

 

**ELLEN TINKHAM SCHOOL’S SELF EVALUATION FORM**

Ellen Tinkham School has continued to develop and make progress since the last Ofsted inspection in January 2016. Ellen Tinkham is federated with Bidwell Brook School (June 2014) and together we form the Learn to Live Federation.

Our vision statement is:

**Everyone will be the best that they can be**

**Everyone has a voice**

**No-one is excluded**

In our schools:

* Mutual respect is non-negotiable.
* The student voice is heard, valued and responded to.
* We are led by a person centred approach.
* We give full value to all transitions.
* We foster positive, transparent and open relationships with families, carers, external agencies and providers.

The school has remained committed to its set of core values throughout the various changes and expansion which have taken place over recent years. This is evident in the culture of high trust, high expectation, challenge and accountability which gives leaders autonomy to create and innovate. Reflection and evaluation play a significant role in leadership and have ensured the school is an accepting and fully inclusive community where all are welcomed.

Knowledgeable senior leaders are articulate, skilled and passionately committed to driving progress forward in order to improve the life chances of pupils.

The school nurtures its staff and places emphasis on staff well-being.

Leadership at every level is effective and impacts positively on pupil outcomes. Strong adherence to a shared vision ensures the leadership focus is on learning, equitable access to learning and inclusion to and ownership of learning.

In May 2018, we received confirmation from the DfE of our designation as a Teaching School and National Support School (NSS), with the Executive Head being a National Leader of Education (NLE). We are currently establishing a strong Teaching School Alliance (TSA) of special schools initially, that will improve outcomes for all learners with SEND across the region. As well as developing and sharing our own ideas and practice, we also belong to regional and national networks of specialist teaching schools, thus providing us with the support and challenge that is vital to maintain the high quality of standards across our federation.

Through our Teaching School Alliance, we are developing an extensive tiered TA development programme leading to Diploma, Foundation degree or in-service degree (BA awarded by Marjon, one of our alliance partners). This development model will have a profound impact on standards, driving high expectations of all teachers and leaders from within the increasingly skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistant team ad through their research projects. We have already experienced this through the Foundation degree programme and seek to develop it further. The specialist degree will provide excellent preparation for teaching in a special school or setting and allow us to help develop teachers and leaders of the future who can safeguard the profession and provide quality education for our complex students. Another external alliance member is Devon Primary SCITT (DPSCITT), who will provide an alternative PGCE opportunity, supporting our ITT element.

**Summary of Main Improvements since last Ofsted Visit, January 2016**

**Teaching has improved:**

Following the Rochford Review and subsequent DfE guidelines, we have continued to develop our assessment systems ensuring they are relevant, purposeful and meaningful. They respectfully celebrate pupil progress and document the journey of learning and their path towards independence.

We have adopted Evidence for Learning (EfL), an online system to record and track assessment data.

Our new assessment frameworks and individual pupil targets, have been uploaded onto the EfL system, allowing us to gather evidence against both. The impact so far has been positive in terms of staff time and organisation of information. Further positive impact in consistency, quality, quantity and range of assessment evidence and in ease of managing complex data, is expected.

As staff become more proficient with the new evidence system, we will be able to share this information with parents via a secure parent portal. Parents will also be able to submit evidence of their own, giving real validity to our Home:School Agreement targets and ensure increased parental engagement and allowing us to celebrate, receive and share evidence of new and generalised learning.

Target setting has improved through training opportunities and the use of ‘Critical Friends’. Teachers are much better at setting targets that are meaningful, relevant and measurable. Our Home:School Agreement targets are personalised targets which are pertinent to the individual. These come directly from a deep and thorough assessment and understanding of each pupil and how they might be helped to make progress. The pupil, parents and family, therapists as well as teaching teams, are all involved in the assessing of needs and the devising of the ‘next steps’ fundamental to individual learning needs. It is a truly integrated approach which works.

The purpose of these individualised learning programmes is to:

* Nurture talent and ambition;
* Empower communication and decision making;
* Ensure that learners have access to high quality provision as laid out in their Education Health Care Plans (EHCP’s);
* Ensure that all needs are met through high quality teaching and personalised provision.

At the heart of our teaching approach is the recognition that learning and development across all areas are underpinned by our understanding of engagement - the way each individual engages with other people, activities, their environment and any stimuli. Following an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) ethos and model of ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’we seek to nurture life-long learners who, rather than just being recipients of support, are motivated, inquisitive and active participants in their unique curriculum.

