



Benton Dene School

The policy was ratified on
And will be reviewed in
Signed by

A. E. Williams

Head Teacher

Signed by

C Jack.

Chair of Governors



Benton Dene School is a 'Good' special school (Ofsted 2017). This means that the quality of the teaching and learning and the outcomes for our pupils are recognised to be so nationally. As a 'good' school, we share and support inclusive practice with other schools in the area. We work proactively with Higher Education providers to support Initial Teacher Education and the training of educational support staff and health professionals.

The schools' commissioned Language and Communication Team supports pupils in schools across the whole of North Tyneside and the school also has responsibility for Dene Communication Centre a specialist pre-school provision for children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs for children across North Tyneside.

Benton Dene School is a primary school for pupils experiencing complex moderate learning difficulties or autism aged three to eleven years. Most pupils will have additional educational needs in areas such as the development of learning, communication, speech and language, concentration, emotional, behavioural and social skills, personal skills, motor skills or sensory difficulties. The school has specific provision to meet the educational needs of pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) who may or may not have additional learning difficulties. Pupils with ASC are usually about 55% of our pupils.

The school has 8 assessment places for pupils of nursery age.

We have a multi-disciplinary approach to the education of our pupils involving Educational Psychologists, teachers of the deaf and visually impaired, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Paediatrician and Psychiatrist, Public Health Nurses, Play Therapist, Social Workers and Education Welfare Officer.

Working together to meet individual needs

Situated in Longbenton, the school shares the inclusive Benton Dene Schools building with Benton Dene Primary School. This is an innovative educational setting where the two schools and pupils from each school work alongside one another throughout the building and the day. There are examples of joint staffing and shared resourcing.

Benton Dene Schools work in partnership within the building and aim to develop exemplary inclusive educational practice whilst meeting the needs of both pupil populations

We are part of the North Tyneside Learning Trust and work closely with other schools and partners to enhance the educational experiences of our children.

Facilities in the school include specialist classrooms, specialist teaching spaces for Art and Design, Music and Food Technology, two ICT suites – one interactive (Imagine), a Gym and large sports hall and two dining areas, Sensory Integration studio, Speech and Language Therapy rooms, Learning Partnerships and Play Therapy rooms, medical rooms and a Community room.

There is an Out of School Club providing childcare for parents of both schools.

Outdoors, there are a number of attractive play and teaching areas, two multi use games areas (MUGA) and a large grassed area that includes a growing area and allotment (Cultivate) and pond and wildlife area (Explore).

Admissions to Benton Dene School

Pupils are usually admitted to Benton Dene School following a full assessment and having been given an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). These documents will give information about the child's needs and form a basis for our work in school. Occasionally, a child may be admitted to Benton Dene School as part of the assessment procedures and an EHC Plan is given later. Admissions can take place in any school year and at any time of the year. However, we try to work around school holidays.

Nursery aged pupils will be admitted following consideration at the Local Authority LEAPS (Local Early Action Plus Support) panel. Pupils will be on the 'roll' of the school but may not continue into Reception class if their additional educational needs identified during assessment suggest a different educational setting.

Before admission, all parents have the opportunity to have an informal visit to the school when they will have time to speak to the Headteacher and classroom staff, visit the classrooms and view resources and facilities. Parents may wish to bring along their child to this visit or may wish to come back to school at another time. More than one visit can be arranged if parents so wish. There is a comprehensive transition programme agreed between home and parents.

Once a parent confirms with the Local Authority that they would like a place at Benton Dene School, an admission date is offered and once agreed, the place is confirmed in writing. Placements at Benton Dene School are full time and if appropriate, transport is arranged.

Nursery places are part time, with four places each morning and four places each afternoon.

THE SCHOOL DAY

8.40 am	Transport arrives
8.45 am	Children make their way to classrooms
8.55 am	Registration
9.00 am	Morning Session: Teaching and learning
11.30 am – 12.30 pm	Lunch Time one hour for all children
12.30 pm - 3.10 pm	Afternoon Session: Teaching and Learning

Whole School and Good News assemblies are held throughout the week

Pupil Organisation

In the school, pupils are taught in four zones - Yellow, Green, Red or Blue:

Yellow Zone	Foundation Stage - Nursery and Reception
Green Zone	Key Stage 1 - Year 1 and 2
Red Zone	Lower Key Stage 2 – Year 3 and 4
Blue Zone	Upper Key Stage 2 – Year 5 and 6

Our pupils with **Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)** may be placed in any class as they progress in school. The class a pupil is placed in takes account of their own individual learning needs. All classes are equipped to meet the needs of pupils with ASC and specialist approaches are used in all classes.

