

## West Sussex Special Support Centres (SSC) In Mainstream Schools

### Provision Descriptor

#### Type: Social Communication Differences

##### Background:

Thomas Bennett Community College is a secondary academy located in Crawley. It has children and young people (CYP) aged 11-18 years and has a Special Support Centre (SSC) offering provision for CYP with significant social communication differences.

##### The SSC Offer

Overall aims are:

- to support each CYP's development academically, socially and emotionally through a combination of support in the SSC and support in mainstream classes
- to enable CYP 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
- to enable CYP to access the provision set out in the EHC Plan and achieve the agreed outcomes
- to ensure the provision offer is in line with the fundamental principles set out in the SEN 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 CYP's parents/carers
  - the importance of the CYP, and their parents/carers, 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 CYP, and their parents/carers, in order to facilitate the development of the CYP 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 participation of CYP and their parents/carers in decision making
- greater choice and control for CYP and parents/carers over support that is identified for the CYP
- co-production with education, health and social care services to provide support
- high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
- high expectations for the CYP attending the SSC

The setting will focus on:

- inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- successful preparation for adulthood (PfA pathways), including independent living, community inclusion, good health and employment

- supporting strengths and differences associated with social communication including autism supporting CYP to make good progress in relation to their relevant starting points holistically in learning and well-being
- supporting effective transitions including planning appropriate arrangements to enable a smooth transition from their previous setting, between the SSC and the mainstream provision and to their next, identified setting (education, employment or training)
- working in co-production with CYP, parents/carers and mainstream colleagues to ensure the best possible outcomes and support

### Needs of the Children and Young People

The SSC will support:

- CYP with significant social communication differences whose associated learning needs will be most appropriately met with access to a broadly mainstream curriculum
- CYP who may be working at levels below their expected age-related curriculum outcomes or have a spiky attainment profile, due to the impact of their significant social communication differences
- CYP who may have differences in their ability to:
  - understand and use non-verbal and verbal communication
  - understand social communication which in turn may impact their interactions with peers and adults
  - use their executive functioning skills to access the learning environment
  - process and modulate sensory information including sounds, sights, smell, touch, and taste, vestibular, proprioceptive and interoceptive stimuli
  - develop literacy, numeracy and/or other independent learning skills
  - develop gross and/or fine motor skills
  - monitor and evaluate the intensity of their emotional responses and, in addition, find it difficult to recognise their emotions and therefore need support in developing strategies to aid independence
  - present as their authentic self without the need to mask
- CYP to build understanding of self and any diagnosis in a positive and affirming way.
- All CYPs referred for placement will have an education, health and care plan with a primary need of social communication differences or be undergoing the final stages of an 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 CYP with social communication differences/autism. They will have relevant qualification(s) in addition to their qualified teacher status or extensive experience in supporting the needs of CYPs with SEND/social communication differences/autism.
- The SSC will have suitably qualified and/or experienced support assistants and/or teachers.
- All staff members must seek regular continued personal/professional development opportunities. As a minimum, staff must attend annual Autism Affirming training from the Autism and Social Communication Team (ASCT). In addition the school should ideally participate in the West Sussex ASCT's

Autism Aware Award, to ensure they maintain experience/knowledge and expertise within the facility.

### Curriculum

- The CYP in the SSC are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, ensuring that they access their full entitlement to education so that gaps in learning do not appear. It is anticipated that specialist teaching and other support such as regulation or sensory breaks will be provided. These will be facilitated for all CYP on an individual basis and in small groups as appropriate to each CYP's needs.
- There will be a specific curriculum offer for CYP with significant communication and interaction differences focused on the delivery of key targets across a broad range of educational activities.
- Individualised programmes of work will be based on the CYP's EHCP and may focus on:
  - developing the pupil's understanding and use of non-verbal and verbal communication
  - supporting the development of their social awareness
  - support the development of executive function skills
  - supporting the understanding and development of emotional and sensory regulation skills

### Therapies

- 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.
- Delivery of therapy provision will be responsive to need as detailed within the pupil's EHCP.
- The SSC will have a Speech and Language therapist and Occupational Therapist linked to the SSC. These therapists and key SSC staff will jointly review the needs of all pupil's on roll with a view to agreeing appropriate intervention and support.
- The Local Authority and SSC will discuss and agree suitable action if individual pupil's require a different approach to therapy delivery.

### Environment

- An educational environment that is safe, structured, provides visual support and accommodates identified sensory differences and preferences.
- An identified low arousal area/space.
- Access to appropriate break out rooms/ teaching areas.

### Mainstream Inclusion

- CYPs will be supported appropriately to enable inclusion in a range of mainstream opportunities as appropriate i.e. classes, school visits/trips (including residential), 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 CYPs experiencing inclusion within the main school.

#### Co-production with Families

- There will be regular co-production with, and support given to, parents and carers of CYP attending the SSC.
- CYP 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 CYP's strengths and differences 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 other CYP who may benefit from the available facilities but are not formally allocated a place at the SSC.

This may relate to CYP with or without an EHCP within the mainstream school but mustn't be at the detriment of the provision delivery of the pupils placed in the SSC. The provision for any new pupil placed in the SSC would have to be prioritised over that of CYPs in the mainstream.

This may also relate to CYPs with underlying significant social communication differences currently presenting themselves as an alternative primary area of need e.g. emotional need or an additional need like a physical disability. The Local Authority and SSC will work together to consider how these needs will be best met.

The SSC should, 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.