age dependent).
- Needs led and sessions led by a combination of SLT and Teacher (such as PSHE), or combination of SLT and Arts Therapist.
- Whole school sessions (such as assemblies).
- Special events (such as the Comic Relief event, Cyber bullying assemblies with the local police, cross-curricular themed weeks e.g. Africa Week, and wider community events, e.g. Jubilee Week).
- Tailored small group and/or individual therapeutic input (SLT, OT/PT, ATCP).
- Trips (the school offers a range of academic based trips which can also provide opportunities for social communication input).

- SLT run trips, which aim to target areas of social communication, including functional life skills.
- Pastoral care (through the pupil's Head of House and Group Leader, in liaison with other members of the multi-disciplinary team).
- Links with other professionals (such as CAMHS and/or a consultation with a Child Psychologist).
- Staff training (regular in-house and external training is supported and encouraged in order to develop the team's understanding of social and communication difficulties).
- Alert Programme and Relaxation Groups (run by the OT team to support low arousal levels and hence successful social interaction). Successful social interaction by encouraging the use of socially acceptable strategies to deal with different arousal/energy levels.
- The SCERTS programme for Foundation Stage pupils. This is led by the SLT, but involving the team around the child.
- Work Experience in Year 10.
- Links with colleges in preparation for transition to Post 16 education.

### **Speech and Language Therapy Input**

All pupils have needs in the area of social and/or communication difficulties as either a primary need or as a secondary feature of their language difficulties. They therefore receive high levels of targeted support to address these needs. This support is in the form of:

- Specifically tailored social skills programmes targeting areas of need: The programmes used are a combination of published resources or specifically devised programmes and are delivered during CT or Life Skills sessions. The SLT 'Primary and Secondary Programme' are specific documents which outline the range of social and communication skills programmes currently being delivered. Please note that these programmes are delivered on a needs led basis, rather than on a year by year basis, thus ensuring that all approaches are specifically targeting the heart of individual need. The range of programmes delivered is therefore an ever evolving list.

- Needs led individualised support: To target specific social or communication issues. This involves direct therapy work to target a key area and utilises specific approaches such as 'Social Stories' with the aim of making social and behavioural expectations explicit for a specific social difficulty.
- Indirect support: Working with the Teacher and LSA to ensure carryover of specific social/communication targets into the classroom setting and beyond.
- Generalised day to day support: To enable pupils to manage in a specific, less familiar context (e.g. a change of room, integrating with new pupils).
- Functional Trips: involving providing specific practical opportunities for pupils to practise taught strategies beyond the school/therapy context. This involves setting specific targets and then encouraging pupils to evaluate outcomes, thereby encouraging the development of self-awareness in relation to their own communication abilities.

## **Play**

An SLT is specifically appointed to oversee play and interaction during unstructured times (e.g. break and lunch time play). This role involves monitoring, evaluating and developing the range of activities in place to enable all pupils to engage with one another successfully during break and lunchtimes, as this is an area of need for many of our pupils. It also involves training and supporting the staff to support the social interaction of all pupils during play or free times.

A collaborative approach is used through working with the onsite Behaviour Team, ATCPs, OTs, other SLTs, Group Leaders and LSAs.

The school is committed to involving the pupils in the range of play activities in place and to flexibly meet their range of special interests. As a result, the break and lunch clubs have been developed to include such clubs as Lego Club, Computer Discussion Group and Story Telling Club.

From 2016/17 Enrichment clubs began to run through extended lunch times – in Primary this incorporated the therapies team every day. This continues through 2018/19.

## BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Social and Communication difficulties can often present as issues with 'behaviour'. Therefore behaviour management forms a vital part of the school's Social and Communication Curriculum. There is a strong behaviour management approach in place throughout the Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools. This aims to be positive, enabling, child-focused, clear, consistent and fair. Vitally, this behaviour management approach is holistic and involves input from the different teams: teachers, assistants, SLTs, OT/PTs, ATCPs. This ethos and approach is in place throughout the whole school however the delivery and strategies vary according to the age, maturity and language levels of the pupils. The school recognises that social communication and behaviour management are a two way process: the individual or group need to be supported towards positive change but the educational environment and communication styles of staff need to be flexible and adaptable also.

