

WESTHAVEN SCHOOL
Business & Enterprise College

*All policies are developed to be compliant with and supportive of the ethos and values of
Westhaven School*

September 2019

Special Needs Policy

RATIONALE

This policy demonstrates how the staff and governors of Westhaven School intend to provide for the special needs of pupils admitted to the school. It promotes an outstanding example for the identification of, and provision for pupils with special needs.

THE VISION

Westhaven School provides challenging and exciting learning opportunities which enhance and support personalised learning and focus upon positive emotional health and well being for every child.

As a special school we understand that the driving forces of the modern economy are innovation, competition, skills and enterprise. We provide our pupils therefore with rich and creative learning experiences, which enhance and support independence and raise aspirations for life long learning, thus creating healthy, happy, confident individuals, resilient and able to flourish in a competitive and challenging world.

We have high expectations of our pupils and are proud of our excellent reputation. By working in collaboration with parents/carers and other wider community partners we ensure that together we can prepare our pupils appropriately with the knowledge, skills, aptitudes and understanding required for a successful life as a citizen in the 21st Century.

AIMS

The governors and staff of Westhaven School are committed to meeting the following outcomes for all pupils in the school namely:

- Being Healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution
- Economic well being

We have therefore agreed the following aims, which encapsulate our approach to meeting the needs of all pupils.

1. To enable each pupil to reach their highest possible achievements in all areas, i.e. intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually.
2. To provide each pupil with a secure, caring and supportive environment where, within a structured framework, his or her needs will be met in an ethos conducive to learning.

3. To recognise each pupil's achievement whatever their magnitude.
4. To enable each pupil to develop effective and appropriate communication skills.
5. To enhance each pupil's self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation.
6. To set personal targets as well as subject targets.
7. To foster and encourage each child's self-motivation, independence and sense of responsibility.
8. To provide each pupil with relevant, varied and stimulating experiences, fostering interests in a variety of cultures, arts and literature.
9. To encourage a problem solving approach to learning, in order to promote the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of what has been learned.
10. To assist with each pupil's social development and to encourage the acquisition of life skills in preparation for adult life in the community.
11. To encourage respect for others and their property.
12. To encourage an appreciation of the environment and their part in improving and maintaining it particularly in relation to sustainability.
13. To fulfil the legal requirements of the National Curriculum and allow access to a wider personalised curriculum appropriate to the needs of each pupil.
14. To fulfil North Somerset and Westhaven policies, including those focussing on entitlement and equal opportunities.

These aims have been generated and agreed by the staff and governors of Westhaven and will be reviewed annually.

RANGE OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Westhaven School offers educational provision to pupils from within the boundaries of North Somerset. Since its inception in 1960 the school has offered a broad and balanced curriculum to pupils who, because of their intrinsic learning difficulties and peripheral difficulties have been unable to have their needs met in mainstream schools.

The school recognises there are a small number of pupils for whom the mainstream sector is not, for a variety of reasons, the appropriate provision. Our ideal aim is for those pupils who would benefit to access mainstream education. However, for some pupils this is not possible and we therefore provide an academic, social, physical and spiritual curriculum, which takes account of their general and specific needs. Westhaven School is a section of, and fulfils a specific role, in the wide continuum of North Somerset's educational provision.

Identified needs fall into a number of categories, which to a considerable extent overlap each other. All Westhaven pupils experience a range of barriers to learning, which may also be inter-related with, and exacerbated, by social and cultural deficit. Many of our pupils' exhibit global or moderate learning difficulties, whilst others may have average intellectual abilities which are complicated by peripheral issues that may present as mild, school phobia, emotional, social communication and interpersonal difficulties.

An essential feature in the education of pupils with learning difficulties is that of social competence. Although many factors are taken into account in the descriptions of their needs, pupils who have moderate learning difficulties have, by definition, difficulties also in learning how to interact with others on an interpersonal basis, difficulties in personal organisation and the transference of experience skills. Such aspects therefore require explicit teaching throughout the school and are especially important in KS4, where great emphasis is placed on personal competence and self-confidence.