Class sizes will vary according to the needs of the pupils in them and may change within the school year. A class can have between five and twelve pupils. Each class is staffed by a teacher and a number of support staff appropriate to the needs of the pupils in the class. Whilst some classes may cover more than one year group we are always careful to ensure that our pupils experience progression and opportunities to develop maturity appropriate to their age.

The Curriculum

Underpinning the curriculum at Benton Dene School is the recognition of the needs of pupils through Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The curriculum offered is broad and balanced and has at its core the Primary Curriculum. However, we equally recognise and foster the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. The development of social interaction and personal skills runs as a thread through all teaching and learning.

We believe that children learn more when they are motivated and interested. Throughout school, we use play and provide opportunities for children to participate in first hand experiences to support their learning. We wish to provide an environment where children can:

- explore to make sense of the world
- practise and develop ideas and skills
- develop an awareness of the need for rules
- develop social and interaction skills
- learn from their mistakes, therefore, take bigger risks
- develop confidence and independence skills

Emphases in the curriculum aim to develop:

- pupil involvement in learning
- the development of language and communication
- concrete learning experiences
- the development of creativity and thinking skills
- a positive attitude to learning whilst becoming active members of society.

Steps are taken to ensure progression and continuity as pupils move through the school. Content and teaching styles are 'age appropriate' especially for older pupils who may still be at the earlier stages of learning.

All our pupils follow either the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum or full range of National Curriculum subjects through our specifically designed primary curriculum. The curriculum allows for flexibility and creativity to capture learning that is both relevant and motivating for our pupils. The flexibility allows teachers to place greater emphasis on aspects of learning most relevant to their class. The use of specialist teaching spaces and outdoor learning to promote progress and achievement are key features of our approach to teaching and learning.

All areas of the curriculum will be modified to allow greater access and increased relevance for our pupils. Work may be drawn from earlier years or Key Stage to

ensure that learning is consolidated and that we are building on prior knowledge. Pupils may work through themed work or subject based lessons.

Steps are taken to ensure progression and continuity as pupils move through the school.

English and **Mathematics** are given high priority in both planning and resourcing which reflects the importance attached to these crucial areas. All pupils have Individual Programmes for these areas that allow them frequent opportunities to learn and experience success.

The teaching of phonics and reading are key and all staff are trained in teaching phonics through the Read, Write, Inc approach. This is used alongside other teaching to promote rapid learning in this area.

Whilst we recognise the importance of reading for all children, pupils at Benton Dene School have intensive support in developing their communication skills and writing.

The content and objectives of teaching are appropriate to the pupils' levels of achievement and are challenging and stimulating. The use of specialist teaching approaches and, for some, additional intensive support ensures progress for our pupils.

We aim through our teaching of **English** to enable pupils to be able to:

- effectively express themselves and their needs and to be able to listen to others
- develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude to reading
- develop the skills required to become readers
- communicate in writing with confidence and enjoyment for a variety of purposes and audiences
- be aware of the conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- develop handwriting skills
- be able to retrieve information from written material

Through **Mathematics** our pupils will:

- develop confidence in their ability to understand number and apply that knowledge to new situations
- consolidate and practise the skills and routines associated with mathematics in money, time, weight and measures
- begin to develop skills in reasoning, thinking and talking about their work
- use number increasingly in everyday practical situations

Science helps our pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them. It is a very practical subject and we aim to encourage the development of appropriate safe, practical and investigative skills. Positive attitudes to working co-operatively with others are learned through working as part of a team. All pupils are encouraged to record their findings using a variety of methods. Health Education forms an important part of our curriculum.

Design Technology has relevance for our pupils in developing problem solving, choice making and evaluative skills. Pupils will take part in activities that enable them to explore, investigate, invent, experiment and be independent. The development of fine motor skills is encouraged at all times through appropriate

activities and experiences. Pupils develop an awareness of the environment and a growing awareness and understanding of the wider community including the world of business.

Computing - Benton Dene School is well resourced with computers in all classrooms as well as ICT suites. There is access for all pupils to multi-media systems. Our exemplar ICT suite will allow interactive learning through multi-media environments.

