

## SEND INFORMATION REPORT

The Castle School has a strong reputation for its inclusive ethos and ensuring all students are fully included in all learning and extra-curricular activities. We have a large Special Educational Needs (SEN) department with 36 staff including Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), Mentors and Specialist teachers. LSAs support individual students with additional educational needs in class with their peers across the curriculum. They also provide one-to-one support for literacy and numeracy intervention, speech and language, social/life skills, exam revision, homework, coursework and mentoring. LSAs also support small groups of children and work alongside teachers encouraging students' greater confidence, independence and self-management strategies. We believe strongly in a collaborative approach and we work very closely with families, communicating regularly through communication books, emails, phone calls and meetings.

### **How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?**

- During the primary/secondary transition, individual support and provision is put in place at the start of year 7 based on information provided by parents/carers/primary Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo) and other external agencies
- There are a range of interventions for students starting Year 7 with identified additional needs – examples include literacy and numeracy support, speech and language and social communication. In addition, all students will have reading, spelling and Cognitive Ability (CAT) tests within the first two weeks of Year 7. These tests, together with transition information, identify those students who may need additional support and interventions
- There is an on-going review of the support of all students with additional needs at regular intervals throughout the year. There is also regular communication from parents/carers and teachers regarding any child who may need extra support
- Teachers who have any concerns about the progress of individual students will liaise with the SENCo and Head of Learning Support
- The SENCo and Head of Learning Support have meetings with parents/carers throughout the year.

### **How will the school setting support my child/young person and how will it communicate to all staff that my child has special education needs or a disability and the support he or she will need?**

- The SENCo and Head of Learning Support prepare a detailed Additional Needs register which is distributed to all teachers and staff, this register includes an outline of the students' individual needs, strengths and support
- The Additional Needs register is regularly reviewed and updated and is provided to all teaching and support staff as appropriate
- Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP ) have a detailed pen portrait which summarises needs, support and provision details from the EHCP. This is distributed to all teachers and support staff
- The SENCo and Head of Learning Support liaise with parents/carers and external agencies and with parental permission, further updated information is distributed to all teachers
- The Castle School has a large Learning Support faculty with over 36 staff. This includes a team of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who work with individual children, groups and classes. There are also SEN Link teachers in all faculties who liaise regularly with the Learning Support faculty

### **How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?**

- There are bespoke classes for English and Maths throughout Key Stage 3 and 4 for students who benefit from a more differentiated curriculum. The majority of the Key Stage 3 curriculum is delivered in mixed ability settings
- There are also bespoke Science classes for students in years 9-11
- Teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of all children in their class
- Specific resources and strategies will be used to support your child individually and/or in groups with differentiation to enable access to the whole curriculum
- The school delivers Modern Foreign Culture lessons during year 8 and 9 in place of Modern Foreign language, for those students identified with significant literacy difficulties. This programme enables students to widen their understanding of different cultures and build literacy and research skills
- The school also has a range of alternative curriculum pathways at KS4 which include the ASDAN Life skills and Personal Development courses at entry level and level 1 and 2. These courses build students' independence and confidence
- At KS5 there are Level 1 and 2 Advanced Bridging courses at the Sixth form Centre. These courses enable year 12 students to gain further qualifications and build self confidence in preparation for college and work

### **How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing and how will you help me support my child's/young person's learning?**

