

SEND Information Report: The Serendipity School

This document describes what we do to support our students throughout their time at The Serendipity School, and during the transition process at Post 16 or Post 18.

The Serendipity School

- Provides for up to 15 girls with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) between the ages of 9 and 19.
- Specialises in the education and care of girls who have experienced extreme trauma and who would benefit from a placement in a small, girls-only environment.
- Offers a holistic therapeutic approach, which also includes individual specialist therapy sessions within the timetable for all our students.
- Has an ethos based on the value and concept of 'Respect': respect for yourself, respect for others and respect for the environment and the wider community in which we live.
- Is a positive, safe and secure environment where all students are supported in receiving life-long learning experiences.
- Helps all students to develop more adaptive ways of coping with their difficulties and managing their emotional responses.
- Encourages all students to achieve their full potential and make a positive contribution to society.
- Celebrates and recognises achievement at every opportunity.
- Promotes positive behaviour, positive self-image and encourages all students to become effective communicators.
- Makes use of the local community to enable all students to develop social and team building skills, bringing learning to life.
- Promotes effective working relationships between parents, carers and external agencies.
- Has a small Post 16 provision with an emphasis on Life Skills, Independence and Post 18 options.

The Serendipity School is a specialist provision which provides education and care in a nurturing and therapeutic environment for girls who experience a broad range of complex difficulties in relation to social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Asperger's Syndrome, Autism (ASD), Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), challenging behaviours, or speech and language difficulties. The girls have typically been excluded from mainstream schools, or have had unsuccessful placements in alternative provision or a maintained special school.

Our therapeutic approach means class sizes need to be small and staffing levels need to be high. Our curriculum, timetable and class groupings are driven by the individual needs of the students.

Question	School self-evaluation
<p>1 When are girls able to access The Serendipity School?</p>	<p>All students at The Serendipity School are referred by their Local Authority (LA). Students may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • already have a Statement of Special Educational Need/Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). • have a pending EHCP naming The Serendipity School as the education provider. • have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. • be placed in the residential care of The Serendipity Centre Ltd. (TSCL) or in Local Authority (LA) care outside her school catchment area.
<p>2 How does The Serendipity School know what additional help my child will need?</p>	<p>All students receive individual assessment on entry to The Serendipity School. Assessment for the students is also supported by information from the LA and the school's own psychologist assessment and an assessment of her therapeutic needs.</p> <p>The vast majority of students placed at The Serendipity School have a Statement of SEN / EHCP, which fully outlines her own area of need and the outcomes expected for her by the end of a Key Stage, and also informs her Individual Education Plan (IEP). This is formally reviewed once a year during the Annual Review meeting, where progress is discussed and any additional needs or changes to the Statement of SEN / EHCP are made.</p> <p>Personal Education Plans (PEPs), which are formally reviewed on a termly basis, support all our students who are children looked after (CLA) by the LA.</p> <p>All classes have a high staffing ratio, and each subject leader is able to quickly identify any requirements for additional support.</p>
<p>3 How will The Serendipity School staff support my child?</p>	<p>The provision required is detailed in the Statement of SEN/EHCP and is further broken down in the goals and targets, referred to as Personal Progress Targets (PPT). Parents'/carers' contributions are actively sought. This is explained to parents/carers during the admission and transition process and at Annual Reviews.</p> <p>Each learning group has, on average, one subject leader and up to two learning support assistants (LSAs). This will vary according to individual student need within the group. Class sizes can vary from 1 to 4 students. Students may be taught in whole classes, small groups or 1:1 by the subject leader or LSA. The subject leader plans for all the students in the class, and is responsible for the overall assessment of their attainment and progress.</p> <p>Many of our students in Key Stage 4 access work experience, college placements and an enhanced curriculum allowing many opportunities to prepare for Post 16 transition and life beyond formal education. There are numerous</p>