Software supports all areas of the curriculum and is constantly updated and extended. Pupils have opportunities to develop skills in using a range of peripherals such as scanners and digital and video cameras.

Interactive whiteboards are placed in all classrooms.

ICT is a tool for learning and pupils develop ICT skills through specific lessons and the planned integration of ICT within the curriculum. Pupils will be encouraged to learn the skills required to become independent learners, to work collaboratively with others and to learn the relevant terminology and language associated with the use of computers.

Through links with the community and industry, pupils will develop an understanding of the role of ICT in the world outside.

E- Safety is taught and rigorously monitored to ensure that our pupils work in this area is safe with pupils developing the knowledge to keep themselves safe.

As part of **History and Geography** teaching, pupils make visits to a range of local places of interest, historical sites, museums and conservation areas. We aim to help our pupils develop an understanding of the past and to be able to make comparisons between the past and the present.

Through Geography, pupils will investigate the local area and close surroundings. This will lead to skills in comparing our locality with others in the world.

Music teaching at Benton Dene School aims to help every child develop their own awareness and understanding of music from a variety of traditions, styles, cultures and places. We also support pupils in expressing ideas, thoughts, enjoyment and feelings through music. Performing and taking part in musical activities are key elements of the teaching.

Through **Art and Design**, pupils should develop a sense of imagination to enrich thinking and practical work. They will also develop skills in observing and recording what they see and experience and become aware of the made and natural environment. Pupils will use a range of materials and discover how they can be used creatively and will acquire a set of skills. The work of artists and craftsmen past and present will be studied.

This aspect of the curriculum has been enhanced through work within Creative Partnerships and with external practitioners. In 2012 we were awarded the Artsmark Gold for our work in the Arts and Creativity.

Physical Education is an important part of the curriculum with all pupils swimming during two terms each year. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in

gymnastics, dance, team games, athletics, trampolining and rebound therapy and outdoor activities. PE helps our pupils who may experience motor or co-ordination difficulties to develop their skills in a structured, safe and supportive environment. Benton Dene School employs an Occupational Therapist on the staff for two days each week.

PE is also a tool for learning listening and concentration, social and co-operative working.

As pupils move through school they have opportunities to compete against pupils from other schools in gymnastics, swimming, football and athletics. The school teams have been very successful in these competitions with pupils winning trophies and medals.

All pupils gain swimming awards throughout their time at school.

Over the last year, pupils had an opportunity to learn football skills with the Newcastle United community programme, judo, dance and multi skills through extended school activities.

Our Year 5 and 6 pupils experience a residential outdoor activity at Robinwood in Alston each year. Here they have opportunities to take part in adventurous activities including climbing, orienteering and canoeing.

Benton Dene School uses the TOPS sports programme. The school grounds give opportunities for cricket and rounders, short tennis and a trim-trak provides opportunities for adventurous play.

Breaktimes are used to encourage our pupils to be active and build stamina. All children have daily fitness sessions when they are encouraged to build stamina and challenge themselves to extend skills. Some older pupils use Nintendo Wii to motivate them in fitness activities and social interaction.

The school is proud to hold the Activemark for its work in this area.

Religious Education is taught throughout school. We aim to allow pupils to explore the beliefs and values of Christianity and other faiths and apply these beliefs to moral issues and individual lifestyles. Throughout the whole of the teaching, we aim to help our pupils to understand and value the beliefs of others.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education in school. If you wish to do so, please put your request in writing to the Headteacher.

Relationships and Sex Education will be delivered through topics, planned aspects of Science, pastoral time, through occasional and planned visits from the school nurse, parents or other visitors. Sex Education will be taught within a values framework which models and encourages a respect for self and others, responsibility for our own actions, honesty with self and others, an acknowledgement of diversity regarding religion and culture and a responsibility for family, friends, school and wider community.

The school is committed to working with parents. Under the Education Act 1993, a pupil can be withdrawn by parents, from the part of sex education which is outside the compulsory elements in the Science National Curriculum. Parents wanting to exercise this right are invited to contact the Headteacher who will discuss the content of the teaching. If parents then want to withdraw, the request should be in writing. There will be no more teaching until such time as a written request is received from parents. Programme content will be shared with parents and any materials requested by parents for use at home will be supplied if possible.

The **teaching methods** used at Benton Dene School are varied and designed to meet the needs of individual pupils as well as whole groups. Pupils may be taught as individuals, as part of a small group or as part of the class.