- The SENCo and Head of Learning Support are available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress and any other concerns/updates you may have. Home/school communication is important to us and we encourage you to contact and share with us your knowledge and experiences
- In addition you are able to contact your child's tutor and Leader of Student Progress/Head of Year (LSP) if you have any concerns about your child's well-being and progress
- The school has parent and tutor evenings for all year groups that are held at set times in the year as detailed in the school calendar and you will also receive reports on progress twice a year
- The Learning Support Faculty has an information evening for Year 7 parents early in the first term and the school organises Tutor Evenings and Parents for Learning events during the first term
- We are in the process of setting up a parent/carers support group which will meet termly in school to enable parents/carers to share experiences and knowledge and there will also be information available and any updates on SEND
- If your child has an EHCP you will also be invited to an Annual Review meeting as well as informal meetings throughout the year
- LSAs that support students with EHCPs update either by weekly emails, phone calls and home/school communication books, as agreed with parents/carers
- If there are significant concerns with your child's progress in school you will be invited to attend meetings and with your permission, external professionals will also be involved to offer advice and support
- For some students additional arrangements and adjustments can be made to enable them to fully access a range of tests. This might include additional time, rest breaks or the use of a scribe or word processor. Only tests and assessors authorised by the school and recognised by JCQ can be accepted for access arrangements for public examinations. The SENCo and Head of Learning Support work with the school exam and data team to identify those who are eligible for additional examination access arrangements.

## What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall well-being?

In addition to the Learning Support faculty, pastoral support is given from each Year team. The school's pastoral support ensures the continuing well-being and personal growth of all students. In addition arrangements are in place to support the medical needs of students throughout the day. The school has a behaviour support team and mentoring services to reinforce positive behaviour and rebuild students' self-esteem and engagement in learning. Below is a list of some of the strategies used in the Castle School:

### **Strategies to support the development of students' social skills and enhance self-esteem**

- Small group programmes
- Lunchtime clubs e.g. Active club, art club, film club and signing club
- Mentoring sessions
- Quiet spaces available at lunch/break time
- Social Skills/communication groups

### **Mentoring activities**

- Liaison with Learning Support staff
- Pastoral support

### **Strategies to reduce anxiety/promote emotional wellbeing (including communication with parents)**

- Transition support, visits and events
- Personalised timetables
- Regular contact and liaison with parents
- Open door policy
- Lunchtime support
- Mentoring sessions

### **Strategies to support/modify behaviour**

- School sanctions and reward system as set out in School Behaviour Policy
- Behaviour Support Services: Student Re-integration Centre for restorative work
- Mentoring and Peer mentoring programmes
- Achievement evenings and celebrations

### **Support/supervision at unstructured times of the day including personal care**

- Break time – Learning Support Base
- Lunch clubs - Learning Support Base
- Trained staff supervising during break periods and at the start and end of the day
- Quiet room – Learning Support Base
- Lunchtime clubs available in different faculties e.g. Art, ICT, Science, PE

### **Personal and medical care**

- First Aiders available for students throughout the day in dedicated first aid base
- Weekly visit from the School Health Nurse
- Health Care Plans for students with medical needs
- LSAs support individual students with more complex medical and personal care needs

### **Access to strategies/programmes to support occupational /physiotherapy needs**

- Advice of professionals disseminated and followed
- Use of any recommended equipment and support

### **Access to modified equipment and I.T.**

- Specialist equipment as required on an individual basis to access the curriculum
- Use of laptops, computers, iPads across the curriculum
- Modified resources and equipment for students with sensory needs

### **What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school and how do you all work together?**

The school works with a number of external agencies on a regular basis for additional guidance and support to ensure that the needs of all children are met. These include:

#### **Sensory Support Team:**

**Ann Manuel (Sensory support Service, Bristol City Council, Support Teacher)** weekly visits, to work with individual students with hearing impairments and liaise with staff.

**Jane Dixon (Sensory support for Visually Impaired (VI) students Bristol City Council, Support Teacher)** visits 6 times a year to meet students and staff.

#### **Speech and Language Support:**

**Geraldine Bates- Independent Speech and language therapist and on the Autism assessment Team for South Gloucestershire** - fortnightly sessions with specified students, advice and observations, social communication group work and individual assessments

**Dianne Webb- Speech and Language Therapist (NHS)** 3 times a year to work with identified students.

#### **Other services used:**

Educational Psychologists, Inclusion Support Service, School Health Nurse, Occupational/Physiotherapy Paediatric Services, Advisory Teaching Service Gloucestershire County Council, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service), Youth Intervention Support Service (YISS), Family Intervention Support Service (FISS), First Point and Educational Welfare.

