

West Sussex special schools centres (SSC) in mainstream schools provision descriptor

Type: social communication needs

Thomas Bennett Community College is a maintained mainstream academy located in Crawley. It has pupils aged 11-18 and has a Special Support Centre offering provision for pupils with significant social communication needs.

The SSC offer

Overall aims are to:

- Support each pupil's development academically, socially and emotionally through a combination of support in the SSC and support in mainstream classes.
- Enable pupils to benefit from the access to a range of mainstream experiences alongside the more specialist support of the centre. Mainstream integration will be flexible and reflect individual pupil needs and interests.
- Enable pupils to access the provision set out in the EHC plan and achieve the agreed outcomes.
- Ensure the provision offer is in line with the fundamental principles set out in the special educational needs and disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015, in particular the setting will have regard to:
 - the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
 - the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions, and
 - the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

The setting will support this by ensuring the following:

- The participation of children, their parents and young people in decision-making.
- Providing greater choice and control for young people and parents over support.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- Providing high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

The setting will focus on the following:

- Inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.
- Supporting needs associated with social communication challenges including autistic spectrum condition.

Needs of the pupils

The SSC will support:

- pupils with significant additional learning needs whose needs will be most appropriately met with access to a broadly mainstream curriculum.
- pupils who may be working at levels significantly below their expected age-related curriculum outcomes due to the impact of their significant additional learning needs.
- additional learning needs covers a wide range of needs which may be identified as a primary need of:
 - understand and use non-verbal and verbal communication
 - understand social behaviour which in turn affects their ability to interact with children and adults and to regulate their behaviour
 - think and behave flexibly which may be shown in restricted, obsessional or repetitive activities
 - process and modulate sensory information including sounds, sights, smell, touch, and taste, vestibular, proprioceptive and interoceptive stimuli
 - develop literacy, numeracy or other learning skills, and
 - develop gross and/or fine motor skills.

All pupils referred for placement will have an education, health and care plan or be undergoing EHC needs assessment.

Staffing

The SSC will have an identified Teacher in Charge of the centre. They will be experienced in meeting the needs of pupils with communication and interaction challenges. They will have relevant qualification(s) in addition to their qualified teacher status or extensive experience in supporting the needs of pupils with SEND/communication and interaction needs.

The SSC will have suitably qualified and/or experienced support assistants.

All staff members will be provided with continuing personal/professional development opportunities to include mandatory participation in the West Sussex ASC team's Autism Aware Award, to ensure they maintain experience/knowledge and expertise within the facility.

Curriculum

Specialist teaching will be provided for pupils on an individual basis and in small groups as appropriate to each pupil's needs.

There will be a specific curriculum offer for pupils with significant additional learning needs focused on the delivery of key targets across a broad range of educational activities.

Broad, balanced and individualised curriculum leading to appropriate learning and social outcomes for all pupils.

Individualised programmes of work will:

- develop the pupil's understanding and use of non-verbal and verbal communication
- support the development of their social understanding
- support the development of greater flexibility in thinking and behaviour, and
- support the development of emotional and sensory regulation skills.

Therapies

A coordinated and shared approach to therapy provision ensuring it is integrated throughout the school day by school staff in consultation with the relevant therapy teams.

Delivery of therapy provision will be responsive to need as detailed within the pupil's EHC plan.

The Local Authority and SSC will discuss and agree suitable action if individual pupil need requires a different approach to therapy delivery.

Environment

An educational environment that is safe, structured, provides visual support and accommodates identified sensory sensitivities.

An identified 'quiet area' with low arousal/stimulus.

To see what the SSC looks like, visit the [Thomas Bennett Community College website](#).

Mainstream inclusion

Pupils will be supported appropriately to enable inclusion in a range of mainstream opportunities as appropriate i.e., classes, social activities etc.

Mainstream inclusion will be responsive to pupil need ensuring these experiences contribute to the pupil's overarching educational outcomes.

Staff working within the mainstream school will be expected to access appropriate support and training from the specialist staff within the SSC, LA specialist support team (ASC Team) and therapy team to assist them in meeting the needs of pupils experiencing integration into the main school.

Engagement with families

There will be regular liaison with, and support to, parents and carers of pupils attending the SSC.

Pupils at the SSC and their families will be fully involved in decisions about their support in school in line with the overall aims described above.

Flexibility of offer

Whilst the pupil's needs and associated provision described above will most commonly be supported through this facility, it will also be possible to consider flexibility and differentiation of the core offer to accommodate pupils who may benefit from the available facilities.

This may relate to pupils with underlying significant learning challenges currently presenting themselves as an alternative primary area of need e.g., emotional need or an additional need like medical needs or physical disability. The Local Authority and SSC will work together to consider how these needs will be best met.

The SSC should work flexibly within their locality to support other mainstream schools by offering advice, outreach and in-reach to demonstrate the delivery of specialist interventions.