The majority of our pupils respond to this whole school approach to raising self-esteem, self-awareness and managing their own behaviour in accordance with clear rewards, consequences and choices. However, for a variety of reasons some pupils need additional and more individualised support, perhaps through calming techniques, set rules and consequences, a positive reinforcement chart, a cost-response chart or a behaviour contract, positive comments books or books which label appropriate and not appropriate behaviour. The child-centred plan is designed, implemented and reviewed by the key staff involved, usually with input from the SLT (for instance through social stories, anxiety rating scales, anger management strategies, specific input regarding expected and unexpected behaviour, public and private behaviour), and the OT/PT (for instance through sensory processing strategies such as deep pressure, brushing or vestibular activities, fidget toys, wobble cushions, gym programmes, calming techniques). Explicit links are made to the reasons for the behaviour, especially in terms of the social and communication implications.

Refer to the [Approach to Behaviour Management](#) document for more detailed information.

During 2017/18, all staff were trained to log and record Behaviour data (including incidents/injuries) on our information system Schoolpod. Information from this is shared and analysed between the relevant Behaviour teams (Primary/Secondary) who monitor

and draw up action plans. Some data is shared with our attached leading professional, Dr Ana. Behaviour plans are disseminated through Heads of Curriculum and Therapies meetings, and shared with all relevant staff to ensure holistic and consistent application. This process has been further refined and will continue through 2018/19 in line with revised publications such as KCSIE (revised 2018). To further support this, all staff are trained in positive behaviour management to support the school's ethos and the pupils' needs.

## **Parents**

Blossom House School is committed to working in partnership with parents. Parents play an essential role in their child's learning process and the home learning environment is key to ensuring pupils develop and maintain positive attitudes and behaviours that support their educational attainment. We aim to create continuity for pupils by strengthening the school-home link, and partnership with parents is widely encouraged through a range of information sharing events and support packages. Parent's views are greatly valued and we are continuously working on ways to encourage parental contribution in the development of our policies, procedures and school environment. We consider parents to be an integral part of the Holistic Curriculum.

Partnership with parents is encouraged through:

- **Parental Involvement in School Learning**
- **Parent Information Events**
- **Parenting Support**
- **Communication**
- **Friends of Blossom House School (FOBHS) Parent Teacher Association**

Our practices include:

- Involving parents in school policies and procedures
- Involving parents in the school curriculum plans and therapies
- Parent questionnaires to gain parents views on school provision
- Involving parents in behaviour management
- Family mornings for parents to come and see their children in a classroom setting
- Involving parents in transitions to/from Blossom House School
- Involving parents in travel training
- Parent information talks and guest speakers



- Parent training events (including behaviour management, SLT and OT related topics)
- Involving parents in SRE (Sex and Relationship Education)
- Making links with external agencies e.g. Social Workers, Psychologists, Family Therapists
- Regular contact through the Head of House and Group Leader and/or meetings between key staff and home
- Access to the school Family Support Service where families are in need of extra support at home
- Support groups for fathers
- Siblings groups
- Communication with parents via the school website, email, text messages, letters and half termly newsletters (in the future, we aim to increase our communication with parents through social media such as a Blossom House App, Facebook, Twitter or a Virtual Forum)
- Half termly coffee mornings and regular fundraising events run by FOBHS
- Parent Forum (due to be set up in September 2015)

Refer to the [Partnership with Parents](#) document for more detailed information.

### **Other Policies and Documents of relevance:**

It may be useful to refer also to these policies regarding the Social Communication Curriculum:

- Discipline and Behaviour Policy ([primary](#) and [secondary](#))
- [Physical Intervention Policy](#)
- [Approach to Behaviour Management](#)
- Speech and Language Therapy ([Foundation](#), [Primary](#), [Secondary](#) and [Post 16](#))
- [Fine Motor](#), [Gross Motor](#) (OT/PT)
- [Arts Therapies and Child Psychotherapy](#)
- [Sex Education Policy](#)

### **Post 16 Provision**

Provision and input is tailored towards supporting the students with moving towards the next steps in their learning career as well as adult life.

## **Academic Curriculum**

The Post 16 academic curriculum is designed, planned for and delivered on a needs-led individualised basis. The majority of curricula input will be delivered through Nescot College Surrey, South Thames College, Merton Campus or Kingston College, in close liaison with the school. The 'college-link' school provision is for students whose primary need is speech, language and/or social communication difficulties and offers a programme of study at an appropriate level given the student's current level of attainment. Students are supported by Blossom House staff placed permanently in one of the colleges. During 2018-19, staff are supporting a small group of students to transition gradually into college, through accompanying them every Friday to a taster session at Nescott College.

### **The P16 programme offers:**

- Functional Skills for Literacy and Maths
- GCSE classes in English and Maths for those pupils previously attaining a '3' grade
- Full-time vocational College course
- Work related and vocational skills (BTEC)
- The ability to achieve accreditations and build a portfolio of achievement that can be communicated clearly to others, such as employers
- Life skills and independence training including community based skills
- Integrated Speech and Language Therapy
- Integrated Occupational Therapy
- Integrated 'Arts' Psychotherapies
- A personalised programme for pupils unable to access college immediately

### **Support across School and college**

This programme of study is underpinned by direct support from a highly skilled multi-disciplinary team within the school and college environment in both structured and unstructured times.