### **What training has the staff supporting the children and young people with SEND had or are they having?**

The Learning Support faculty has an experienced team of staff with specialist knowledge and expertise in all areas on SEN including Autism Spectrum, Sensory Support, Specific Learning Difficulties/Dyslexia, Behaviour Emotional and Social difficulties (including Attachment needs) and Complex Needs including Down Syndrome.

An on-going programme of training is in place to ensure that teachers and support staff have appropriate skills and knowledge in areas that will further improve their teaching and support of children with additional needs through staff INSET and external courses. The Learning Support Team also give guidance and support to teachers and organise training for newly qualified and student teachers.

Recent training (2013-14) includes:

- Vision Impairment
- The LSA and SEN in mainstream schools
- Effective differentiation training
- Understanding challenging behaviour and ASD
- Down Syndrome
- Hearing Impairment
- Dyslexia and Dyscalculia
- Managing Developmental Co-ordination disorder
- Improving outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils

Our SENCO and Head of Learning Support actively engage with local opportunities to share best practice and keep abreast of current local and national initiatives and policy to support students with SEN.

Learning Support staff and students deliver a yearly information session to PGCE students at Bristol University.

The School also seeks advice and guidance from local special schools to review, evaluate and develop provision for students who have the most complex needs.

We have Learning Support staff with specialised expertise and qualifications in school including:

Accredited SENCO (National SENCo Award), Assistant Headteacher, BSc (Hons) in Sports Science with Education, Physical Education and Recreation Management

Head of Learning Support with knowledge and expertise (18 years) in all areas of SEND and professional qualifications, BA (Hons) Education (SEN & Inclusion)

Accredited teacher and co-ordinator for ASDAN, QTS

Accredited Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants with specialist SEND knowledge and expertise in Dyslexia, Autism, Complex Needs such as Attachment, BESD and Down Syndrome

Specialist Speech and Language Teaching Assistants

Higher Level teaching Assistant with Sensory Support expertise and BSL signer

Five LSAs currently completing HLTA qualifications

HLTA studying MA in Specific Learning Difficulties/Dyslexia

### **How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?**

- We ensure that all children are able to access all external trips and visits alongside their peers
- The Learning Support faculty liaise with other faculties to make arrangements to ensure that all students are included and participate in all extracurricular activities including school trips
- Students with more complex needs are fully supported and supervised in all activities outside the classroom. Contact is made prior to the visit to ensure accessibility and safety arrangements are in place
- Students with EHC plans who are attending trips for extended periods of time, including trips abroad are supported by experienced support staff in agreement with parents
- The Learning Support faculty organise regular extra-curricular trips for students with Additional Needs. These include sessions at the All Abilities Cycling Centre in Bristol, swimming sessions at the local leisure centre and a yearly Willow Trust canal trip.

### **How accessible is the school environment?**

Castle School has a fully inclusive ethos and ensures that every child is able to access the curriculum and all school activities.

- We ensure that equipment used is accessible to all children regardless of their needs
- We ensure that the learning environment is accessible to students of all abilities and this includes differentiation of the curriculum, support and interventions
- We offer a range of curriculum pathways to suit individual needs
- We provide support with homework clubs and access to the library at lunchtime, before and after school
- Key words and literacy resources are used across the school to support learning
- ICT is used extensively across the curriculum to support and develop learning
- Lap top computers, iPads and other ICT equipment are used by students with more complex needs and/or sensory impairments
- There is a lift situated in the lower school for movement between floors when necessary
- Disabled toilets, showers and ramps are situated on the main school site. Accessible toilets and ramps are situated at the Sixth Form site



### **How will the school prepare and support my child/young person to join the school, transfer to a new setting/school/college or for the next stage of education and life?**

The Castle School has a well-established extended year 6 to 7 transition programme for students who might find the move to a secondary school more challenging. We liaise closely with primary schools, families and external agencies during year 5 and 6 and this enables us to gain more detailed knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of children and we ensure that support and provision is in place to enable a smooth transition.

