

West Sussex special schools provision descriptor

Type: special school for pupils with social emotional and mental health needs

Cornfield School is a maintained special school located in Littlehampton. It has boys aged 6 to 12 years who experience social, emotional and mental health challenges and other associated needs.

The school offer

Overall aims:

- Support each pupil's development academically, socially and emotionally.
- Enable pupils to benefit from the access to a range of specialist experiences.
- Enable pupils to access the provision set out in the education, health and care (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, 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
 - 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 school 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.
- High expectations for the pupils attending the setting.

The school will focus on the following:

- Inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living, community inclusion, good health and employment (Preparing for Adulthood pathways).
- Supporting needs associated with learning difficulties and other associated areas of SEND.
- Supporting pupils to make good progress in relation to their learning and other needs from their relevant starting points.
- Providing a smooth transition to their next identified setting (education, employment or training).

The school provision/curriculum will:

- be specialist and highly differentiated. It will be personalised to meet individual needs, enabling each pupil full access to an adapted curriculum supporting their social, emotional and mental health needs. The curriculum will support them to understand and manage their own behaviour and learn to demonstrate positive, more appropriate behaviour
- provide small and well-supported groups that enable progress in academic and vocational subjects, as well as in the development of emotional resilience, social skills and self-regulation of behaviour
- help children and young people to understand their anxieties and learn ways to manage and/or reduce these
- offer a range of approaches to build resilience, and support children/young people to remain calm and manage stress
- support children and young people in developing a positive mindset/sense of themselves and who they want to be as well as how to develop positive relationships with adults and peers
- offer a therapeutic approach to teaching, learning and the curriculum
- offer outdoor learning as appropriate, this will include access to on site as well as off-site activities to support learning and development
- provide a focus on skills for life across all age groups, which will include skills needed for independence and to prepare for adulthood
- offer a very individualised package of support dependent on child or young person need, this might include an enhanced and highly supported transition and integration plan
- offer a range of curriculum opportunities relevant to need and age.

Secondary aged children/young people will:

- be able to access some GCSEs as well as Entry Level Certificates and other qualifications according to their needs and abilities. Duke of Edinburgh awards and other vocational accreditation will also be available
- provide appropriate support and guidance associated with preparation for adulthood and post 16 opportunities at Key Stage 4 (years 10 and 11). This will include working with the young person, their family and local post 16 providers/employers to identify positive pathways and the best progression route for them. Employment skills, careers advice and guidance, work experience and access to college are made available as appropriate
- support children and young people to develop the skills to successfully transition between different activities and places, between school and home/their community, and into the next phase of their learning and adulthood.

Needs of the pupils

Children/young people will experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which present themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour.

The child/young person's behaviours may be as a result of their Special Educational Need (SEN) or disabilities such as learning difficulties, autism or social communication difficulties, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, pathological demand avoidance (PDA), attachment disorder, or as a consequence of trauma (early in childhood or more recently), social or mental health issues or general anxiety. Some may have a medical diagnosis.

Some children and young people may have difficulties in literacy and numeracy and will require an individualised approach and specialist interventions to support them in developing these skills.

The child/young person's behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression which may have resulted in self-harming, school avoidance, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.

Some children/young people may have experienced significant social issues; for example, disrupted home and personal life which have impacted on their behaviour. Many children/young people may be known to the early help and/or social care services and some to child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS).

Some children/young people may also demonstrate a sudden and catastrophic deterioration in behaviour that does not respond to appropriate specialist intervention.

Children/young people's academic ability will cover a broad range, and their difficulties are likely to be a barrier to learning and their potential to achieve well, and to have

persisted, despite the implementation of an appropriate personal and social curriculum. Ability and/or attainment may be below age-related expectations, but the child/young person may not be able to demonstrate their abilities clearly.

Children/young people are likely to display some/a mixture of the following:

- Being withdrawn or isolating themselves, including school phobia and/or depression for some.
- Low self-esteem and poor self-image.
- Extremes of emotions.
- Entrenched inability to trust others and/or lack of emotional resilience.
- Being disruptive and significantly disturbing the learning and well-being of other pupils.
- Persistently challenging of authority and/or erratic response to discipline.
- Routinely anti-social and uncooperative.
- Being hyperactive and lacking the ability to concentrate.
- Having immature social skills.
- Having difficulties with social communication skills, including social use of language and the conventions of social behaviours.
- Presenting very challenging and sometimes aggressive behaviours.
- Persistent inability to manage own anger.
- Deterioration of behaviour or emotional wellbeing.
- Difficulties coping with school routines and relationships.
- Long-standing difficulties in forming positive relationships with others (adults and children).
- Lack of social conscience or a sense of inner justice.
- Lack of empathy and respect for the feelings and emotions of others, including inappropriate emotional responses and actions in a given situation.
- Behaviours that seek to exploit weaknesses in others and control situations.
- Expressed desire to harm others, including through psychological and physical bullying behaviour.
- Vulnerable to being influenced or exploited by others with a lack of sense of personal safety.