In response to an ever changing cohort and a significant increase in pupil numbers, we have developed a dedicated space within the school called ‘The Hub’, where complex sensory learners can access meaningful and highly motivating learning opportunities that develop their communication and early social skills through sensory experiences, as a daily timetabled session.

Teaching strategies traditionally used with tried and tested success are no longer working for the large numbers of children with these complex learning difficulties and disabilities. Evidence based research into teaching this complex cohort of profiles is still in its early stages. It is necessary therefore that we rise to this challenge and creatively respond to this new profile of learning. We need to explore new teaching strategies that will enable us to engage the child as an active participant and transform them into active learners, as *‘without engagement, there is no deep learning’* (Carpenter et al, 2007). This will enable us to contribute to the educational community by sharing an evidence based model for successfully teaching complex cohorts of pupils via our Teaching School Alliance.

The provision ‘The Hub’ provides ensures interventions are targeted and then measured against specific learning outcomes linked to an individual pupil’s EHCP outcomes. It allows time and space to embed reflective practice and develop a process of measuring impact in order to ensure complex needs of students continue to be met. It also provides staff with the means to share expertise and skills across different staffing teams within school, providing a valuable space for CPD.

**Enhanced CPD opportunities:**

Our comprehensive programme for teachers ‘new to a special school’ continues to evolve, based on participant feedback, to ensure that we are growing and developing our teachers whilst meeting pupil needs.

We are also developing a comprehensive programme for teaching assistants and support staff, facilitating their personal learning through Diploma to foundation degree and BA degree stage. This is likely to impact in the future, on recruitment, potentially attracting a number of degree students.

**Growth and change in the leadership structure:**

In response to a growing student population across the federation, our leadership structure has also evolved. Senior Leadership sits within two teams, CBT (Core Business Team) and T&L (Teaching and Learning). CBT have been able to extend their remit to over school growth. Within the Teaching & Learning Team there have been some changes as part of a wider development and succession planning process overseen by the Governing Body, as follows:

With a number of new Senior Leaders joining the team, we have devised a weekly Leadership Development Programme to ensure cohesion and clarity of purpose.

**Opportunities available for Key Stage 4 & 5 students have significantly improved:**

This academic year, we have taken the decision to reduce Key Stage 3 to Years 7 and 8 and move students to Key Stage 4 at Year 9. This aligns with the Transition Planning process and provides the opportunity to further develop the ‘Preparing for Adulthood’ curriculum giving students an additional year of Key Stage 4 before transition into Post 16.

Teachers have a very clear and ambitious vision for our provision and our older students are achieving far more than they ever have in terms of externally accredited courses that are meaningful to the individual. Work experience and work related learning are high priorities for our students and staff work hard to ensure equity for all.

Both Key Stage 4 & 5 have moved off the main school site (Hollow Lane) and into our new Wayside Crescent site. The newly developed building is perfectly placed for growing the provision and developing community networks including student specific work placements. Our older students are increasingly empowered, socially aware and responsible young adults and real ambassadors for our school.

**The impact of the federation is that the capacity to improve and innovate is enhanced:**

* There is overwhelming support for the federation across both schools, evident in the two most recent Ofsted inspections (Ellen Tinkham January 2016; Bidwell Brook October 2017);
* Collaborative, mutually supportive yet challenging opportunities are emerging at all levels and significantly adding value to developments and initiatives. Examples include the cross-federation developments in assessment and the cross-federation Communication & Decision Making Team, deepening and enhancing respectful and effective responses to challenging behaviour;
* Staff are able to move between the schools so they have a much more open ended career path. Thus allowing us to develop staff who can safeguard the profession whilst ensuring quality education for our students.

**What Difference has it Made to the Quality of Provision in School?**

* Children and young people are happy, they want to come to school and enjoy fun-filled days with adults who respect and understand them;
* An enhanced teacher introduction programme has supported and aided the transition of teachers new to the school into the school culture, empowering them to demonstrate the benefit they bring to the school by “fast-tracking” their capacity to be highly effective and “be the best that they can be”;
* An enhanced and reconfigured senior leadership structure provides exceptional capacity for rapid and effective school improvement. A range of skills, good communication, a shared, strong vision and a highly collaborative ethos lead to quick and impactful, solution-focussed working;
* A respectful new space for older learners means that students can make a significant, supported transition from Key Stage 4, building their resilience to and expectation of, change. The location of the new site means that there are better opportunities to enhance independence and the identity of self as part of a community.

**Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

**… is ‘Outstanding’. There is a real understanding that assessment, of and for learning, is essentially ongoing and is seen as an integral part of an interactive learning process. The main purpose of assessing a pupil is to enable him/her to make the best possible progress in the development of his/her skills, knowledge and understanding as possible.**

Our new online assessment system shows that teachers have a clear view of what has been learned and understood and what has not – ongoing assessments show how teachers are probing pupils’ knowledge and understanding, how they use this information to adapt their teaching so all pupils move forward in their learning. This information is absolutely the driver of the curriculum and stimulates the next stages of planning. The process of triangulation is much easier as a consequence.

As a federation staff team, we have worked collaboratively to devise new assessment frameworks following on from the DfE and Rochford Reviews. The new frameworks are written around areas that we feel are pertinent to our pupils and areas we feel as a school we can really impact on, making a difference to the lives of our young people, better preparing them for life beyond the school gates. These new areas tie in well the Code of Practice areas and ensures that we are effectively joining up our working practices with EHCP target areas.

Staff meeting time has been put aside to facilitate partnership planning across key stages and termly moderation exercises are happening across the federation. Increased collaborative planning and discussion between teachers has been continued. This has led to coherent planning across age ranges, without repetition and with progression. Comments made suggest these are highly valued by teachers. Teachers have advised they find the moderation process really useful as it has helped to ensure improved standards for all learners, regardless of age or ability, through the sharing of good practice. As special schools, we often feel isolated as we don’t get many opportunities to talk to others in situations similar to ourselves.

Highly personalised learning is in evidence across all key stages, with a real understanding by all staff of what we are doing and why, for each individual. Monitoring classroom practice indicates that learners are far more likely to be leading their own learning and the level of learner engagement has dramatically increased, with a vast range of motivating and creative learning opportunities taking place. A focus on motivation and engagement underpinned a process of personalised inquiry through which teachers have and are continuing to develop effective learning opportunities that are led by pupils’ individual learning styles and motivations. Sophisticated support for learning ensures students are expected to do their own thinking and problem solving.

Consistent high standards across the school are evidenced in extensive SLT monitoring. This year we have a large number of teachers new to the school and as such, we are regularly ‘dipping in’ to classes to ensure there is no in-school variation and that high standards are the norm.

Wherever appropriate, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils about their learning is now a key element of our SLT teaching and learning monitoring process and we are always amazed at how well our students are able to articulate their learning. Each class has an Advocacy Champion who facilitates advocacy in the class for those who are unable to clearly articulate for themselves.

The formalised professional data conversations that take place termly between T&L SLT and teachers continue to be well received. Teachers feel they are being given the opportunity to ‘tell the story’ behind their data. This gives an extra layer of validity to our data ensuring accountability whilst also being a supportive process.

Effective colleague-to-colleague support is evident. It is rapid in its response and helps to maintain high standards. We have recently introduced a ‘2-6-2’ element to our staff meetings, which gives staff the opportunity for group supervision sharing expertise and knowledge. Asking for help, support and/or advice is definitely seen as a sign of strength.

We have senior teachers in place at both sites who lead on ‘Access to Equal Opportunities’ with a focus on progress for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium and CIC. They work with the federation’s Commissioning Lead (Senior Leader) to monitor equity, spending of pupil premium and its impact:

* All school activities and opportunities are monitored to ensure priority access to this vulnerable group;
* Time is spent with the assessment lead analysing data and identifying any gaps in attainment or barriers to learning;
* Funding is used to offer social experiences and activities, and to provide therapy opportunities eg outdoor education residential trip to the Calvert Trust for KS2 pupils and therapy sessions in music, play and aromatherapy;
* Other opportunities are identified to meet the needs of this group through collaboration with teachers across the school and by using external links eg football sessions led by Exeter City.

Traditionally, there has not been an attainment gap within the school for Pupil Premium pupils; this is frequently the case in special schools. However, we were not content to be complacent about this apparent success. We have therefore been scrupulous in our interrogation of assessment data, which can pose challenges with a curriculum which is so highly individualised to suit the complex needs of our learners. We have used both Home:School Agreement data as well as National Curriculum Assessment data as a means of tracking pupil attainment. Senior Leaders from across the federation meet termly and consistently challenge the data. We are constantly querying both what is the most pertinent measure of assessment for our students and does our Pupil Premium strategy and spend still fit the needs of this group.