		<p>opportunities to take external accreditation in a range of subjects in KS3, KS4 and KS5 according to relevance and the level of need of each individual student.</p> <p>School staff meet twice daily (morning briefing and afternoon debriefing) to discuss the students on an individual basis. If students are resident in one of the three children's homes run by The Serendipity Company Ltd (TSCL), a twice daily verbal handover, in the morning and the afternoon, between care and education staff takes place, in addition to a daily written precis.</p> <p>The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meets monthly to review the needs of the individual students and discuss changes which may be required to a student's plan. The MDT will seek to inform and involve other professionals working with a student at each stage to ensure information and best practice are shared.</p> <p>The role of the Proprietor is to influence and monitor the resources of the school, in partnership with the Head Teacher, to ensure that all our students are well supported. The Proprietor monitors outcomes, the quality of teaching and learning and parents'/carers' views. The Proprietor also reviews spending in relation to different provision for different students.</p>
4	<p>How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?</p>	<p>Whilst based on the National Curriculum, with the core subjects fully covered at KS3 and KS4, the curriculum is revised and suitably differentiated to ensure that all our students fully access an education suited to their individual needs. Primary aged students will follow a curriculum based on the new National Curriculum for KS2. In designing the curriculum, we actively address the anomaly between the students' educational needs and their social and emotional development in order to build a personalise programme which is achievable and allows realistic targets to be set. Detailed schemes of work have been produced and are used in every subject area, including offsite learning projects.</p> <p>We enhance our core curriculum through a variety of activities, both on and off site, which incorporate extensive spiritual, moral, cultural and social opportunities for all our students.</p> <p>We strive to offer as wide a range of experiences to our students as possible on an individual, small group and whole school basis, including half termly team building activities. These opportunities give our students the chance to develop their own skills as well as improving their self-confidence, self-esteem and social skills in a small group setting.</p> <p>All our students are offered 1 to 1 in house therapy following a detailed period of assessment to ensure that the relevant support is provided.</p>
5	<p>How will I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to</p>	<p>You will receive regular communication from the school about the progress your child is making. The STAR Book and your child's tutor is the first point of contact for any communication you may wish to make on a daily basis.</p>

	<p>support my child's learning?</p>	<p>Assessments are made on a regular basis in every subject, and the subject leader is responsible for maintaining and updating their records. School staff meet regularly to share and update assessment, and are able to plan for future learning and progression. Academic progress is monitored using P scales and/or The Serendipity School Levels based on the last set of level descriptors for the National Curriculum, predicted grades and achievement in external accreditations.</p> <p>Weekly homework is set for core subjects which parents/carers are encouraged to support their child to complete.</p> <p>Parents/carers and social workers receive a weekly report, in addition to a progress report in the Autumn Term and the Spring Term, as well as an Annual School Report at the end of each academic year.</p> <p>Personal Progress Plans (PPP) show progress and provision towards agreed targets which are measured on a daily basis and reviewed regularly. The PPPs are shared with parents/carers.</p> <p>Parents/carers of CLA students are invited to the termly PEP review meetings and to the Annual Review meeting.</p> <p>Parents/carers are invited to an annual Home-School Link afternoon to meet with school staff, to discuss student progress.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?</p>	<p>The well-being and emotional health of our students, which is supported by our holistic therapeutic approach, is equally as important as their academic progress. The high staff to student ratio helps to support and develop the emotional well-being of all our students in conjunction with our broad and varied curriculum. Students are also supported through the development of their individual behaviour plans, their individual risk assessments, their 1 to 1 therapy sessions and regular communication with home through the STAR Book.</p> <p>Our school has a strong community spirit with many opportunities to experience and share a wide range of activities on and off the school site. Our regular School Voice meetings enable the students to be involved in the decision making regarding their school community.</p> <p>Exclusions are rare and we work closely with staff and parents/carers to do all we can to proactively improve behaviour. Exclusions are used as a last resort.</p> <p>Students contribute to goal setting and review them at a level commensurate with their abilities.</p> <p>All school staff are trained in Team Teach which employs positive behavioural strategies, designed to reduce anxiety, risk and restraint. In addition, all school staff have an up to date first aid qualification.</p>

		<p>Fresh fruit is available for all students at break time and all students are provided with a healthy two course meal at lunch time which is prepared on site by our own school chef. Students also have the opportunity to have breakfast at school every morning.</p>
7	<p>What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by The Serendipity School?</p>	<p>The Serendipity School is able to provide holistic support to all our students and the school staff are highly skilled in meeting the individual behavioural, learning and social needs of students with complex learning difficulties.</p> <p>School staff work with a variety of professionals to best meet the needs of individuals. For example, Speech and Language Therapists, Nurses, CAMHS, Educational Psychologists all work in the school with individuals or groups on occasions, as well as our students working with our in house psychological services in Tranquillity House.</p> <p>Social workers, support workers for Social Care and Virtual School leaders are involved with many of our students and often visit the school to gain a better understanding of specific students and learn how their progress is achieved at school.</p> <p>We have an excellent working relationship with the local police and we also work closely with Barnado's.</p>
8	<p>What training are the staff supporting the students with SEND had or are having?</p>	<p>The Serendipity School has a well-qualified and experienced staff group. All teachers, except those in training positions, are fully qualified to national standards, but also have a wealth of other specific training and experiences.</p> <p>All staff receive a comprehensive and ongoing training programme designed to make sure they are fully equipped to meet the needs of our students. All new staff take part in a detailed Induction Programme, and all new staff are supported regularly throughout their first year by senior staff.</p> <p>All staff receive regular training in Team Teach (positive behaviour management), First Aid, Safeguarding and various other opportunities relevant to their specific job role.</p> <p>Training in school is used to increase and monitor the quality of teaching and learning across all needs and includes five annual INSET days of training. This time is carefully planned to ensure that it is used to extend and further develop staff knowledge and skills, and also to address any key areas of the school development plan for the year.</p>
9	<p>How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?</p>	<p>The Serendipity School is a fully inclusive school and we would never exclude any student from an activity because of her disability or SEN. Our staffing and teaching strategies are designed to help all our students best access the community and the full range of educational opportunity.</p>