FACILITIES FOR PUPILS

Westhaven School has developed a wide range of resources and facilities designed specifically towards meeting the needs of all pupils during the course of their education and, in particular, towards creating a caring and supportive ethos in which pupils can feel secure and more self-assured.

The staff possess a wealth of qualifications, experience and expertise in teaching pupils with special educational needs and are able to offer the stability and continuity of relationships that the pupils need. They are able to cover all of the academic and cognitive aspects of the National Curriculum and are also especially skilled in meeting the emotional and social needs of the pupils.

The school is also able to provide a more favourable staff/pupil ratio than in mainstream, which means that pupils are able to be taught in smaller groups, allowing for greater attention to individual needs and a closer contact between staff and pupil. In addition, teaching and learning support assistants not only assist teachers in their day-to-day teaching, but also further help to provide a nurturing environment through support within the classroom.

The school itself possesses a good range of practical facilities, enabling all pupils to gain full access to the curriculum. There is a purpose built Science laboratory, together with a well-equipped Food Technology and Design and Technology room. There are also specialist rooms for ICT and art, plus a well-stocked library. In addition, there is a teaching block specifically for Years 10 and 11, with an integral careers library. A semi-commercial glasshouse with adjoining teaching block was completed in November 2008 and offers learning opportunities in Horticulture, which are the best in the LA. A specialist life skills teaching area has also been in use since 2012.

To support the delivery of the curriculum, there are a wide range of audio-visual aids and all pupils have full access to information communication technology.

The school is situated in an attractive area, surrounded by woodland, garden and natural areas within its boundaries that are used for scientific and environmental studies. Part of this area also contains an adventure playground, which provides recreational facilities in addition to the main playground.

The school also possesses 2 minibuses and a school car, which enable pupils to take part in a wide range of educational visits beyond the school boundaries.

THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The Governors enjoy overall responsibility for the allocation of resources throughout the school. The detailed decisions are made through the Headteacher and staff. Westhaven pupils have access to a wide range of resources that have been made available through various identified needs. Decisions are made through consultation with all or some of the staff and are directly influenced by the needs of the curriculum. Other areas, such as Health and Safety and Asset Management, also make demands and therefore influence the allocation of resources. The School Development Plan is monitored regularly by the Full Governing Body and reviewed annually and through this the Governors assess whether resources are being used appropriately.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Pupils attending Westhaven School have already been identified, prior to admission, as presenting special educational needs. They have undergone a multi-disciplinary assessment as a result of which an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) has been issued in accordance with the 'Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs'.

The identified needs of and provision for pupils are detailed on their EHCPs. The role of Westhaven School then is to interpret the findings of the EHCP, and later review it in such as ways as to ensure delivery to pupils of the identified provision required to meet their individual needs. This provision will be achieved mainly, but not exclusively, from within the legal requirement to deliver the National and wider Curriculum.

The needs of pupils do not remain static. They change as a result of educational input and sometimes because of issues in familial or personal circumstances. Westhaven School aims to engage each pupil, taking into account his or her attainments and the programmes by which the curriculum is delivered, in a constant evaluation cycle, which allows educationally appropriate and time related targets to be set. Pupil's immediate needs are met and new objectives identified as a result of integral evaluation built into the planning process.

The Statement of Educational Need is reviewed on an annual basis at each Annual Review meeting with parents and other professionals. This is carried out in accordance with the 'Code of Practice' Chapter 6, and within a procedure recommended by the Local Education Authority.

PUPILS' ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum followed at Westhaven School is based upon the dictates of the National Curriculum, together with areas that are essential, as identified in their Statement of Educational Need. The National Curriculum is followed in breadth rather than in depth and schemes of work are modified to meet pupils' needs. The curriculum – academic, social, moral and spiritual – aims to develop the full potential of all facets of the pupil and recognises and celebrates the individual's worth and contribution to the school community. All pupils are encouraged to participate in all activities – academic, social and physical. A structured planning procedure ensures a balanced and broadly based curriculum is achieved. Time management, differentiation, evaluation, progress and continuity are built into the planning programme.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

At Westhaven it is recognised that teacher assessment lies at the heart of the learning process. It is essential that new learning is matched to what a pupil already knows and can do. The assessment process enables the teacher to assist the pupil as a learner by reflecting on what has already been learned, helps the teacher in the role of guide and evaluator and provides information for third parties. The procedures are based upon clear curricular intentions.