This group of learners will always be at a greater disadvantage – we just need to know where this disadvantage manifests itself. By monitoring and collating data from the Home:School Agreement skill set, we have found that the Pupil Premium group do less well in some of these areas, suggesting their communication and social skills, perseverance and resilience skills are less well developed. Pupil Premium spending has therefore been targeted to help build resilience, embed advocacy so that every pupil’s voice is heard, improve communication and decision making and increase the range of social activities on offer.

Pupil premium also helps to fund access to learning through an improved offer of an outdoor curriculum with a dedicated Rural Skills teaching assistant on site. Access to play and music therapies, to improve self-esteem, to work through anxieties and to explore social contexts in a “safe” way, along with a range of enrichment opportunities favouring this group, is intended to make a positive difference to the resilience of this cohort. The Commissioning Lead acts as a “pushy parent” for this group and is currently working on systems to demonstrate the impact of alternative therapies (such as Music Therapy).

We have introduced a ‘spotlight’ on Pupil Premium support intervention. Using data as a starting point, the Pupil Premium Lead works collaboratively with a class teacher to identify barriers to learning for an individual. It provides another viewpoint and is seen as a support mechanism to help to close the gaps in areas of development highlighted through the Pupil Premium data.

Regular meetings with the Deputy Head for Curriculum and Assessment, and with teachers and families, are used to shape person centred responses. An improved referral system is in place for alternative therapies, linking them directly with the skill set outcomes, so that their effectiveness in meeting the desired outcome can be more closely monitored. It is essential that assessment against the skill set is rigorous because we are intending increasingly, to base pupil premium spend on this information.

**Effectiveness of Leadership and Management**

**… is ‘Outstanding’. There is a relentless drive and ambition for excellence across the school, demonstrated by leaders at every level and a well-embedded distributed leadership culture in place.**

The Learn to Live person centred movement was established at the school to ensure a set of rights to which every learner is entitled, and to embed the co-construction of services with our families. The person centred processes, that have been drawn together into a ‘core promise’ for families and learners, drives the work of the school and is at the heart of the Learn to Live pedagogy model. Other schools and organisations are using this effectively in a number of ways.

Senior leadership consists of two teams, “Core Business Team” and “Teaching & Learning Team”. Each meet weekly, share minutes from each other’s meetings and crucially, focus on the areas they are responsible for. Governors mirror this system with their committee structure. As a result, SLT is targeted, purposeful and collegiate, meaning good decisions are made based on use of a targeted skill-set.

Governors take a courageous view in terms of support to other schools and understand that as a ‘strong’ school we have a moral obligation to support others. We also understand the reciprocal benefits of working in collaboration and are never complacent about our own standards knowing that there are always new challenges to be faced and innovative practice to learn about.

The monitoring and development of teaching and learning is multi-faceted, providing leaders and governors with a deep understanding of the core purpose of the organisation; the strengths, opportunities and development areas. Through a range of formal and informal monitoring, mentoring and coaching activities that are ongoing throughout the academic year, practice is fine-tuned through professional learning and discussion and is radically improved where required through collaborative and respectful relationships between trusted colleagues. Through this process we are able to identify people’s strengths and areas for development and give them opportunities to grow.

Senior leaders are actively involved in regional and national organisations. The Executive Head is a member of the executive committee of SWALSS (South and West Association of Leaders in Special Schools). The Executive Head and Chair of Governors helped devise the first two SWALSS Special School Governor conferences and are currently working on a third. We have significant involvement with the local DPSCITT programme; we are active members of the SENtient Trust – a Co-operative Trust of Devon Special Schools.

There are effective moderation networks in place for core subjects and early years – cross federation in key stages and across SENtient Trust schools.

Governors carry out a range of monitoring including learning walks and in-depth scrutiny of key aspects (see Governor Monitoring Framework, attached).

Middle leaders scrutinise pupil data termly so they know the pupil’s learning stories. Effective monitoring and intervention in core subject learning is led by the Empowerment Team.

The Enable, Enrich and Energise teams bring together leaders in linked subjects/services, to jointly plan, innovate and monitor. The Enable cluster has an equitable ‘access to learning’ focus and includes leaders for visual impairment, sensory learning, pupil premium eligibility, speech & language therapy, behaviour support and advocacy. The Enrich cluster includes creative and expressive arts as well as having a cultural and spiritual focus. This cluster organise enrichment days and opportunities across the year and ensure a positive, respectful culture, demonstrating and supporting British Values, through engaging learning. The Energise cluster focusses on physical, outdoor and active learning, covering all aspects of sport and PE as well as practical outdoor learning provided by the highly skilled rural skills team and overseeing the significant range of residential opportunities provided across the year. This includes visits abroad. Recent examples include cultural city visits to Paris and Barcelona and skiing in Chamonix. A major expedition to Africa also took place this year.

**Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare**

**… is ‘Outstanding’.**

Our vision is:

Everyone will be the best that they can be

Everyone has a voice

No-one is excluded

Our purpose is to:

Nurture talent and ambition

Empower communication and decision making

Ensure all needs are met

Ours is a respectful community. People do not shout and there are many random acts of kindness and thoughtfulness in evidence all of the time. Well deployed and highly skilled teaching assistants and additional adults support behaviour and learning effectively. Where difficulties do arise, the class team, supported by the CDMT, are able to accurately adjust the provision to ensure strong outcomes.

Teachers and teaching assistants have an outstanding understanding of behaviour as a form of communication; the visible manifestation of communication and decision making. This results in learners that are self-confident and keen to do well, ensuring all pupils have an equal chance to thrive and learn in an atmosphere of respect and dignity. Excellent behaviour support is in place with highly effective leadership, policies and guidance. There are very few instances of physical intervention, despite the complexity of pupils. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the school policy of de-escalation and advocacy. All interventions are recorded and monitored. Pupils who require them have personal intervention plans devised jointly by families, school and other agencies. There are no exclusions; we have a zero exclusions policy.

The school’s ability to promote equality and tackle issues such as harassment and bullying is outstanding, placing these issues at the heart of all its work. These aspirations are understood and acted upon consistently at all levels. There are few instances of bullying but staff are highly vigilant, dealing with any possible instances openly and firmly in liaison with pupils and families. Differences are celebrated.

Teachers cross-reference PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) in their planning of other subjects so it is integral to all learning. Sex and relationship education is calm, clear and uses correct terminology with a strong emphasis on self-respect, respect for others, public and private and keeping safe. Planned strategies are implemented consistently and effectively. Teachers plan to ensure motivation and involvement.

There is an active Student Council who are elected and have a budget. They make decisions, are involved in the appointment of new staff and are invited to comment on school developments. Most recently, the Student Council have created a “Calm Corner” with funds from the PTFA. This area is being used well and appropriately by learners to self-regulate.

Global citizenship is addressed across the school but is a particular focus in FE. The school has links with a school in Durban, South Africa and several students and staff were fortunate enough to visit in May 2018. Learners participate in national and international days and events eg International Women’s Day and Fairtrade Fortnight and charity support days are regularly held with students, staff and families working together to raise money for charities. Students are wonderful ambassadors for the school. They are congratulated for their conduct and positive interactions when in public places or representing the school.

In the Rural Skills department, learners are taught to care for animals, to care for and about the environment, to grow food and flowers and to respect the natural world and its resources. Opportunities for outdoor and adventurous learning encourages team work, shared challenge, motivation and self-esteem. Play therapy, music therapy, aromatherapy and yoga are all used to support the wellbeing of learners.

Advocacy supports the voice of the learners. The lead advocate has a team of advocacy champions across the school. Having a voice is the right of every student and a strong safeguarding factor. Students are happy and confident because they are listened to and respected.

Most significantly, the whole school person centred ethos is the driving force for respectful working and sets the expectation that every child and young person has the right to be heard, to be included and to be the best that they can be.

There is a strong induction programme for all staff which includes Child Protection, Moving & Handling, Health & Safety, Mobility, Disability Awareness, Total Communication, Team Teach, Emergency Medication training. An understanding of the hierarchy of needs (Maslow) to ensure students are ready to learn eg comfortably positioned in appropriate seating. Continuing Professional Development supports staff to continue to develop their skills to best meet the needs of the pupils they work with. Annual professional development meetings highlight additional training needs that ensure a continuing developing workforce.

**Safeguarding**

**… is ‘Outstanding’. “There is a strong culture of safety across the school.” (Health & Safety Audit 2016).**

We support our children and young people to have a voice and to use their voices, and we are embedding the skills within the school community to listen and respond appropriately and effectively. It is vital that our students are at the heart of any choice or decision making that is about them and we believe that this is the best way to safeguard them and ensure their welfare.

Effective leadership is in place around safeguarding. All staff members are DBS checked and the single central record is up to date and monitored regularly by the lead governors. References are always taken up for new staff. Every interview panel includes at least one person with safer recruitment training. There is an e-safety policy and e-safety committee in place. There are links on the website to CEOP and other related sites where families can obtain further advice and information.

