

SEND policy

The Royal School for the Blind caters for children and young people from 2yrs to 25yrs who have a visual impairment and multiple learning disabilities. These disabilities include severe and profound learning difficulties, physical disabilities, multi-sensory disabilities and challenging behaviours.

The school strives to provide education of the highest standard in a stimulating, safe and caring environment and maintains a high staffing ratio in order to achieve this.

SEN ENTITLEMENT

Our aims and beliefs.

At The Royal School for the Blind we believe that everyone has something positive to contribute and each individual's interests, skills and abilities should be fostered and appreciated.

We aim to :

- Create a multi-sensory environment that meets the special educational needs of each pupil.
- Ensure that the special educational needs of the pupils are identified, assessed and provided for using the PIVATS and MAPP assessment tools.
- Enable all pupils to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum using experienced staff, adapted environments, communication aids and specialist equipment.
- Ensure that parents and carers are involved in supporting their child's learning and development through the home/school communication system and the Annual review.
- Encourage our pupils to have a voice and develop communication skills whether they be verbal or non-verbal.

Underlying all our curriculum is the belief that communication is all important and each pupil must be allowed time to respond and to develop communication skills using a total communication approach, i.e. an approach appropriate for each individual pupil.

The school believes that every child, regardless of disability, race or gender, has the right to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.

We believe that every pupil should have access to the full range of National Curriculum subjects, with work taken from appropriate Key Stages. Our early years pupils will work on the Early Years Curriculum to prepare them for the National Curriculum. We believe that our 16+ pupils should have access to a 16+ curriculum which prepares them for life beyond school.

Through the wider school curriculum we aim to -

- provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve.
- promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING.

Pupils access the school curriculum through a class timetable as well as having access to specific areas of expertise including mobility, SALT, hydro therapy, physiotherapy and music therapy. Pupils also have access to occupational therapy through the Physiotherapy department as well as wheelchair services. These individual sessions are timetabled and pupils access all or some of them depending on their special educational statement of needs.

The special needs of our pupils mean that the curriculum will include these teaching areas in addition to the subjects taught through the National Curriculum. We believe that these additional subjects add to the strength of the school.

The visual impairment of our pupils means that teaching approaches and strategies have to offer a specialist approach and our subject curriculum documents illustrate this. Depending on the needs of each pupil work may be presented through tactile and multi-sensory means

In order to make full use of any residual vision, the area of visual training is an area which permeates all curriculum subjects and may necessitate separate teaching sessions.

We promote the importance of Mobility and Orientation for our pupils. This subject is included as one of our curriculum areas and permeates the whole curriculum. Staff at the RSB are also given mobility training so that pupils receive informal mobility training throughout the week when moving around the school campus.

We also acknowledge the importance of P.H.S.E. and Citizenship for all our pupils as well as SMSC which permeates throughout the whole curriculum.

Some of our pupils may demonstrate behaviours that put up barriers to participation and learning. We recognise that time may be required to address these problems before effective teaching can take place and this is achieved through behaviour support programmes. All staff use a positive approach with pupils.

ASSESSMENT

During their first term at school each pupil has a baseline assessment completed in the core National Curriculum subjects, mobility and vision. A formal assessment using PIVATS are undertaken in the summer term of each academic year.

Pupils requiring additional moving and handling assistance are also assessed and a moving and handling risk assessment policy is generated ensuring that pupils are handled safely and consistently whilst keeping staff and pupils safe at all times.

Whilst aiming for progress it is recognised that for some pupils progress is not necessarily only movement up a ladder of skills and knowledge, but lateral progression is also important. We also believe that the process and experiences offered are equally as important as the final achievement.

For this reason the school has now implemented the MAPP system (Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress) as we believe this illustrates the lateral progress of pupils.

This is monitored by the class teacher, curriculum meetings, relevant senior leaders and the lead SMT for assessment.

Some of the pupils will be attaining levels within the N.C. However most of the pupils are likely to have targets within the P levels. Programmes of study for all pupils will offer a variety of experience in an age appropriate way and each pupil will be equally valued for their achievements.

Staff qualifications and experience.

All the teaching staff within the EYFS and from KS 1 – 4 have an additional teaching qualification in visual impairment (B Phil in VI) as well as their existing teaching qualification.

All staff at the Royal school for the Blind also undertake a variety of training including child protection, first aid, safe guarding, use of multi- sensory resources and safe handling courses/ behaviour management.

On joining the school all staff receive moving and handling training as well as a basic mobility training session. These skills are essential to help the pupils and staff stay safe and access the mobility routes around school.

As well as qualified teachers of the Visually Impaired being in the classrooms there are also SALT, physiotherapist and mobility officers on site, which the pupils have access to throughout the week.

Adapted resources

The school has its own hydrotherapy pool with pool hoist making it fully accessible to wheelchair users as well as an individual Jacuzzi bath.

There are several chill out zones around school with visually stimulating lights and experiences including a fully accessible sensory room which is switch activated and therefore very interactive and fully accessible to wheelchair users.

All the classrooms are spacious and kept clear of clutter to help visually impaired pupils move around the room safely and independently. All the classrooms have an outside balcony and an adjacent changing room and toilet facility.

The gymnasium is newly refurbished and has colour contrasting equipment such as benches and climbing tables as well as audible and visually contrasting balls and smaller equipment.

The food technology classroom has adjustable sinks and cookers to enable wheelchair users to access the equipment and work on their independent skills.

The room is also equipped with talking scales and microwaves to further enhance the pupils' independent skills.

Outside in the school grounds there is two outside play areas including a climbing frame, roundabout, wheelchair accessible swing and roundabout as well as height adjusted planting trugs to allow all pupils access.

Organisation of support.

Our school strives to be fully inclusive. In our school all pupils are taught in classes arranged by age which are mixed ability and teachers provide learning opportunities for all pupils within this environment and provide materials appropriate to pupils' visual ability, interests and physical abilities.

This ensures that all pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The structures and systems in place to help the pupils are :-

Small class sizes with a high staff ratio.

Individual support given during individual Literacy and numeracy sessions.

TAC meetings to involve all staff around each pupil.

Annual reviews take place which include reports from the multi-agencies involved with each pupil's education.

Annual reviews and progress of pupils' learning.

Pupils are continually assessed and monitored throughout the year through recording achievement through photographic evidence and the pupils' records of achievement in all subjects as well as their learning outcomes being evaluated and rewritten termly by the class teachers.

These learning outcomes link directly to the PIVATS and MAPP assessment tools used and are used to show progress as well as highlight any possible areas of concern or areas of development needing more input.

All pupils have an annual review and the class teachers writes the annual report linked to the pupils' progress over the year.

The previous PIVATS levels are also compared to the present ones each year to show ongoing progress and the parents/carers have the opportunity to make comment prior to the review to highlight any areas they are pleased with or have concerns about.

The Annual review report also contains reports from the multi-agencies involved with the pupil's education at the school.

These reports are overseen by the Assistant Head in charge of SEN Quality Assurance who after reading and checking them are passed to the Head of School before being sent out to the parents and other professionals linked to the pupil and who may be attending the review