At all times, pupils are encouraged to develop as confident, independent learners who are able to take some responsibility for their own learning. Teaching materials are modified or designed to assist our pupils in achieving this independent work. An example of this would be the use of symbols alongside words to assist pupils in independent reading and writing. For a number of our pupils, we have found that the use of Makaton signing alongside speech enables the learning of concepts much more quickly. The development of thinking and problem solving skills has an important place in the curriculum and special activities are used to help our pupils in this area.

We believe strongly that our pupils learn best through first hand and concrete experiences. Throughout the curriculum, practical tasks and environmental visits are used to support the learning in the classrooms and to support communication and language development. The capturing of learning through photography allows pupils to recognise and celebrate their own progress and learning.

For pupils with Autism, specific teaching methods and approaches such as TEACCH and PECS are used. The designated specialist teaching areas provide a small cloakroom and toilet area, a large and well equipped creative and play space and a 'work' space that provides a low arousal area where work stations and specially designated work areas support learning. There is also a withdrawal /calm room where sensory work can be carried out.

Structure and routine with higher staffing ratios achieve success for our pupils.

At Benton Dene School, we incorporate lunchtimes into the teaching day. For some children, staff provide specific programmes to encourage a wider diet or to develop appropriate independence and skills. There are two dining halls providing a range of experiences and friendship opportunities. Children are always supported at this important time of day by our skilled team of teaching assistants who design activities to extend the play opportunities for our children.

Behaviour

At Benton Dene School, we believe that good behaviour and good work are different sides of the same coin. Children and adults can only behave well towards others if they first feel good about themselves. We therefore provide a curriculum with lots of opportunities for success and the enhancement of self - esteem. The Golden Rules help us to teach children about the kind of behaviour we are looking for and to give the children a model to work towards.

Most children respond to praise and we believe strongly in rewarding positive behaviour and work. There are lots of reward systems operating in school - stickers, certificates, good work points etc. are all used. Children's achievements are shared with the whole school through assemblies and presentations. The achievements are based on the child's individual progress, which supports all pupils to be successful.

A strong part of our work at Benton Dene School is helping children to develop in this area. We do not expect every child to be able to behave in the same way and for children for whom this is a key additional need, we will have appropriate expectations that allow success and progress.

From time to time, individual children may need extra help to behave in the way we would like, we may need to give more frequent praise, reminders of good behaviour or need to describe these behaviours more clearly. If this approach does not bring about change then we may need to use sanctions to reinforce our requests. A behaviour plan would be written to support the child and to ensure that consistent approaches are used by all.

The loss of curriculum such as swimming will never be used as a sanction unless the behaviour is related directly to the activity e.g. a child may be asked to miss the first 5 minutes of swimming if their behaviour at the pool on a previous visit was not appropriate. Parents will be informed if this happens. We will never use curriculum work as a sanction unless it is to complete some missed work in a playtime.

For children who find the playground difficult, there are a range of options offered as alternatives and children can themselves request an alternative.

Parents are always welcome in school to discuss aspects of their child's behaviour either in school or at home and we will offer support for any strategies being used at home. We find that working together brings about the best results.

Bullying of any kind is not tolerated. We work with children through a range of approaches to help them understand about all kinds of bullying, to encourage our 'telling' ethos and to help them to know who can support them should they feel that they need it. Parents are encouraged to talk to school immediately should they have any concerns.

What do we mean by good behaviour?

At Benton Dene School, we believe that it is important to give children a positive vision for themselves and we will do this through helping them to understand themselves, and develop as people who are kind, honest, hard working, caring, good listeners and who act safely.

These behaviours will be encouraged, recognised and valued and we ask everyone (within personal capabilities) to keep the following **Golden Rules**.

The rules incorporate those promoted by Jenny Mosley's Quality Circle Time Golden Rules plus one of our own:

We are kind and helpful

We don't hurt anybody's feelings

We are gentle

We don't hurt others

We listen to people

We don't interrupt

We work hard

We don't waste time

We are honest

We don't cover up the truth

We look after property

We don't waste or damage things

We work, play and move around safely

We don't run, climb or shout

We ask everyone to do these things:

- **do the best that you can in your work and help others to do the same.**
- **take care of our school, the things that we use here and other people's things.**
- **work, play and move around safely and quietly.**
- **take care of other people and help them to feel happy here.**

For the children this means that:

- **we always try our best**
- **we love to look after our school**
- **we work safe and play safe**
- **we help other people to feel OK**

Learning Partnerships

The Learning Partnerships department includes our Play Therapist and Home/School Link Workers.