		<p>All students are encouraged to fully participate in whole school events and activities, both on and off site. The extent to which every student is able to participate will vary according to the individual and her level of need, but activities and expectations will be carefully differentiated in order to support every student. As a school we place huge value on the importance of a balanced and varied curriculum, and on curriculum enhancement activities.</p> <p>All visits and off site activities are fully risk assessed, and carefully planned for. Students are able to take part in regular trips and visits, and parents/carers are communicated with on a regular basis to ensure they are fully aware, at all times, of any off site activities.</p> <p>Group activities will be planned sensitively according to the needs of the majority but with as much support as possible for those who need it. It may well be the case that not all members of a certain group will attend the same outing or trip BUT all should receive similar quality opportunities to meet their individual needs.</p> <p>All school trips are without charge.</p>
10	<p>How accessible is the school environment?</p>	<p>The school is an accessible building with a downstairs teaching space with toilet and changing facility for students who may not be able to access the upstairs teaching spaces.</p> <p>A hearing loop is available for students with hearing difficulties.</p> <p>The use of visual graphics around the school, for example Makaton and Widgets.</p> <p>School staff work with parents/carers to try and facilitate appropriate equipment and resources for individual students.</p> <p>Classrooms and corridors are well lit and well equipped.</p>
11	<p>How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school or transfer to a new setting / school / college or the next stage of education and life?</p>	<p>The Serendipity School has a thorough transition programme to support new students moving to the school.</p> <p>We encourage parents/carers of any new students, who will not be resident in one of TSCL children's homes, to visit the school before the placement is agreed by the LA.</p> <p>All transitions are bespoke in order to reduce anxiety and ensure that the individual needs of the student are met. Transition timetables are planned in consultation with the student, parent/carer and social workers (if applicable) any relevant information from previous educational settings.</p> <p>All transitions from The Serendipity School are supported to suit the individual need of the student. This may include a slow transition back into mainstream education, taster visits to local colleges or a gradual integration into college</p>

		<p>which slowly builds the number of hours/days at college while being supported by a part time timetable in school. Many transitions are supported by 1 to 1 staffing from The Serendipity School LSAs.</p>
12	<p>How are school's resources allocated and matched to student needs?</p>	<p>All students will receive support matched to her own level of need during their time at The Serendipity School.</p> <p>The school is funded in relation to the individual needs of the students. When setting staffing levels these allocations are used – the school makes variations to this when it can afford to by providing additional staffing where it feels subject leaders/LSA levels are not enough.</p> <p>The school receives additional income targeted at set individuals and groups. Records are retained to show how such grants are spent. The school will retain responsibility, in discussion with Virtual Schools and social workers, to ensure that such spending is used to best help educational outcomes.</p>
13	<p>How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved?</p>	<p>Parents'/carers' opinions and priorities are routinely included in considerations about target setting through the Annual Review.</p> <p>We produce a weekly report and a ½ termly newspaper, 'The Independent'. Parents/carers are also invited to a number of events throughout the year, including workshops that have been run to provide further information. For example, workshops on reading at home and homework.</p>
14	<p>Who can I contact for further information?</p>	<p>There are several methods of communication you can make use of, either before admission or during your child's time at The Serendipity School.</p> <p>Prior to admission you will be given a named contact at school, this is most likely to be the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).</p> <p>You are always welcome to contact the school at any time if there is anything you wish to discuss, or to arrange a tour of the school. An appointment will then be arranged at a mutually convenient time.</p> <p>During your child's time at The Serendipity School the first point of contact with the school is your child's tutor. You can also make daily use of the STAR Book, or telephone/email the school if you wish to discuss anything with a member of staff.</p> <p>In all instances contact to the main school office is welcomed and staff will help parents/carers contact the appropriate person.</p>

		<p>You may find useful information in our SEND policy which is available upon request.</p>
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The Head Teacher can always be contacted by parents/carers who wish to discuss any fundamental issues about needs and provision.

