

# Devon Hospitals Short Stay School SEND Information Report

## How we cater for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

### About our school and what we do

We are classed as a Pupil Referral Unit and cater for the needs of all pupils from Foundation Stage to age 16. In some cases we also cater for pupils with special needs, who are still in education, up to the age of 25. We have two sites - one at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, and one at the North Devon District Hospital; both offer the same type and level of support for pupils with special needs. When pupils are admitted to hospital, we talk to parents, main school settings, the medical team and other agencies who might be involved, so that we can obtain as much information as possible about the young person; this helps us to plan appropriate tasks and use relevant resources. We are able to meet the following needs:

- Communication and interaction - for example difficulties with speech or understanding spoken language; social communication difficulties.
- Cognition and learning -for example, difficulties in remembering what's been learned or slow progress in picking up new skills.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties - for example, difficulties interacting with other pupils, disruptive behaviour or low self-esteem.
- Sensory and/or physical needs - for example, difficulties with handwriting; the need for tactile experiences.

The SENCo is the Head teacher, Julia Allen, who is full time and based mainly at the Royal Devon and Exeter (Wonford) site. She holds the National Qualification for SEN Coordination. Elaine McIntosh manages the day to day running of special needs at the North Devon District Hospital. At RDE pupils may be taught by more than one member of the team although at North Devon it will usually be Elaine McIntosh.

- **How do we identify pupils with special educational needs?**

The majority of our pupils come to us with their special needs already identified and we always use advice and information from parents and main schools so that we can continue to use strategies and approaches that are appropriate to individuals. Sometimes we will carry out some of our own assessments, such as Thrive or phonic checks, where we think that a specific special need may be apparent. We will always discuss any concerns or observations with parents/carers and communicate this to the pupil's main school.



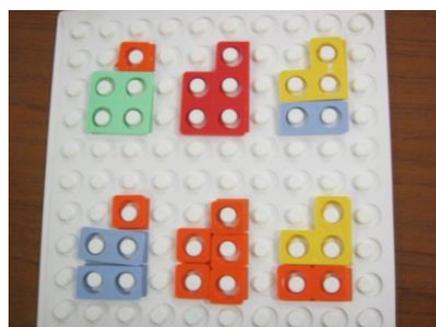
- **What is our approach when teaching pupils with special educational needs?**

Wherever possible, we provide a personalised approach for all pupils using specific and sometimes specialist resources to achieve this. These may include specific intervention programmes such as Toe by Toe for reading or we may use specialist resources such as switches and sensory mats. We offer a broad curriculum which aims to include all pupils while covering expectations within P-Levels, the National Curriculum and specialist programmes of learning e.g. sensory. Teaching may take place in the classroom or at the bedside; we are very used to moving beds and medical equipment so that all pupils can be involved. All classrooms have wheelchair access and our sensory room is particularly useful when supporting pupils with sensory and complex needs. Physical activities and those designed to support emotional and mental health needs are also provided; we have two trained Thrive practitioners on our staff although we follow the guidance of the medical team when providing for pupils with eating disorders. Planning and additional information from main schools is usually used as this guarantees continuity of provision; where this is not available we use our own observations and assessments. Teaching is usually 1:1 although we provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to benefit from social experiences as appropriate to individuals. Our safeguarding policy is strictly adhered to and we are in the fortunate position of being able to access the direct support of the hospital team when dealing with medical or mental health issues.



- **What equipment and facilities are available to support children and young people with special educational needs?**

We have an extensive range of equipment to support children and young people with special educational needs for example switches, games for the visually impaired, I-Pad Apps and dyslexia friendly reading materials. We also use other schools or agencies to secure additional resources needed on a temporary basis; this is particularly important as we do not receive any additional funding, such as special needs funding or Pupil Premium, to help us cater for specific or complex needs. The classrooms on both sites are fully wheelchair and bed accessible and set up to support pupils with sensory difficulties.