Every year we have around 30 year 6 students who attend our transition programmes. One group of identified children attend sessions with year 10 mentors during the whole of year 6. We have 2 groups of year 6 students who attend the summer transition programme over 6 weeks, taking part in lesson taster sessions and activities to boost self-confidence. We hold transition celebration events for year 6 students, parents/carers at the end of the summer term.

The Learning Support faculty liaises closely with the year 7 pastoral team throughout the transition process and ensure that all staff are aware of the additional needs of all new students.

Towards the end of Key Stage 4 we have a range of programmes and support to prepare our students for the next stage in their education and life. These include group visits to Post 16 colleges and sixth form, taster days, individual visits and liaison with college/sixth form staff. The Youth Intervention and Support (YISS) worker, external support agencies, learning support staff and parent/carers plan and discuss appropriate and suitable pathways for individual students to ensure appropriate support and provision is in place.

### **How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's/young people's needs?**

Individual students with EHCPs receive allocated funding to ensure that appropriate support and provision is in place. This includes individual support, small groups and personalised timetables. The School has an SEN budget which provides funding for students with additional needs. This funding provides bespoke classes for English, Maths and Science, alternative curriculum pathways which include ASDAN and life-skills courses. Entry level qualifications are available in English, Maths and Science. We run a Modern Foreign Culture class as an alternative to languages which enables the development of literacy skills. There are a range of literacy intervention programmes, speech and language sessions and social skills groups. We also have a one year Level 1/2 Life-skills course (Bridging Course) which is offered as an alternative provision for year 12 students. The course includes English, Maths, Sport, Art, Business, Food Technology, Child Care and Life Skills. The students also attend a weekly work experience placement.

### **How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?**

A student with an EHCP will have an entitled level of support outlined in their plan. The type of individual support and provision is planned following discussions with parents/carers, teachers and external agencies. Support can be delivered by LSAs working with students in lessons, in 1:1 sessions, in specialised small classes and in small group sessions. Students with more complex needs may receive additional support from professionals such as Speech & Language Therapists, Sensory Support teachers and other support agencies.

Other students identified with additional needs may receive a range of support including small groups, literacy and numeracy interventions, mentoring and social communication sessions. There are also lunchtime extra-curricular activities available on a daily basis.

### **How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved? How will you build on your equal partnerships with parent carers?**

The Learning Support faculty has regular communication with parents/carers. This may be through regular phone calls, emails, home/school communication books. Parents/carers are always welcome to meet the SENCO/Head of Learning Support/LSAs to discuss their child's individual needs or any concerns.

## Who can I contact for further information?

Assistant Head teacher and  
Special Educational Needs  
Co-ordinator  
(SENCO)

Liza Burgess

Email:

[liza.burgess@thecastleschool.org.uk](mailto:liza.burgess@thecastleschool.org.uk)

Head of Learning Support

Vivienne Cotterill

Email:

[vivienne.cotterill@thecastleschool.org.uk](mailto:vivienne.cotterill@thecastleschool.org.uk)

Headteacher:

Mr Peter Smart

SEN Governor:

Mrs Sally Heath

Responsible for:

- Ensuring that your child is able to access the curriculum and all curriculum activities
- Personalising the curriculum to respond to strengths and needs of all students with additional needs
- Ensuring that your child is able to develop personally, socially and emotionally
- Checking on the progress of your child to identify, plan and deliver any additional support/interventions
- Applying the school's SEN policy.
- Coordinating provision for children with Additional Needs in accordance with the new SEND Code of Practice
- Providing specialist advice and facilitating training to ensure that all staff are skilled and confident about meeting a range of needs.
- Ensure that parents are included in planning and reviewing support and provision for their child
- Liaising with a range of agencies outside of school who can offer advice and support to help students overcome any difficulties

Responsible for: The day to day management of all aspects of the school, including the provision made for students with SEN

Responsible for: Supporting school to evaluate and develop quality and impact of provision for students with SEN across the school

If you would like any more information or would like to visit the School, please contact the school's main switchboard on 01454 862100 or email: [enquiries@thecastleschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thecastleschool.org.uk).