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 (e.g. ASD, Auditory Processing), cognition and learning (e.g. Dyslexia, Global Delay), social, emotional and mental health difficulties (e.g. ADHD, ASD), sensory and physical needs (e.g. Hearing and /or visual impairment; ASD).

Each of our students has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), naming The Valley School as the right place for them to learn. The Valley School offer routes of accreditation that are appropriate to the individual and so ensure each student has the opportunity to meet their potential, as well as gain the essential life skills that prepare them for adulthood. 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”, with our aim to treat every student according to their individual needs and preferences, reducing the barriers that can get in the way of effective learning.

We aspire to be …

‘A centre of excellence for secondary school children with learning needs. ‘

Mr. David Pearce –The Valley Headteacher

1. Roles

At The Valley School, each and every member of staff will have a part to play in the provision of education for your child. This includes the staff that care for the school environment, the office staff who support smooth running of the school and ensure your child receives their full entitlement in all aspects of their education, through to the Teachers and Learning Partners who support your child in class with their learning. Our Senior Leadership team guide the school and support staff with changing curricula and foci, ensuring that we are forever building upon our successes and sharing our collective experience.

The role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) at The Valley School, is to co-ordinate the various professionals involved with your child's care, ensuring that advice and recommendations that inform their EHCP are heard and built into their targets, as well as promoting each individual's wellbeing and aspirations for their future. The Annual Review provides for an ongoing discussion between family and professionals, with the student's education, health and wellbeing at the centre.

The SENCO at The Valley School: Sally Svensson sally.svensson@thevalley.herts.sch.uk
The SEND Governor at the Valley School: Dr. Rona Tutt admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk (can be contacted through school and marked as 'For the attention of the SEND Governor)

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 class intervention, to promote good progress and the development of their students. The class teaching teams work closely with the SENCO, who also leads the Interventions Department, to ensure that the needs of all students are planned for effectively and reviewed regularly. A general review happens weekly at our Heads of Year meetings, ensuring any students in need of further support through the Interventions Suite are identified and a bespoke package of support is put in place. Individual reviews can happen on a daily basis, ensuring that any newly identified areas of need, can be addressed with specific referrals to outside professionals and internal referrals to Interventions. The Year Teams will deliver excellent Quality First Teaching. This includes differentiation/adaptations, a range of teaching methods and access to a variety of resources. This is complemented by whole school approaches to address the specific needs of a student, where those specific needs are common needs that have been identified across EHCPs in each year group. Teachers use a range of strategies to assess each and every child's knowledge base and understanding, adapting plans that both support the development of their academic and core life skills.

If students are identified as having a need for more targeted support, short-term additional provision may be put in place. This can include small group sess

ions led by a Teacher and/or Learning Partner centered on a learning skill, speech and language therapy, sensory needs, or it could be 1:1 sessions booked within the Interventions timetable to support the all-round development of the individual. The impact of this additional provision is recorded and monitored by the SENCO, Interventions staff, Teaching Team and SLT.

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

Who will support my child in school?

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 Pupil Progress meetings held each half term, along with Parent Teacher Consultation evenings and school reports. Annual reviews for EHCPs are held on the one day, with outside professionals invited to join in with families. This ensures that all the individuals who support the young person and their family, can meet at the same time. Throughout 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, with Years 7, 8 and 9 using Class Dojo and our upper school, Years 10 and 11 using calls and/or online chats.

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 and learning styles are similar. We promote literacy and numeracy to support the wider curriculum, with a view to ensuring most students leave us with secure functional skills in both. Every student has an Individual Learning Portrait (ILP), which identifies their strengths, likes/dislikes and main barriers to learning. They provide for very specific and highly individualised ways of supporting the student, and are written in conjunction with the student, parents/carers, as part of the annual EHCP review process.

Specifically, as within mainstream provisions, we track what each individual student needs and put the provision in place to meet the needs. If further support is needed, we step up to the next level:

Step 1- Quality First teaching which includes varied physical resources, differentiated/adapted activities and clear visuals to support learning for all. Extra processing and 'Take-up' time is built into the everyday approach and delivery, along with movement breaks where needed. The use of

Whole school approaches such as Lexia and Visual Coding/Colourful Semantics, are interventions that have been adapted to provide added support within the normal teaching day, supporting Cognition and Learning, as well as Communication and Interaction skills.

Zones of Regulation teaching throughout the school helps promote self-regulation and emotional Literacy, supporting each student's Social, Emotional and Mental Health, as well as their Communication and Interaction skills.