Class organisation and teaching strategies employed reflect the need to explain any activity clearly to pupils in language they can understand. At the planning stage teachers identify the knowledge, concepts, values, skills and processes that may be involved. Reference to National Curriculum programmes of study are identified and recorded on planning documents, along with the Westhaven Learning Ladders.

Pupils are provided with a range of contexts in which to operate, identifying their own particular needs. The assessment strategies used by teachers reflect the nature of the activity the pupils are engaged in and are chosen for their suitability for the purpose of assessment. Differentiation of assessment styles reflect the cognitive processes involved in learning, such as problem solving, recollecting, interpreting and imagining. Ongoing day-to-day assessment takes account of unanticipated, as well as planned outcomes.

A range of evidence is gathered by teachers for assessment by observation, listening, asking questions, setting tasks and reviewing the product outcomes of pupils' work. This may include:

- a) Written - rough notes, reports, poems, drafts, computer print-out sheets
- b) Graphic - diagrams, drawings, charts, photographs, videos
- c) Three dimensional - models, sculptors, constructions
- d) Oral - spontaneous planned discussions
- e) Physical - co-ordination, manipulative skills, spatial awareness
- f) Formal Testing - students undertake formal testing in main subjects at set times of the year. This includes a spelling and reading test.

The wide range of evidence provides the opportunity for pupils to reveal the full extent of their achievements.

Assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses and focuses on what pupils have shown they can do and how well they have done it. The skills, concepts, knowledge and attitudes they have formed are clearly identified.

Pupils are encouraged to share their success with a wider audience, e.g. through school assemblies. Diagnosis of difficulties regarding particular areas of the curriculum are solved by identifying strategies to rectify the difficulties and lead to improvements.

Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the reviewing of their work through selection of work for their personal profiles.

Pupils take National Curriculum classroom tasks and tests at the appropriate Key Stage. Testing of reading and spelling is carried out several times throughout the year.

Teachers record continuously the progress and achievement of individual pupils. This is done via:

- 1. Personal Files
 - Individual pupil records and statements
 - Copies of pupil reviews and reports
 - Health and similar records
- 2. Pupil Reports
 - Describe the pupil's course of study
 - Highlight strengths and weaknesses
 - Identifies progress and achievement, including National Curriculum levels where appropriate
 - Set targets and give advice for future learning.
 - Names the teachers with whom the report will be discussed
- 3. Records of Achievement
 - Provides a summary of progress and achievement within the curriculum
 - Describes other significant achievements
 - Includes evidence valued by the pupils
- 4. External Accreditation
 - At KS3/KS4 pupils are entered for appropriate qualifications.

BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMME

Westhaven has a strong behaviour programme based on an agreed set of school expectations, which are displayed prominently in every classroom. Pupils will be encouraged to conform to these expectations. Where necessary pupils will be seen by other teachers, Deputy Headteacher and the Head and include, at an early stage, the involvement of their parents. The system is supported by a Reward System of Merit and Class Dojo points that recognises good behaviour, effort, work and attendance. This continuity of expectations and rewards enables pupils to respond positively by developing an understanding of the equitable manner in which expectations are applied.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Complaints Policy details are the formal methods available to express dissatisfaction with Westhaven School. For full details please consult the Complaints Policy.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In line with Westhaven School's commitment to investing in people, staff development forms an integral part of the overall planning process, and the identification of training and development needs arise out of a twofold process, that of the School Development Plan and that of the Performance Management System. The School Development Plan outlines targets which are intended to be met during the year and for which staff training may be required. At the same time individual members of staff will have identified their own development needs through the process of Performance Management. Staff development plans are then constructed based on these areas of need, linking personal development with the priorities that have been targeted by the school for that year.