The team provide liaison and support time to other schools whilst also working closely with parents and carers of children at Benton Dene School. A fundamental part of their role is to work with other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, OT and the School Nurse to provide support for parents and carers in the home. They oversee and facilitate our parent support groups and the parent forum. They can also establish individual programmes to develop pupils at home.

The work of this department complements our aim **to work together to meet individual needs**. If you feel you have any issues you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher.

Play Therapy

Play therapy is a mode of therapy that helps children:

- to explore feelings
- to express themselves
- to make sense of their life experiences

Play Therapy is an area of work at Benton Dene School and we are pleased to be offering this different service to our children and their families.

Ms Rachael McCabe works as a Play Therapist on three days each week.

Her role includes working 1:1 with children using non-directive play therapy, using play therapeutically with small groups of children and raising awareness of issues

relating to children's emotional development and mental health with staff, other professionals and families.

Play Therapy is an effective intervention for many children including those affected by family breakdown, disability, domestic violence, abuse, loss or who have emotional and behavioural difficulties among their experiences. Children may be referred to Play Therapy by school staff or by their family.

If you would like to discuss Play Therapy and your child with Rachael McCabe, please contact her at school.

Intervention Programmes

Some members of the School's staff are non-class based. They work closely with class teams and the deputy headteacher to ensure that intervention work is targeted and effective in raising standards across school.

They are trained in First Class@number and Better Reading Partnerships and have also completed specific training in different areas of the curriculum/specialist programmes e.g. PECS, Rebound Therapy, Drawing and Talking Therapy.

They support class teams in carrying out assessment, planning and evaluating intervention work.

Uniform

We ask all pupils to wear school uniform as this helps them develop a sense of belonging to our school. The uniform is a navy blue sweatshirt with the school logo and a short sleeved polo shirt which is worn underneath. The colour of the polo shirt reflects the colour of the teaching zone. We ask for the children to wear something dark alongside these, for older pupils this is usually school skirt or trousers, younger pupils may manage jogger type trousers better. A PE uniform consisting of black shorts and white tee shirt is also needed. Outdoor footwear will be needed for some sports and we ask that children in Yellow and Green Zones have wellington boots in school for outdoor learning. School provides waterproof jackets and leggings. Footwear should be appropriate for a busy day in school and should be dark coloured.

We ask that children not wearing the official uniform wear uniform colours. Football tops are not to be worn in school at any time.

Jewellery

The only jewellery that should be worn in school is a watch. Pupils with pierced ears should only wear stud type earrings and on PE days they should wear no earrings to prevent possible injury. If a pupil comes to school wearing a lot of jewellery, they will be asked to remove it in school. It is hoped that parents will co-operate with this policy as it is for the general safety of all the children.

Attendance

Regular attendance is extremely important if our pupils are to benefit from the education offered at Benton Dene School and to make progress.

If your child is absent at any time, school should be notified of the reason for the absence. If we do not receive this information we will contact you to check on the reason for absence. You may make contact in writing or by telephone. The only reasons for authorised absence are illness and medical appointments. We strongly

discourage children taking holiday in school term time and will always record these as unauthorised absence. We work closely with our Education Welfare Officer in supporting good attendance.

Should you need to remove your child from school during the day for any reason, please notify school in advance to ensure that your child is in school at the required time. It is essential that you notify the reception desk when you leave, this is for security and safety reasons.

Parental Involvement

At Benton Dene School, we believe that parents are partners with us in helping our pupils to achieve the highest standards of learning. Parents are free to visit school at any time, all that we ask is that school is contacted first if you wish to speak to a particular member of staff so that arrangements can be made to ensure that they are available. Either the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher are also available.

Parents are especially welcome as helpers on environmental activities or in our classrooms. Listening to reading or working with small groups etc. This may be in your own child's classroom or another area of school. Please contact the DHT if you would like to work in school and she can arrange for the necessary paperwork to be put in place.

Each term, parents are invited into school to review the Individual Education Plan and to discuss the progress of their child. On these occasions, there are appointments and opportunities to see work and classroom practice demonstrated by class staff. The wider team of school support are also available on these evenings.