Whole school Sensory circuit training and use of sensory activities to build understanding of the 'self' and strategies to develop emotional regulation, Zones Toolbox and wellbeing, support Sensory and Physical Needs.

Now and Next/Now, Next and Then task planners, encourage and promote independence skills. Along with this, we look for opportunities to build what would normally be deemed as specialised interventions, into our everyday practice:

Step two – Interventions

Where the need for more specific/targeted support is identified, it is delivered in a small group setting and monitored. This is recorded and evaluated to determine whether more specialised input is needed. This may be group sessions of more intense input around Colourful Semantics, or Lego therapy being used to support the area of need. At this point, referrals to outside agencies can support this small group work.

Step 3 – Personalised support

Here students may have the following to support an area of need:

Cognition and Learning – support from the Specialist advisory Team/Complex Needs Team; 0-25 Team

Physical/Sensory Needs – Planned physiotherapy; individual sensory interventions; specialist equipment

Communication and interaction – Social skills sessions, lunch and break provision, SALT Sessions.

SEMH – MASH/SASH support; modified curriculum/timetable/part-time hours; external learning provision; MHST support; CAMHS/PALMS support

Independence – 0-25 Team; Travel Training

Access Arrangements

Exams are part of the school curriculum and accreditation process. At The Valley, we keep these as low key as possible and start planning for what support may be needed, at each EHCP annual review time.

Students with SEND are supported in class and in exams by being allowed access arrangements. There are a wide range of arrangements that meet the needs of students in all the 4 areas of SEND (Cognition and learning, Communication and interaction, Physical and Sensory and Social, Emotional and Mental Health). These arrangements have to be the student's normal way of working. As a school, we start our graduated response to supporting the access arrangements in class and for exams, in Year 7. This means that from Year 7, each student's needs are

documented in the EHCP and provide a trail of evidence to support the Formal Applications to the examining boards, to ensure the arrangements can be used during their external exams at the end of Ks4.

Specialist Equipment

For a smaller percentage of students with SEND, they will require specialist equipment to help them access the curriculum and exams. This can range from Reading pens to Laptops.

To have access to any specialist equipment, we have to ensure that the student routinely needs that piece of equipment and we have to evidence that without it, the student is disadvantaged. It is important that the use of this equipment becomes the pupil's normal way of working.

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

Our overall curriculum has been developed to reflect 'best practice' within SEND and to offer our young people the opportunities to try new things, supported by current research. As part of this, our new PSHE curriculum supports our students develop their understanding of themselves and the world around them, encouraging and enabling them to make informed choices. Along with our work on the Zones of Regulation, we are equipping our young people with the tools to develop their emotional literacy, independence skills and to adopt strategies to support their general wellbeing.

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The Valley school is supported by the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and we have an allocated Educational Mental Health Practitioner who provides early intervention support to a student and their family. The referral process is completed by the Year team and SENCO, and is triaged by the MHST. We also have a dedicated Interventions Team in school, who provide support to a student directly or, indirectly through the Year Team. The SENCO can make a referral to CAMHS/PALMS when appropriate, including supporting evidence from families.

to them.

We have recently appointed a Family Engagement Worker and an Outreach/Flexible Learning Teacher. This has helped us to extend our provision out of the school, supporting our most vulnerable students whilst they are unable to come in, and through the transition phase back into school.

Family Engagement Worker - louise.casey@thevalley.herts.sch.uk

For students who need further intervention, The Valley School and London Young Counselling have teamed up to provide counselling sessions in school. This partnership is facilitated by the University and enables us to ensure our students can access support in a familiar and safe environment

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

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, as with the Mental Health Support Team. We can also access support from various advisory teams for a range of SEND, making referrals where needed to:

Educational Psychology Service
Educational Welfare Officer
The Specialist Educational Support Service
Occupational Therapy Service
School Nurse Team
Speech and Language Therapy Service
Physiotherapy Service
Hearing Impairment Team
Visual Impairment Team
Travellers Education Service
Children's Services
Families First
Family Centres
Healthy Minds
Young Carers
Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS)
Positive behaviour, Autism, Learning disability and Mental health Service (PALMS)

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

Weekly staff meetings are focused on an area of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and we identify further training and development needs on an ongoing basis, and annually through our Performance Appraisal Cycle. Statutory annual updates such as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', underpin our safeguarding approach, whereas others such as Trauma Awareness and Understanding; Autism Understanding and Provision, feature annually to update classroom skills and provide opportunities for us to access the latest research and thinking on how best to support the students in our care.. All of our staff are trained in Hertfordshire STEPS and are skilled in using a range of strategies related to encouraging and embedding positive behaviours for learning.