Rigorous risk assessments are in place against all activities including a wide range of off-site activities. There are individual evacuation plans in place for those who need them and individual risk assessments for all students. All incidents including safeguarding concerns are logged on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) and regularly scrutinized by the Teaching & Learning SLT.

All staff members receive up to date safeguarding training. In September 2018, staff signed to acknowledge their read/receipt of the revised Keeping Children Safe in Education document. There is clear information around the school with photos of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. There is a named lead safeguarding governor, supported by two additional safeguarding governors, who regularly scrutinise processes. PREVENT training is delivered across the staff team and as part of the induction programme. A recent survey from the Local Authority showed the majority of staff are confident in dealing with any safeguarding concerns.

The Safeguarding Leads from the federation schools meet regularly to ensure consistency of practice and to review and monitor training and safeguarding updates. All safeguarding leads and deputies have Level 3 training and have all attended training around Operation Encompass, which is a police initiative to rapidly respond to sharing sensitive information when domestic abuse affects our students and families. The Safeguarding Hub meets twice a term to monitor and review processes and procedures; provide emotional support and; regular supervision.

There is a senior leader for Health & Safety and Premises with a federation-wide remit. There is rigorous health and safety recording of all accidents and incidents including “near-miss” accident recording. There is a link governor for health and safety who regularly scrutinises recorded accident and incident data with senior leaders to inform actions to mitigate risk.

There are good security procedures in place for visitors, staff and pupils. The school has a signing in app, IPad security system and all adults are expected to wear identity badges which clearly displays their photograph and their name. All new visitors to the school are given a safeguarding leaflet. Learners have been known to challenge people they don’t know who are not wearing a visitor’s badge.

**Outcomes for Pupils**

**… is ‘Outstanding’. Pupils’ individual needs are met very effectively by diligent staff and through exciting learning opportunities, providing a positive learning climate enabling all pupils to thrive and make good progress.**

Our learners continue to be at the centre of everything we do and we advocate personalised methodologies through our highly differentiated curriculum and approaches. We provide a secure, enjoyable and stimulating place to learn where learners have opportunities to take risks with their learning and develop skills, knowledge and understanding for life beyond the school gate.

All learners are entitled to equitable access to rich and inspiring learning opportunities, encompassing the full range of curriculum areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage, National Curriculum, Entry Level and Life Skills. This is achieved through:

* person centred processes that allow a deep understanding of each individual;
* close working with families and other professionals;
* skilled differentiation and delivery of learning opportunities by exceptional teaching and support staff;
* learning carefully tailored to suit learners needs.
* Our commitment to a person-centred approach ensures personalised learning and individualised programmes, encompass the development of the Ellen Tinkham key skills at the Hollow Lane site:
* Problem solving and communication;
* Daily living skills;
* Improving own performance;
* Working with others;
* Physical orientation and mobility;
* Therapy and help with my health.

And the four areas of Preparing for Adulthood at the Wayside Crescent Site:

* Education & Employment;
* Community Inclusion;
* Independent Living;
* Health.

The school has developed highly specialised units of work to make sure all lessons are appropriate for our pupils. The most important aspect of this is ensuring that all pupils can communicate; that they each have their right to be listened to, to make choices, and to be respected and supported.

All staff understand there are no standard or uniform teaching techniques which meet all of our learners’ needs or support them to overcome all of their barriers. There is not a single menu of interventions and approaches, and there is no one curriculum which could possibly fit all our pupils. Each needs a unique curriculum. Everything we do, and everything each learner experiences, must be meaningful, and we must all, as educators, know why we are doing what we are doing with our learners. We see it as our fundamental job, to find the very best interventions and teaching techniques for each learner, through researching what is best in the SEND community, but even more importantly, through knowing the learners as best we can.

Following Early Years philosophies, with the backing of research and the input of thoughtful practitioners, we have been implementing a ‘continuous provision’ approach across the school, where pupils have access throughout their day to many practical learning opportunities and resources to support them with their learning. Our ‘continuous provision’ approach enables pupils to explore recent learning, practice new skills and follow their own interests, therefore leading their own learning. Practitioners are able to enhance the continuous provision offered to the children through adding additional resources and making more explicit links to adult directed sessions. This combination of continuous and enhanced provision gives practitioners a framework within which they can set their adult-led activities, being sure that children have plenty of opportunities to practice and improve their skills, knowledge and confidence in independent learning.