A very important aspect of our work with parents is **homework**. This may take a variety of forms – weekend diaries, sharing a book, listening to reading, playing games, spellings, number practice or work related to a class topic. The amount of homework set will vary with age and from class to class but all pupils will have homework. We hope that parents will support us by helping in the completion of homework or ensuring that it is carried out. Teachers are always willing to discuss homework with parents.

The Friends of Benton Dene Schools Association (FOBS) organises a number of successful social and fund-raising events throughout the year for families of both schools. They have provided the reading folders which all children in school use, library books, garden materials, swimming awards and other materials. The group also gives parents an opportunity to meet together informally and chat about any issues concerning them.

A number of parents are available to chat to any parents who are considering a place at Benton Dene School for their child. Please ask the Headteacher if you would like to chat to another parent at any time. All parents are welcome to any meetings.

Staffing

All staff at Benton Dene School take part in a wide range of training and personal development activities linked to our School Progress Plan and School Aims and Values. This training enhances their teaching skills and the curriculum on offer to our pupils and ensures that we are working to the highest levels of effectiveness and safety.

Over the last year staff have attended courses to extend knowledge in curriculum areas, especially the teaching of phonics through the Read Write Inc. approach and reading, early writing skills and physical skills related to writing, the use of specialist ICT approaches, curriculum leadership, target setting, developing outstanding teaching and numeracy. Staff have also attended a range of courses to raise awareness of working with pupils with ASC such as SCERTS and the use of social stories to support personal and emotional development.

The majority of staff have trained in the Team Teach approach to positive handling, the headteacher and other senior staff have updated Designated Child Protection Teacher training and all staff are trained in child protection policy and procedures. Some staff have trained with health colleagues to ensure that children with physical or health problems have their needs fully met.

In the last year we have also invested heavily in training staff in specialist numeracy and reading interventions. We now have 9 staff trained in either Better Reading Partnerships or FirstClass@Number.

All our staff development activities are designed to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress whilst at Benton Dene School.

Working together to meet individual needs

We are fortunate at Benton Dene School to have the support of a wide range of agencies and professionals who are able to work with Benton Dene School staff to the benefit of our pupils.

The Sensory Team work with pupils who have a visual impairment, providing equipment and advice for staff and parents. A Teacher of the Deaf, works in school each week to monitor the progress of pupils, oversee hearing aids, liaise with hospital services and to work with Benton Dene School staff to provide the best possible education for our pupils with hearing impairment.

The Educational Psychologist makes regular visits to school. She may attend Annual Reviews, assess and observe pupils, support specific programmes in School and work with school staff and parents.

Victoria Harper is our Educational Psychologist. If parents have any concerns about their child's progress they are able to discuss these with the Educational Psychologist.

Public Health Nurses support school. They are available to give advice to parents and school staff on a range of medical issues. The Nurses advise on health education issues and support First Aid work in school.

Occupational Therapy Colleagues work in school each Tuesday and Thursday and a team of occupational therapists provides occupational therapy input for our pupils. They may carry out assessments, monitor and set programmes, hold small group sessions or may work in classrooms.

Ms Ruth Colmer and Mrs Nicky Ramsay provide Speech and Language Therapy for our pupils. Pupils are assessed individually and a report and programme are produced to support work in school and at home. The Speech and Language Therapist works in the classrooms alongside staff as well as working individually with

pupils. She is available to discuss pupils with parents. A Speech and Language assistant **Ms Katherine Vincent** also works in school.

An **Orthoptist** visits school on two occasions each term to work with children under eight to assess vision and support pupils who are experiencing visual problems.

School is also able to call upon the expertise of the **Community Learning Disabilities Team** and the **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service** for advice and support for school or families.

The Governing Body Comprises

The Governing body meet on several occasions each year and have subcommittees for staffing, health and safety, curriculum and finance. Governors carry out a programme of visits within school to monitor and support the work going on. They manage the school budget and bring support and challenge to the headteacher and the work in school.

Governors monitor the work of the school and help to make key decisions on new developments and improvements in school.

Ms Christine Jack is the chair of Governors; if you wish to contact her on any matter, she may be contacted via school at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Obtaining Advice

Please contact the Headteacher who will be pleased to help in the areas of benefits etc. If she does not have the answer to your particular query, she will put you in touch with someone who has.