- **How are our staff trained?**

We recognise that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs and have a responsibility to provide for them. However, within our staff team we have specific experience in supporting pupils with:

- Autism
- Challenging behaviour
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia (maths)
- Profound, complex needs
- Self- esteem difficulties

In addition, staff regularly take part in whole school and individual training in order to be in a position to secure appropriate, high quality teaching; this is regularly monitored. Recent training has involved making effective use of Devon's Graduated Approach to SEND, improving our understanding of autism, using Widgit to aid communication and supporting pupils with mental health difficulties. In addition, linking with other mainstream and special schools ensures that we keep abreast of current and excellent practice while communication with other agencies enables us to access specialist resources and advice as relevant e.g. support for visually impaired pupils. The head teacher is a member of the Special Heads Association Devon (SHAD) and benefits from regular meetings, discussion and networking opportunities through this forum. The SENCo attends regular local meetings with Devon educational advisors and other schools and current information and updates are regularly shared at weekly staff meetings. We are a member of the National Association for Special Educational Needs and also use their magazines and journals to keep us up to date.



- **How are pupils, parents and carers involved?**

We feel that it is really important to talk with pupils and parents and welcome their participation in any plans and decisions that are made. When meeting a pupil and their parent(s)/carer(s) for the first time, or when catching up after a period of time, we like to have an informal chat to find out as much as we can. After that, we talk with parents about planned support and interventions and feedback on progress and achievements at the end of each day. In addition, parents/carers receive a more 'formal' report if the pupil has been with us for a week or more. This information is also communicated to the pupil's main school and to other agencies e.g. speech therapy as appropriate. Regular questionnaires encourage pupils, parents and carers to feedback on the quality of provision and to make

suggestions for improvements. We really value this. The notice board outside the classroom is used to let parents and carers know about local support groups and local events and we are always happy to help parents/carers in pointing them in the right direction for additional advice.

- **Who else do we work with?**

Being a hospital school, we work very closely with the medical team. When a pupil is admitted to hospital, we talk with doctors and nurses in order to gain any additional information that may support us in carrying out our work. Some pupils may not be well enough for school to begin with or may have particular dietary needs; it is really important that we know this. Sometimes our observations from working with pupils are useful to the medical team and this information is communicated to them.

We also routinely liaise with pupils' main schools and other agencies involved in their education, health or care. When appropriate, we may seek advice from advisory services and outside agencies such as the educational psychologist in order to gain a better understanding of pupils' needs. In the last year we have received support from the Educational Psychology Service and CAMHS; we also have benefitted from visiting local Special Schools.



- **How do we know that our support is effective?**

We regularly look at our planning, marking and recording and hold formal monitoring meetings at least twice a term. We also discuss the needs of individual pupils on a daily basis. Observations of teaching are also carried out by the head teacher and regular focussed observations of each other also take place. That way, if staff needs are identified, they can be discussed and modified or else programmed into our School Development Plan either at individual teacher or whole staff level. In addition all members of staff have an identified link with mainstream and special schools; this adds an additional element of training and moderation. We record progress on a daily basis; this is measured against specific targets with achievement and next steps being identified. This is communicated to pupils, parents and the main school either through discussion or, in the case of the main school, by telephone, e mail or, sometimes, through a visit.



- **Who can you contact for additional information?**

We are able to point you in the right direction of services and information that may be useful. Please contact the Head teacher, Julia Allen but if, in the case of the North Devon District Hospital, this is not practicable, then Elaine McIntosh can be contacted. Devon's Local Offer web page explains the different types of support that are available for pupils with special needs and disabilities; this can be found on our website or by following this link

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>

Our *Accessibility Plan* is also available on our website and compliments this Information Report and our main SEND policy.

- **What should you do if you have a complaint?**

We have had very few complaints historically but we are always open to positive and negative comments – usually negative issues can be readily resolved by talking to the teacher concerned, but occasionally parents/carers may feel the need to talk to the Head teacher.

Parents and carers can contact the Head teacher, Julia Allen using the telephone number or e-mail details below. If, in the case of the North Devon District Hospital, this is not practicable, then Elaine McIntosh should be contacted. Our Complaints policy explains the different stages that complaints go through; this can be obtained from us directly and can also be found on our website [www.devonhospitalschool.org.uk](http://www.devonhospitalschool.org.uk)

**If you would like to contact us**

**Telephone:**

01392 402675 (Exeter) or 01271 311878 (North Devon)

**Website:**

Devon Hospitals Short Stay School: [www.devonhospitalschool.org.uk](http://www.devonhospitalschool.org.uk)

**E mail:**

[rdehospital.school@devon.gov.uk](mailto:rdehospital.school@devon.gov.uk) or [ndhospital.school@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ndhospital.school@devon.gov.uk)