### **On-going support includes:**

- developing students' self-awareness of specific areas of strength and need

- improving communication skills (specifically when faced with new or complex social situations)
- encouraging functional & organisational skills
- helping students to manage unstructured time, for example increasing their ability to form and maintain friendships or managing a workload independently
- learning and developing employability skills
- finding and using socially appropriate sensory strategies to deal with sensory difficulties when faced with unknown\ busy environments
- developing and using positive coping strategies to aid emotional needs
- specialist teaching for written language difficulties.

**A direct speech and language therapy programme providing intensive support across the student's day in school and in college aimed at:**

- Improving expressive and receptive language skills
- Building functional use of language across settings and for different purposes
- Supporting social interaction and friendships

Speech and Language Therapy staff work alongside both teaching, other therapy and support staff to ensure targets and strategies are worked upon together to support the student.

The programme extends to support the student with:

- Communicating within the community
- Communicating with peers and friends in social and unstructured contexts

**Support in school**

1. Students are supported through their day by teaching and support staff who have all received training in assisting students with complex/severe language difficulties. They are experienced in working alongside speech and language therapy staff and able to assist in reinforcing strategies.

2. Class groups at school are small, around eight students, taught by teachers who are experienced and skilled in teaching students with language difficulties. Noise is controlled both in classrooms and in the general environment.

3. Suitable accommodations are made to teaching including:

- Reduced pace of teaching
- Simplified language to support comprehension
- Regular modeling, repetition and reinforcement of new vocabulary and concepts to support semantic language difficulties
- Techniques to support working memory including using high levels of visual supports and breaking information down to smaller amounts
- The delivery of a curriculum which emphasises visual and practical components, for example, backing up spoken information with visual aids such as keywords, symbols or pictures, to help students learn and retain information
- A pre-teaching and reinforcement of subject and concept specific vocabulary

4. A minimum of one hour per week of direct, group Speech and Language Therapy integral to the student's timetable. This input supports the development of problem solving and pragmatic language skills as well as functional and work skills.

5. A social skills programme designed to provide continuing support with social interaction and friendships which is directly delivered by a Speech and Language Therapist, working alongside teaching, other therapy and support staff.

6. A Functional Skills session

7. Additional onsite one to one Speech and Language Therapy is provided on a needs-led basis.

8. Weekly Occupational Therapy group sessions delivered by an Occupational Therapist trained in sensory integration and the CO-OP approach aimed at:

- Encouraging independence with Activities of Daily Living
- Increasing self-awareness and building self-esteem & resilience
- Using appropriate sensory strategies to remain focused for learning
- Improving fitness levels
- Finding suitable leisure activities
- Stress relief and relaxation techniques

9. Additional direct Occupational Therapy input provided by an onsite Occupational Therapist trained in Sensory integration delivered in a small group or on an individual basis at school or at college (if needed) aimed at:

- Developing insight and understanding of sensory and functional difficulties
- Encouraging students to be active participants in devising and undertaking socially acceptable sensory strategies
- Improving functional independence skills

10. Students are supported across their day by teaching and support staff who have all received training in assisting students with sensory processing difficulties and coordination disorders. They are experienced in working alongside Occupational Therapy staff and able to assist in reinforcing strategies.

11. An intensive programme of Group Arts' Therapy delivered weekly by a trained Psychotherapist.

12. Additional individual psychotherapy sessions if needed in the first year and access to individual psychotherapy in the following year- with therapists teaching students how and why they might self-refer.

13. Pastoral and counselling support is overseen and delivered by the onsite Multi-Disciplinary Team and assists students with managing anxiety and controlling behaviours linked to this.

Techniques are taught to students to assist them with:

- Understanding when and why they are becoming anxious or frustrated
- Applying calming strategies to reduce arousal levels
- Developing strategies and ways of seeking support

### **Support in college**

- Students are supported with their college course by a Speech and Language Therapist and specialist LSA. This can include direct one to one support in lessons.
- Weekly one to one reviews between student and LSA/SLT monitoring academic and social progress.
- Students are supported by multi- disciplinary team to set weekly targets, these are then also reviewed weekly

- LSAs and SLTs support students with transition times at college as the students find the mainstream environment extremely challenging due to the higher level social expectations. This support can consist of specific targets as part of the weekly reviews or direct individual SLT or OT input.
- Students are taught how and when they need to access adult support in order to help them progress on to become independent adults
- Direct individual onsite SLT provided by a qualified SLT to provide ongoing support for social communication difficulties when faced with new or complex social situations.
- Direct individual onsite occupational therapy for students with sensory processing difficulties, who struggle to function within an overwhelming sensory environment.
- Specific and ongoing specialist support to develop self-awareness of specific areas of strength/need in relation to their performance at college and implementing strategies to help them make progress.
- LSAs support students to use strategies in college sessions, monitor the effectiveness of strategies implemented and work with therapists and students to adjust strategies as necessary.