Staff development is available to all members of staff and may take the form of in-house training, as well as courses held in other institutions. Many appropriate courses are provided by the LA in collaboration with local universities as part of the Professional Development Opportunities programme, but they take many different forms including twilight training sessions and Further Higher Education courses. Staff are invited to indicate their training needs, which they may discuss with the staff development co-ordinator, currently the Headteacher.

Following the training, staff give immediate feedback by completing a course evaluation form in order to make a preliminary assessment of the value of the course, etc and decide on whether feedback to all staff is required.

LINKS WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Historically, special schools have always been isolated to some extent from the mainstream of education. It is therefore extremely important that Westhaven develops strong links with all areas of education and the local community. It is through these links that the school is able to review its part in the overall framework of the education system. The links include regular meetings with local cluster secondary and primary schools. These enable Westhaven teachers to keep up to date with current practices. In order that Westhaven is able to cover all aspects of the children's needs, we also rely on excellent links with the support services. These include:

- Social Services
- Educational Welfare Services
- Health Education Services, *including Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, etc.*
- Child and Family Guidance
- Sensory Impaired Service

Westhaven has developed strong links and open relationships with our partner schools. This has offered our pupils inclusion opportunities and our staff professional development.

Westhaven has strong, well-established links with Weston College and pupils in Years 10 and 11 are able to access many different vocational courses.

Work experience has long been a successful part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum, which allows the pupils the opportunity to gain experience in the local community. Currently pupils achieve accreditation through Connexions for their work experience placements.

Westhaven prepares pupils for adult life and a continuum of support is maintained through links with Connexions. Each pupil is monitored from Year 9 until they leave, with guidance and support assisting them in the decision they have to make.

Westhaven aims to foster links with all parts of the local community and religious organisations, in order that our pupils are given the best possible opportunities, both whilst at school and after they leave.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

Parents are a crucial facet of the educational process at Westhaven School. Parents are involved in discussions regarding their child's education from the initial referral to the school. It is anticipated that parents will have offered evidence in the EHCP and if this is received before the initial interview, issues may be extracted and discussed. Formal consultation takes place between school and other agency representatives at the annual review meeting and with the class teacher twice each academic year when progress is discussed. However, much constructive liaison may take place informally and to this end teachers and senior staff are ready to see any parent whenever help is sought. A home/school diary is initiated for pupils so that teachers and parents are in daily contact.

The majority of pupils are brought to school on LA transport, so that daily contact with parents enjoyed by local community schools is largely absent. This is counteracted to an extent by the close contact with the welfare services. Home visits may be made by the Nurse, the Parent Support Adviser, the Speech Therapist and the Education Welfare Officer, all of whom work closely with the teacher and parent. The transport escorts also form an informal, but useful, link between the parent and the school.

A Parent Support Group is available to offer support and opportunities to meet with other professionals and parents who provide excellent peer support.

Consultation with parents in the context of their role as co-educators is most effectively brought about by structured discussion during the parental interviews detailed above. To this end, the following is a series of prompt questions that may be used to help parents enter into this role. Knowledge of the child and previous contact with parents will inform the class teacher regarding the more appropriate prompts.

- Does your child enjoy attending school and what do you think could be done to make it an even better experience?
- What do you feel your child enjoys most at school? What is he/she good at? From what do you think he ought to be able to gain more benefit?
- Are you aware of any problems and what can we do to prevent these?

- There are both advantages and disadvantages to attending a special school. How do you feel we can minimise the disadvantages and obtain greater benefit as far as your child is concerned? Is segregated provision still appropriate considering the facilities in the county?
- Do you feel you could be better informed regarding your child's progress? How?
- Are you happy regarding the progress being made? Are you happy with your child's social life? Can we do anything to help?
- Are you happy with the way your child relates to other members of the family and can school provide further help or support?
- You may have views regarding what we teach and the overall relevance of the curriculum we provide. Do you wish us to consider any particular aspect of your child's education?
- Have you made your views known to us regarding your child's future, further education, post-school placement, etc? Is there anything you would particularly like us to take into account and have you any other comments regarding your child's education?

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History of Document

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1	FGB	July 2014	23/10/14	Minor amendments to update references	Jul 2016
2	FGB	Jan 2018	18/1/18	Rewritten to reflect changes within the school.	Sep 2019
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