General Information from School

Information will be sent at regular intervals. The notices will be sent home with your child. Please **ask** him/her if there is anything from school. Most letters will be placed in the book bag so again, please check the bag regularly. Some notices will have a reply slip at the bottom for parents to sign - for example, permission slips, medicals, etc. so that we know that you have received them. Please help us by returning these promptly. All pupils have home/school books. Please make use of the book as it can be of valuable assistance to both teachers and parents and promote a greater understanding between home, school and very importantly your child.

We use Schoolcomms to contact parents by text message, please ensure that we have your current mobile phone number at all times.

Annual Reviews

All pupils have a review of progress annually and a full report is prepared at that time and sent to parents. Parents are invited to discuss the report with all concerned. Pupil records are available for inspection by parents by prior arrangement.

Transport

Transport to school is provided for most of our pupils. Most children travel by minibus or taxi with escort and seatbelts or booster seats. Your co-operation in seeing that your child is at the allocated place at the correct time is much appreciated. Escorts are not able to leave the vehicle so you should be there to hand

over and collect your child from the roadside. Changes of address may require transport changes so please inform school immediately.

Any parent wishing to discuss any aspects of the transport should in the first instance contact the Headteacher. The contact person at school transport is Ms Tracy Bradbury on 0191 643 8726

Meals

All pupils stay in school for their lunch and staff eat with the children. Lunchtime is a very important part of the day with much social development taking place.

All meals are prepared and cooked in our own kitchen. There is always a variety of food available and special diets can be catered for. Pupils may bring packed lunch if they wish to do so.

Payment is online at www.joinos.com (not Nursery). If your child is entitled to free meals, please ensure that the form is completed promptly to prevent having to pay for some meals.

Medicines in School

Please notify school of any medication your child may be taking. Any medicines that need to be administered in school should be in the original chemist's container clearly marked with your child's name and the dosage to be given. If this is not given we will be unable to give the medication. Inhalers for asthma will be kept in the medical room for younger children with the children being encouraged to be responsible for their own medication as soon as possible. For children who may need emergency treatment for allergies, epilepsy etc. a meeting will be held with the school nurse and parents to agree the protocol for treatment and handling of the medication in school.

Accidents or Illness in School

School will make every effort to contact parents as soon as possible in the event of an accident or illness. For this reason, it is essential that we have up to date information of address and telephone contacts. Please make every effort to give school, contact details. School is unable to return children home in the event of illness so it is important that parents and carers have a plan for such an event. If a child has to attend the hospital following an accident, it will be essential for parents to meet the school staff there.

Mobile telephones

Pupils should not bring phones to school at any time. School policy asks parents and visitors to switch off phones when in school.

Charging Policy

Parents will be asked to make a **voluntary** contribution towards the cost of an educational visit. These visits are essential for our pupils to make full use of the environment as a source of learning and will be funded and always take place even if the contributions do not meet the cost.

In order to enable all our pupils to have the opportunity to swim in each year throughout school we ask parents for a minimum contribution of £10.00 per term. Swimming is only an essential part of the PE curriculum for a small number of pupils in Key stage 2. We believe that swimming is very important for our pupils and

following discussion with parents believe that they too value this opportunity for their child. Please forward a contribution at the beginning of term.

Outings of a more social nature such as pantomimes, full day outing etc. will lead to a request for a contribution that reflects the actual cost of the outing. If the contributions fall well below the cost, the activity may not take place or pupils may not be able to take part. Residential experiences will be part funded.

Data Protection

The use of the computers in schools for administrative purposes is growing rapidly, it is essential that the school holds a current registration under the Data Protection Act 1984. The principles of Data Protection are available from school. We endeavour at all times to provide appropriate security measures against unauthorised access to, or alternation, disclosure or destruction of personal data.

In accordance with LA policy, parents have the right of access to their child's records upon written request to the Headteacher.

Complaints

Under section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988, a complaints procedure has been established by the Education Authority to consider parental complaints in connection with the implementation and delivery of the provisions of the National Curriculum etc. A copy of the adopted procedure may be inspected at school or at the Education Offices in North Shields, on request.

Warning

The information contained in this publication is correct at the time of printing and relates to the current school year. Changes may be made affecting the relevant arrangements of certain matters before the start of, or during the school year beginning September 2013 or in respect of future school years, arising for example, from variations in Education Committee policy or government legislation for education.

School will endeavour to send to parents any changes to the information at the appropriate time. If you should wish to discuss any part of this prospectus, or require further information, please contact school.

