

## **The Valley School SEN Information Report**

At The Valley School, we welcome students with a range of special educational needs (SEN). All of our students have learning difficulties, which can include needs in the following areas: communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, sensory needs and physical needs.

Each of our students has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), naming The Valley School as the right place for them to learn. From time to time, students from The Valley School are able to join their peers in mainstream schools for some of their lessons.

We believe in “different for different”, so our aim is to treat every student according to their individual needs, preferences and reduce the barriers that get in the way of effective learning.

### **1. Roles**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Taney Howarth. Dr Rona Tutt is the school governor for SEND who ensures the quality of provision is regularly monitored.

SENCO Taney Howarth [taney.howarth@thevalley.herts.sch.uk](mailto:taney.howarth@thevalley.herts.sch.uk)

SEND Governor Rona Tutt (contact through school) [admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk)

### **2. How will school staff support my child?**

Teaching staff are accountable for the progress of each student in their class. They will provide appropriate learning and bespoke intervention that promotes good the progress and development of their students. The class teaching teams work closely with the SENCO and our Head of Interventions to ensure that the needs of all students are planned for effectively and reviewed regularly. The school will take action to reduce barriers to learning and put effective provision in place.

The Year Teams will deliver excellent Quality First Teaching. This includes differentiation, a range of teaching methods and access to a variety of resources. Teachers use a range of strategies to assess each and every child's knowledge and understanding and adapt plans to build on this to ensure progress.

If students are identified as having a need for more targeted support, short-term additional provision may be put in place. These are likely to be small group sessions with a Teacher or Learning Partner using a suitable evidence-based intervention. The impact of this additional provision is monitored by the SENCO and the Interventions Lead.

A small number of students will be identified as requiring more specialist input. Advice from senior teachers, the SENCO, or external professionals may be sought. Where a student has been identified as needing specialist support, parents and carers will be informed and involved at each stage of the process.

The Year Teams work closely with the SENCO and our Head of Interventions to ensure that the needs of all students are planned for effectively and this is reviewed regularly.

### **3. How will I know how my child is doing?**

Class teachers and subject leaders, supported by the Senior Leadership Team regularly and rigorously review student's progress. There are Parent Teacher Consultation evenings and school reports. Annual reviews for EHCPs are held. With all of these processes, we ensure the views of the child are sought. Communication with your child's Year Team and form tutor will be regular, throughout the year.

### **4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?**

Our students learn in small groups with other students whose needs are similar. We focus on literacy and numeracy to support a wider curriculum. Every student has an Individual Learning Portrait (ILP), which identifies their main barriers to learning and gives very specific and highly individualised ways of supporting them. Students, parents and carers help with writing the ILPs, which all staff use when planning lessons, setting targets and deciding on the strategies to help them learn.

**5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?**

We are involved with the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and have an allocated Educational Mental Health Practitioner who provides early intervention support to a child and their family. The referral process is done through the Year team and is triaged by the MHST. We have an Interventions Team in school that will provide support to a student directly or, indirectly through the Year Team. There is a Pupil Listener who works with students that have been referred by their Year Team. The SENCO is able to make a referral to CAMHS, when appropriate, with supporting evidence from families and is a Mental Health Team in school who are responsible for ensuring a whole school approach to wellbeing is in place.

**6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?**

Our SENCO has completed the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination. The school is able to access ongoing advice and training from a large number of external professionals, including input from the Speech and Language Therapy team, who liaise with school staff during their allocated time in the school, support from various advisory teams for a range of SEN, we can make referrals to the Educational Psychologists, the Occupational Therapy Service and the School Nursing Team.

**7. What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?**

Weekly staff meetings are focussed on an area of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and we identify further training and development needs on an ongoing basis and annually via Performance Appraisal. Key training is refreshed regularly so that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the children they are supporting, for example Trauma Awareness and Understanding, Autism Understanding and Provision. All of our staff are trained in Hertfordshire STEPS and are skilled in using a range of strategies related to behaviour for learning.

All staff and governors undertake Safeguarding training, which is updated regularly and the DSPs are clearly identified within school. Where Year Teams have a student with a specific need, training is provided by Specialist Advisory Teachers. Learning Partners are being trained to deliver Lego Therapy across the school to support our commitment to working with speech, language and communication needs as an ongoing tool for access to learning and social skills.

**8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?**

Parent Teacher Consultation meetings are held throughout the year, timing is dependent upon the year group. Further information about this is relayed by the Headteacher's letter, the calendar dates on the website and contact from your child's Year Team. Further meetings can be arranged where necessary. If your child has external professionals involved, advice on supporting learning at home will be included in their reports.