Observing learners within the areas of continued provision is a crucial part of the practitioner’s role and the findings from these observations have an impact on what is planned for children’s next steps. Through observations, practitioners are able to identify the strengths and needs of our learners, their behaviour, interests and patterns of learning and development, ensuring they continue to make progress.

Learners are currently assessed using our new assessment frameworks and teachers set annual targets. Assessment data is gathered and scrutinised by core subject leads and senior leaders on a termly basis. Parent/teacher meetings are held each term at which pupil progress, individual education plans and, where necessary, behaviour development strategies can be discussed. Overarching outcomes for individual learners are devised with the pupil and their families at person-centred reviews and these are then broken down into termly targets working towards their individual outcomes.

As pupils progress through the school, they have opportunities to work towards accreditation in functional skills - English and Maths. We also offer a growing number of BTEC courses, including Home cooking; Hospitality, Construction and Land Based Studies. At Key Stage 4, students engage in work-related learning and have opportunities for work experience based on individual interests.

Outcomes for Post 16 students are directly related to the ‘Preparing for Adulthood’ national strategy, focusing on skills for life and living, work experience as well as regular literacy and numeracy sessions. Students have opportunities for bespoke work placements relating to their long term outcomes and aspirations.

Students leaving Ellen Tinkham School are confident, independent young adults.

**Early Years**

**… is ‘Outstanding’. Continuous provision has been extended across the whole of EYFS and Key Stage 1. Close working, shared themes, planning ideas and resourcing ensures strong, coherent learning opportunities are consistently provided. Skilled Early Years practitioners ensure learning is maximised through highly motivating, purposeful and engaging choices for learners to explore.**

Emphasis is on the ‘Characteristics of effective learning’ which focus on how learners learn. This feeds into the learner-led approach that has been established.

Well-established, non-intrusive assessment processes “capture” learning. Skilled adult interventions provide opportunities for learning to be extended. As a result, children are confident learners who are well prepared for transition into the next stage of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum inspires children, provides development and learning opportunities, ensures learning takes place, develops key relationships and makes sure children feel secure in line with EYFS documentation.

We recognise that young children are active learners and they learn through their senses, through exploration, investigation, experimentation, listening and watching as well as through play. It is important that our pupils have opportunities to interpret their environment, learn to make choices for themselves and grow in confidence understanding their value in our school community.

Within our continuous child initiated and child and teacher led provision, we provide play based learning opportunities aimed to fascinate, inspire, motivate and engage children. This also allows us to work towards building and developing relationships and enables us to assess their individual learning styles to prepare children for life-long learning.

We want children to be independent learners, creating their own self-motivated adventures which enable them to learn and/or generalise work skills. Working outside the classroom, children can learn different curriculum aspects in a fun, meaningful way. Outdoor learning can challenge the children exposing them to new and/or different environments, allowing them to take risks and communicate freely. Learning outdoors meets different learning styles, enhances confidence and self-esteem. As educators, we are always thinking about what the children need to learn and where the best place for this to happen may be.

**FE**

**… is ‘Outstanding’.  Due to the extent of learner achievement, the richness of opportunities and the personalised, respectful ethos, the FE provision at Ellen Tinkham School has been deemed ‘Outstanding’ since 2007.**

The FE College at Wayside Crescent provides our young people Post 16 with an exciting and purposeful learning environment within a community context. This provision, with our empowering, rights-based Learn to Live ethos means that we are decisively preparing our pupils for adulthood.

The learner focus is on consolidating their skills and transferring them into new learning environments, community settings and work placements. Comprehensive personalised transition planning with learners, families and colleagues from social and health services ensures high quality preparation for their next phase.

PSHE and Communication and Interaction are at the heart of the curriculum with opportunities to achieve accreditation in functional English, Maths, IT, Basic Construction, Arts Award, Land Skills and in
Jamie Oliver’s Level 1 BTEC Cooking.

Our ambition is for all learners to achieve self-determination and independence.  All learners have a personal learning programme, driven by what is important to and for them, both now and in terms of future outcomes.  Learner voice and advocacy, transition planning, physical and health needs and “Listen to Me” information from the Annual Person Centred Reviews are all used to inform the young person’s weekly programme.  The curriculum is therefore purposeful, reflective and responsive to individual needs and delivered through specific learning objectives identified for each of the student’s key skills.  Learners are supported to engage in work experience opportunities related to their skills and self-evaluation of their experiences.

The school has worked hard over the past four years to broaden the opportunities for work experience. The staff know each student extremely well and identify programmes of work and access to courses which build on the pupil’s individual interests and abilities. As a result, the pupils work hard and are impressively well prepared for the next stage of their training, education or work.