Sustained interventions from specialist support and/or agencies in other settings will have been unable to bring about a positive change.

It will be clear from previous school-based behaviour logs/supporting reports that such behaviours/issues have developed over time and a number of strategies have been used to try and support the pupil. However, such interventions have failed or have had limited impact.

In the secondary year groups, in addition to the needs described above, children/young people may:

- have had significant gaps in their access to education because of low attendance and/or days lost to fixed-term exclusion
- have accessed a part time timetable, or not accessed school at all
- have engaged in drug and/or alcohol activity that has impacted on their ability to access education
- have been involved in risky behaviours outside of school, including involvement with gangs and/or criminal activity.

Staffing and class arrangements

Teaching and support will be provided by a team with a high level of specialist skills, experience and SEN training. This includes training on a range of disabilities and needs that might impact on behaviour including:

- attachment and trauma
- positive approaches to de-escalating behaviour in a safe and supportive way
- implementing an integrated, person/family centered, needs led approach to supporting mental health (THRIVE model) and sensory integration.

Training is individualised to meet the needs of children/young people at the school.

Children/young people will require access to smaller class sizes and higher levels of staffing to enable flexible delivery of the curriculum in order to acquire learning and social skills.

Staffing ratios are likely to vary across the day/week dependent on the needs of the children/young people and the particular subject/lesson.

There will be access to staff from other agencies for those that need it, for example CAMHs, social workers. Most children/young people will require significantly higher levels of long-term inter-agency co-operation and planning. Staff are supported with structured supervision where needed.

Specialist support and therapies

Therapy to support specific needs such as anxiety, attachment issues or experience of trauma. These might include play, art, music or drama therapy. Therapy provision is based on an assessed need and may be needed short-term or for a longer-term period.

There is a co-ordinated and shared approach to therapy provision ensuring it is integrated throughout the school day by school staff in consultation with the relevant therapy teams. School staff are trained to implement therapy programmes on a regular basis.

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

The setting works collaboratively with colleagues in other professional teams, such as Social Care and other health teams, as appropriate, to ensure a joined-up response to pupil need.

Environment

A mixture of different sized and types of indoor and outdoor learning spaces are provided. These enable the school to organise the curriculum/learning flexibly to meet the needs of the children/young people. They include a mixture of class bases, general learning area and specialist curriculum areas.

To see what the site looks like, visit the [Cornfield School website](#).

Mainstream inclusion

Where it meets the individual needs of the child/young person, consideration may be given where practicable to access supported inclusion opportunities in a local mainstream setting. This would be discussed with the child/family as part of the Annual Review process.

Engagement with families

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

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

Preparation for adulthood/Post 16 offer

At annual reviews from year 9 and sometimes earlier the schools will be working with the young person and their family to identify the best progression route for them.

Monitoring and reviewing progress

Methods of monitoring and reviewing progress will be individualised in nature and responsive to need.

At times pupils may leave Cornfield School before the usual/expected leaving date. This might be when careful monitoring and review has indicated greater or less

progress than the pupil's peers.

If this is the situation the pupil may be ready to go to different type of setting to ensure their needs continue to be met.

The usual process for consideration of this will be through the Annual Review of their EHC plan (which can be brought forward if required). The school will discuss this with you should it be required.

All pupils will have an Annual Review of their EHC plan each year.

Flexibility of offer

Whilst the pupil's needs and associated provision described above will most commonly be supported at Cornfield School, the Local Authority and the setting themselves recognise the need to be flexible. This may require consideration of adapting the core offer to accommodate a pupil who would also benefit from admission to the setting.

It will, however, be important to consider whether any adaptation of offer still provides the pupil with an appropriately ambitious curriculum and suitable school experiences to support their preparation for adulthood and ensure they are able to achieve their long-term outcomes.

Cornfield School will, whenever possible, work flexibly within their locality to support other mainstream schools by offering advice, outreach and in-reach to demonstrate the delivery of specialist interventions.