If needed, remote learning can be accessed through the Google platform. Further information about this is on the school website and will be shared with you as needed.

If further advice or support is needed for a specific area for your child, contact with your child's form tutor is the first step to take.

**9. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?**

We welcome contact with our parents and carers, and we encourage open communication, feedback and discussions between school and home. throughout your child's time at The Valley School. This begins before students start at the school and the relationship is central to each student's journey through the school. Either the SENCO or a member of the Y7 team will join the final EHCP review at your child's primary school and when your child joins The Valley School, the Y7 team will undertake a Baseline Assessment. EHCPs are reviewed at the Annual Review with all school staff and external professionals involved with the child, and we will seek the view of the you and your child as a part of this process.

**10. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?**

Our aim is to include all children in all aspects of school life. For work experience, school trips and off site learning staff carry out a visit and a thorough risk assessment to ensure that all aspects of safety are thought through and planned for. Where we are using external providers, we ensure up to date information about our students is provided and risk assessments are in place so that they know how to support them in an appropriate manner.

### **11. How accessible is the school environment?**

Reasonable adjustments are made for all of our students, where necessary. In accordance with the Equality Act and the SEND Code of Practice, we are committed to supporting all students to fully access the curriculum. If your child needs any specialised equipment, as detailed in their EHCP, we will seek advice from the appropriate professionals.

### **12. Who can I contact for further information or to make a complaint?**

For further information or to make a complaint, please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance. If you wish to discuss matters further, you will be referred to the Head of Year. If the matter has not been resolved at this point, then contact with the Headteacher or the Governing Body can be made, in line with the school complaints procedure. Information regarding this can be found on our website:

<https://thevalley.herts.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Complaints-2020-11.pdf>

### **13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?**

We understand that transitioning to a new school or year group is a big step, particularly for children with special educational needs, so we have a range of strategies in place to support students and their families.

**Y6 to Y7:** Either the SENCO or a member of the Y7 team will attend the Y6 EHCP Annual Review to give all parties an opportunity to share key information and provide time to discuss issues relating to your child. A transition programme is in place where different members of the Y7 team will visit your child in their primary school so that everyone can have a chance to say hello and have a familiar face when visits to The Valley begin. A meeting will take place between the Y6 teacher and the Y7 form tutor, or the Head of Year, to share information about your child. There will also be an information evening. All of the students will receive a pack that includes pictures of the Y7 team and any other key members of staff they are likely to meet in their first few weeks. This helps to reduce the anxiety around transition and supports discussion at home. Opportunities to spend time at The Valley are a part of the transition programme and these are led by the Y7 team.

**Moving to the next year group:** Promotion to the next year group takes place during the last 3 weeks of the Summer term. This allows all students time to get to know their new form tutor, the Year Team and settle into their new environment. The timetable is that of the new year also. When students return to school in September, they are returning to familiarity rather than a new regime after a long break away from school. Before the promotion takes place, staff from the current year group meet with staff from the next year group to share their knowledge of your child, including successful support strategies and individual needs.

**Y11 on to Post 16 provision:** A Transition Support Worker from North Herts College is actively involved with Y11 within our school. They become a familiar face and get to know the students so that They can offer advice and support from the College perspective. Y11s have a weekly visit to College in their timetable. If your child will be attending a different Post 16 provision, then we will ensure that a transition support worker from that place is involved and they and your child get to know each other. Visits will be organised to this provision on an individual needs basis. We are allocated a Personal Adviser (PA) from YC Hertfordshire who attends the Y9 and Y11 EHCP Annual Reviews and meets with your child when they are in Y11. This supports their preparation to adulthood. The Transition Support Worker and the YC Hertfordshire PA attend Parent Consultation Evenings in Y10 and Y11 to provide further information about Post 16 transition. Our EMHP runs a Transition Workshop in Y11 to help support with any worries your child might have about moving on to a new setting.

**14. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?**

Student progress meetings are held termly with class teachers, and the Senior Leadership Team. The progress of all students is tracked and those who are not making the expected progress are identified and suitable research led intervention is agreed. Any intervention your child receives is monitored and the impact of this is regularly reviewed by the class teacher and Interventions Lead. Parents and carers will be involved if advice from an external professional should be sought. Support that is recorded in your child's EHCP is monitored and reviewed by the class teacher and the SENCO.

**15. How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?**

If you look on our school website, you will find a range of information including the links below.

Hertfordshire Local Offer <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>

SENDIASS Hertfordshire <https://www.hertssendiass.org.uk/home.aspx>

Stevenage DSPL <https://stevenagedspl.org.uk/>