[illegible] undertake Safeguarding training, which is updated regularly and the Designated Safeguard[illegible] (DSL and [illegible] clearly identified within school.

Our CPD timetable, also evidences our awareness of needs that are identified in the EHCPs, informing our choices and enabling us to reflect where and how specific training will support those needs.

Communication and Interaction

- Autism training
- Trauma Awareness training
- Colourful Semantics/ Visual Coding
- Zones of Regulation
- Lego Therapy
- Blank Level questons
- Lexia

Cognition and Learning

- Number Skills
- Reciprocal Teaching for Reading/Lexia
- Autism training
- Dyslexia trianing
- Precision teaching/monitoring
- Visual Coding/ Colourful Semantics
- Lexia
- Zones of Regulation
- Blank Level Questions

Social and Emotional Mental Health

- Zones of Regulation
- Mental Health in Schools/Wellbeing
- Student Council/peer mentoring
- Sensory circuits
- Lego therapy

Sensory and Physical needs

- Autism training
- Trauma Awareness training
- Outdoor Learning/Dof E
- Sensory circuits
- Art therapy/Draw and talk

Independence

- Duke of Edinburgh
- Outdoor learning
- Autism Training
- Trauma Awareness Training
- Zoes of Regulation

Where Year Teams have a student with a specific need that falls outside of the learning remit of the class teacher, training is provided by the professional/ team supporting the student. A recent example of this multi-disciplinary approach can be seen in the school adopting a hybrid of Colourful Semantics and Shape coding, where the Speech and Language Team (SALT) trained staff to develop their knowledge and use of Visual Coding. This Speech and Language therapy resource is now being used to support our students to recognize word classes and how to construct sentence.

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

Parent and Teacher Consultation meetings are held throughout the year and information about these, along with dates and time, is made available through the Headteacher's letter, the school calendar and is on the website. Out with these dates, contact can be made with your child's Year Team, through Class Dojo, or by ringing into the school office. Further meetings can be arranged where and when necessary.

If your child has external professionals involved, e.g. the Speech and Language Therapist, advice on supporting learning at home will be included in their reports.

If your child is on a part-time timetable, is unwell for a longer period, or not in school, remote learning can be accessed through the Google platform and supported by our Outreach/Flexible Learning Teacher. Further information about this is on the school website and will be shared with you as needed by the Outreach team.

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 and the SENCO email is also available on the school website.

Parents can also go on the school's website where there is subject specific information, that can help with homework tasks or information about what a student is studying at any particular point in the year.

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 positively encourage open communication, feedback and discussions between school and home. We endeavor to provide 'wraparound' care for each student and this is only possible when school, home and external professionals involved, work as a team. This begins before students start at the school and the relationship is central to each student's journey throughout their

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 yours and your child's views, as a part of this process. Targets are agreed by all present.

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.
Any trips out are supported by staff familiar to the students and strategies/resources are shared with supporting adults to ensure each student is given the fullest opportunity to access the planned activities, and to succeed at them.

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. We are aware that as we are now an old school, with limited scope for structural changes, that we need to look for creative solutions to mobility needs. We do at present have a new purpose-built school in the offing.

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

The Herts Local offer page gives a wealth of support and advice for families, as well as offering courses to develop understanding of SEN needs. This can be found here: https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx

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: As a Hertfordshire school, all the classes move up to meet the staff of their new Year Group on 'Transfer Day'. As we are quite a 'tight-knit community', where staff are deployed to maximise building of relationships out with their year groups as well, your child will already be used to the faces they will see in their new year team. Once our Year 11s leave in June, the focus then falls on Teams carouselling around the school, shadowing the current Year team to ensure students have the opportunity to get to know their new team, alongside their existing team.

Y11 on to Post 16 provision:

As part of our 'Preparing for Adulthood' provision, all students in Years 9,10 and 11 start to think about life after school and how college offers the next step. They start to think about what careers they may be interested in and are encouraged to research them, finding out what skills are needed. Within Year 10 and 11, students are then given the opportunity to build their understanding through an Enterprise project, aimed at providing real-life experiences of the working world and how they can direct their learning and skills to achieve success.

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 make visits to the College throughout the year. If your

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.

child will be attending a different Post 16 provision, then we will ensure that a transition support worker from that place is involved and that 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 from the Mental Health and Support Team, runs a Transition Workshop in Y11 for both students and families. This is to help support with any worries you or your child might have about moving on to a new setting.

We understand that the main body of the college may be too overwhelming for some of our students, despite the SEN focus and experience of the college staff, and we work closely with the YC Hertfordshire PA/0-25 team, to ensure more suitable placements are identified.

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/