

## **Lansdowne School - General Information for Parents/carers**

### **Our Provision**

Developing the whole child and young person is important to us. Our ethos is to provide a secure, caring and supportive environment in which there is an expectation of high pupil achievement and raised attainment. This is reflected in all we do and throughout our website.

Lansdowne is a school for young people aged 11-16 years, with special educational needs (SEN). The school is the Local Authority's (LA) designated secondary school for children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and learning difficulties.

The children and young people are taught in the following key stages:

KS3	11-14years
KS4	14-16 years.

All our students follow the National Curriculum across the Key Stage 3 and 4, as well as following PSHCE and life skills courses. In Year 10 they work towards either GCSE or Entry Level Accreditation in all subjects and start a college link programme currently with Lambeth College.

Class sizes are between 8 and 12 students depending on individual need, with a teacher and two teaching assistants.

The school applies an holistic approach to learning, and works closely with speech therapists, occupational therapists and the school doctor and nurse, as well as outside agencies to enable all students to access the curriculum.

We use the the following strategies to make sure the students are comfortable in school:

### **TEACCH**

TEACCH is a structured approach to learning, with separate, defined areas for each task, such as individual work, group activities, and play. It relies heavily on visual learning, a strength for many young people with autism. The young people use schedules made up of pictures and/or words to order their day and to help them move smoothly between activities. Children with autism may find it difficult to make transitions between activities and places without schedules.

### **The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)**

PECS is designed to teach functional communication skills with an initial focus on spontaneous communication. It has been and continues to be implemented in a variety of settings and contexts (home, school, community) so users have the skills to communicate their wants and needs, as well as supporting comprehension.

## **Social Communication/ Emotional Regulation/ Transactional Support (SCERTS)**

A programme to support young people to learn and spontaneously apply functional and relevant skills in a variety of settings and with a variety of partners.

### **Social Stories**

The goal of a Social Story is to share accurate social information in a patient and reassuring manner that is easily understood by its audience. Half of all Social Stories developed should affirm something that an individual does well.

Our preferred signing system is Makaton.

### **Our Approach**

Our approach is two fold through providing the necessary support young people with autism need to learn in school and to make the curriculum accessible.

All students people follow the National Curriculum, which is broken down into small learning steps and follow a personalized learning programme. This means that all areas of the curriculum are broken down into several smaller learning steps, so the children and young people are able to access the curriculum and work in a more structured and meaningful way. *We measure each student's learning every six weeks*, so we can understand the individual learning needs of each student.

Communication and literacy are important to us. Students read for fifty minutes every day. Our reading programme follows the Letters and Sounds system, which is supported by the Picture Exchange, Communication System (PECs) from Year 7- Year 11. Communicate in print is used across the school to help learning and communication

Learning is 'hands on' and practical and involves trips and outside visits. Regular trips and visits include weekly horse riding and the college link course. Students also visit art galleries, museums, the theatre, Pupils are taught the following subjects:

English, mathematics, science, humanities, RE, ICT, PE, art, textiles, food technology and literacy (including phonics and communication systems)

Curriculum maps and our teaching and learning policies are published and updated on the school web site, along with all other school policies, including homework.

Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship (PSHCE) and life skills are a fundamental part of the curriculum. The school aims for our young people to leave school and move on to post 16 provision and into the community as independent and confident adults.

All our students are supported through the different strategies which enable children and young people with autism to access the curriculum and be

comfortable at school. These strategies include makaton sign language, PECS, Intensive Interaction, TEACCH, Communication in Print, and we have recently introduced SCERTS. (See definitions above).

Pupil progress for every child or young person is measured individually every six weeks across the academic year in each subject. In this way we can accurately pin point any difficulties and set plans to support the children and young people to improve. Learning targets are set at the beginning of each year for all pupils. These targets are measured, reviewed and discussed with parents/carers in meetings throughout the year.

All children and young people are encouraged to join either our lunchtime or after school clubs. These include football, drama, maths, art, chess clubs.

### **People who work with us**

Teaching and learning is supported by the additional adults who work alongside the teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of the pupils. The people who work with us are the speech therapists, occupational therapist and art therapist. Our approach is for the therapists to be part of the teaching and learning environment by supporting and training the teachers and teaching assistants to use the individual strategies which enable our students to learn. In addition the school has two trained communication teaching assistants who support the work of the therapists. In this way we are able to meet the sensory and communication needs of our young people. This is particularly so for those young children entering school with little or no verbal language or communication and/or for those children and young people who need a sensory based curriculum.

We also use an art therapist across the federation.

### **Staff Qualifications and training**

The Executive Headteacher has a masters level qualification PGCSE in Autism.

The Executive Headteacher is PECs, TEACCH and SCERTs trained. In addition all staff follow a yearly rolling programme of training in the following:

- Team teach
- TEACCH
- PECS awareness
- Makaton sign language
- Communicate in Print.
- SCERTS is currently being piloted in two primary classes with training to be rolled out in September 2014.

In addition staff are regularly trained to level 1 first aid, with specific named staff being trained to a higher level.