### **Social and emotional curricula in P16**

Occupational Therapy and Arts Therapies are also delivered at the Post 16 site by trained therapists. SLT input is delivered by the Post 16 SLTs, with a strong focus upon the individual's functional language, social and communication needs. The BTEC qualification in Work Skills is jointly delivered by SLTs and teachers, to provide a recognised qualification alongside functional gains. The SLT team work in close liaison with the FE provider.

OT input is delivered by the Post 16 OTs, with the focus on increasing independence with activities of daily living, while addressing the individual sensory and motor needs of each student. Individualised Careers Guidance is delivered onsite by Post 16 staff as well as an external careers advisor.

### **Other Policies of relevance**

- [Policy for Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting](#)
- [Careers Policy](#)
- [Post 16 Policies](#)
- [Promoting A Healthy Life Style Policy \(Encouraging Physical Activity & Healthy Eating Habits\)](#)

## **ADAPTED CURRICULUM AND TRANSITIONAL PUPILS**

### **Pupils Transitioning in to Blossom House**

#### **Rationale**

The carefully designed and holistic assessment process in place at Blossom House means that the majority of pupils who are offered a place at the school are able to begin attending on their start date, without excessive anxiety or stress. The school is aware that for many of our pupils, even positive change and transition can be a very daunting and stress-provoking event. Therefore, reassurance, preparation and the reduction of uncertainty is paramount. To this end, all parents are provided with individually designed materials in the form of a 'transition pack' (according to age and key stage) which they can use to support their child's understanding of what to expect when they begin attending the school. Further to this, all new and existing pupils transferring in September of the following academic year are encouraged to attend a 'transition day' in July, which is designed to provide them with direct experience of the school, the opportunity to meet peers and ask questions, share concerns and understand the routines, expectations and workings of the school day. Staff can highlight any areas of observed need or strength during this time and parents are encouraged to share their thoughts and any advice with their child's Group Leader.

On occasion, a pupil who has accepted a place at the school can find it very challenging and stressful to begin attending full time from the start date. This may be related to previous experiences, emotional state, family circumstances, diagnoses and/or physical health. In these circumstances, the school will work closely with the child or young person, parents or carers, the LA and any relevant external professionals. The long term aim is to design a programme to enable the pupil to attend school full time, but in a manner and pace which ensures that he or she feels comfortable, 'safe' and ready to learn within a social setting.

#### **Provision**

During this transitional phase, the school will aim to provide the pupil with access to the curriculum, but often the focus will be upon the emotional well-being of the individual. Gradually building confidence, self-esteem and trusting relationships with staff are of paramount importance at this stage; a child needs to feel 'safe' and able to function within

a group in order to make academic gains. The school will aim to provide an individualised timetable which incorporates both therapeutic and academic input, until the pupil is able to attend full time and fully integrate into group lessons, playtimes, extra-curricular activities and social interactions. This integration programme will be carefully reviewed by the Head of Assessments and child's Group Leader who will work closely with key staff such as the SLT, OT and Arts Therapist where appropriate.

**This may mean that the pupil:**

- Receive planned visits from a nominated member of school staff within his or her current educational placement and/or home setting. This will aim to build rapport and establish a trusting working relationship.
- Receives support to fully understand what he or she can expect from the school, how the school day works and what happens within lessons. This may be through strategies such as videos, visual timetables, social stories and examples of learning materials such as worksheets and games. It is vital that work set is accessible and tailored to the individual. The school's behaviour management systems should also be presented and explained at this time. Levels of understanding should be carefully checked. This should include de-escalation measures in order to avoid the need for 'escape' behaviours.
- Attends school for a shortened day. This will usually be a phased process: starting with very short sessions and gradually building up both length and type of integration, carefully monitoring what the pupil can cope with and following that pace. Initially, this may simply be activities aimed at desensitising the individual and reducing anxiety levels, only bringing in attendance to group lessons as and when possible.
- Attends a joint placement between their current setting and Blossom House, gradually reducing the time they attend their current setting and building up their time at Blossom House.
- Individualised input from relevant professionals e.g. SLT, TO, Arts Therapy, LSA.
- Familiarisation with peers and provision of a 'buddy', in a supported non-lesson based setting at first. These should be peers with whom the pupil will mix with when able to attend lessons and take part in group activities.
- Pupil will be provided with concrete examples of success, both socially and academically.