The school has established successful links with local businesses and industry. Student behaviour whilst on work placements or on community based learning is outstanding, which is evidenced through emails received and via the community voice.

**Overall Effectiveness of Ellen Tinkham School**

**… is ‘Outstanding’.**

* Learners across the school are consistently making excellent progress;
* Learner voice is tangible and makes a difference. By the time they are in KS 4 and 5, learners are increasingly skilled in ensuring their voice – and that of others less easy to hear – is heard and acknowledged. Opinions of others are also respected. Our learners will be of benefit to wider society.
* A sophisticated and systematic person centred approach is deeply and reliably embedded across the entire school to ensure we support every learner to ‘be the best that they can be’;
* Access to therapies, advocacy support and outdoor education support learner empowerment;
* A range of activities provided to create highly personalised timetables to meet the unique needs of the individual assumes engagement, involvement and motivation to be the absolute right of every learner;
* The use of Home:School Agreement targets agreed with parents, develop skills in all areas of a learner’s life. Assessments against person targets are rigorous and carefully moderated and monitored;
* Children and young people feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe, who to go to if they need help and understand they have the right to have their say (DSCB “Walkabout” visit, March 2017 and Safeguarding Governor attendance at Student Council, January 2017);
* Systems to ensure support for learners eligible for pupil premium are exceptionally rigorous and in-depth. Careful analysis ensures equity and seeks out potential “gaps” in achievement/opportunity that are not obvious through traditional data monitoring;
* Standards across the school are consistent. The vision threads through the whole organisation and any fluctuations in quality of provision are quickly and effectively addressed by a highly skilled and collaborative team of exceptional professionals.

**Development**

Continuing to develop an effective Teaching School with a focus on growing specialist, special school teachers and on maximising the impact of best practice in special schools across the region, to the benefit of all learners.

**Next Steps:**

* To ensure that assessment systems are embedded and outcomes are shared with families so that both can contribute effectively to the next steps in education, employment and training;
* The school provides a strong provision for the individual needs of children, this provision needs to continue to develop to ensure effective systems are in place for children at the earlier stages of communication;
* The school has considered the environment for children with sensory needs. Further work is needed to support these children to help transfer skills learned and developed within ‘The Hub’ back into the classroom environment;
* A newly developed Rural Skills area to be used to further advance students’ skills in Basic Construction, gardening and Land Skills at the Wayside Crescent site;
* Ensuring that professional and training kitchens are used effectively in supporting the FE students in achieving accreditation in hospitality and catering courses, as well as in learning vital independent living skills;
* Development of a ‘work hub’ integral to preparing young people for employment.

**Federation Development and Improvement Plan targets**

***Access (Intent):*** Learners are empowered to develop coping and self-help strategies, through increased self-awareness. Resilient learners are better prepared to face new challenges, manage change, demonstrate effective social interactions and increased independence. Families and school work together to reduce anxieties around transitions and acceptance of change.

***Curriculum (Implementation):*** A strong focus on Communication through the Curriculum Framework, facilitates resilient learners. Understanding others and being understood, supports the transfer of skills, personal well-being and positive social interactions.

***Leadership (Impact):*** Leaders at every level are responsible for fulfilling the Vision, ensuring positive impact on the life chances of learners. Empowered learners are the best that they can be: Effective communication strategies ensure everyone has a voice: Dynamic and inspiring leadership across the Learn to Live Federation ensures no-one is excluded.



 

**Profile Data as at January 2020**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupils on Roll:Girls:Boys: | 227 66 (29%) 161 (71%) |
| Pupil Premium eligible pupils (71 of 182 eligible pupils):*[81 KS1 pupils receive free school meals]* |  71 (39%) |
| Disadvantaged Children: of which: Child Protection: Children In Need: Children In Care: |  41 (18%)42811 |
| Pupils with two or more diagnoses ie complex needs: |  61 (27%) |
| Attendance for the Academic Year Sept 2018 – July 2019:*(no exclusions in accordance with our zero exclusions policy)* | 92.85% |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of classes: split: Hollow Lane: Wayside Crescent: | 241410 |
| Pupil numbers by Key Stage:EYFS:Key Stage 1:Key Stage 2:Key Stage 3:Key Stage 4 (Yrs 9-11):Key Stage 5 (Yrs 12-14): |  15 (7%) 47 (21%) 61 (27%) 28 (12%) 39 (17% 37 (16%) |
| Number of staff incl teachers: | 220 |