- It may be necessary to design and implement an individualised behaviour programme. This will make use of the multi-disciplinary approach utilised by the school and will be regularly reviewed so as to ensure expectations are in line with levels of integration.
- The school, family/carers, LA and external professionals will gradually increase the amount of time spent in school and integration into lessons and playtimes, following the pupil's lead to ensure long term and full time attendance.

### **Pupils transitioning through the school**

Pupils are supported through year-by-year transitions by the range of professionals directly involved with the pupils. Specific pupils causing concerns are raised and discussed through the curriculum and therapies teams and the Group Leaders, who are responsible for the day-to-day lives of their pupils.

Pupils transferring from EY into Primary, and from Yr 6 to Yr 7 access a number of transition events which are clearly planned in the calendar year. These include attending lessons with new teachers and being supported to understand the new timetables and systems. Since 2017-18 teachers from each phase observe each others lessons, to familiarise themselves with the pupils and with useful strategies around their management.

Pupils transferring from Year 11 to P16 attend a series of Transition Days in the preceding Summer Term. They meet the teachers and staff and also attend some workshops and classes to familiarise themselves with their new environment.

### **Pupils in transition experiencing emotional and behavioural challenges**

Occasionally, a pupil experiencing difficulty with accessing the programme may need to follow a reduced or amended timetable in order to support their heightened emotional and social needs in the short-term. This may involve full or partial education being delivered at *The Zone*, a safe and creative space established at the school in 2017. Pupils attending *The Zone* follow a highly modified and personalised timetable which promotes self-regulation and supports gradual/partial re-integration. Occasionally, pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are provided with an alternative timetable in collaboration with therapists, teachers, TAs and parents. This may include a mutually-agreed reduction of hours.

## **Pupils Transitioning on from Blossom House**

### **Rationale**

Whilst the school tries its upmost to cater for each individual pupil's needs once he or she has been placed here, occasionally there are cases where, for a range of reasons, the individual may benefit from access to a different curriculum and specialist provision. When it has become clear over an extended period time that the pupil would benefit from a different placement, the LA, Parents and any other external professionals are consulted regarding the best transitional process for this individual. The overarching aim would be to ensure that the pupil understands that he or she has not been 'bad' and has not 'failed', but that he/she now needs a school with a different environment or emphasis (depending upon the case) and that a successful transition to the next placement takes place.

### **Provision**

It is often the case that it can take considerable time for all concerned to decide upon the next most appropriate provision for the individual pupil. Therefore, wherever possible, the school aims to provide the pupil with access to an alternative and individualised learning programme, including access to academic, social, emotional and therapeutic curricula. This is tailored in the short term to his or her needs, whilst ensuring that the impact upon other pupils learning is minimised if not removed.

### **This may mean that the pupil:**

- Attends school for a shorter day.
- Attends some group classes which are known to be successful.
- Attends some group OT and SLT sessions which are known to be successful.
- Is provided with some individual teaching, as appropriate to the individual.
- Is provided with some individual SLT, OT and/or Arts Therapy provision with a member of the onsite team, as appropriate to the individual.
- In some cases it may be necessary to provide the pupil with individual support during his or her time in the school.
- The range and amount of provision would be discussed and agreed with the parents, LA and any other relevant external professionals.
- The pupil would receive an individualised and visually supported timetable which would be explained and supported by his or her key worker (this could be the LSA,

Group Leader, SLT, OT, Deputy or Head teacher, depending upon the individual case and with whom he or she has a successful and established rapport).

- The pupil will be enabled to spend time with peers where possible, to provide socialising opportunities and reduce the feeling of isolation.
- The school would work closely with the parents, LA and subsequent provision to ensure that a clearly structured transition programme is set up and seen through.
- The pupil may work towards collecting a record of his or her achievements (social, emotional, academic and/or therapeutic) during this transitional phase, with the aim of providing him or her with concrete examples of his or her success during his or her time at the school.
- The pupil will be encouraged to maintain contact with the school, where appropriate, so that he or she leaves with a sense of acceptance.
- The school maintains a Transition List of pupils who have transitioned on before the usual leaving stage at year 11. This includes details of time spent at Blossom House, why the pupil has left, and links to documentation of the support given to the pupil in the lead up to moving on.

**Other policies of relevance:** *Transition Policy – Sept 18*