

SEND Information Report: The Serendipity School 2019 - 2020

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 aged between the ages of 9 and 19 who exhibit behavioural difficulties associated with their social, emotional and mental health. These may be complicated by additional learning needs.
- Specialises in the education and care of students who have experienced extreme trauma or have identified special educational needs and who would benefit from a placement in a girls-only environment.
- Offers a holistic therapeutic approach, which also includes timetabled individual specialist therapy sessions 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.
- Is a positive, safe and secure environment where all students are supported in life-long learning experiences.
- Helps all students to develop more adaptive ways of coping with their difficulties.
- 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 an independent special school for girls with a broad range of complex issues. All our students have learning difficulties and many have additional needs (for example, Autism, ASD, challenging behaviours, emotional needs, physical difficulties or speech difficulties). The students have typically been excluded from mainstream schools, or have had unsuccessful placements in alternative provision or maintained special schools.

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

Question	School self-evaluation
<p>1 When are students 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 an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). • have a pending EHCP naming The Serendipity School as the education provider. • have emotional, social and/or mental health difficulties. • be placed in the residential care of The Serendipity Centre Ltd. (TSCL) or in LA care and have moved out of 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 commissioned professionals, for example an Educational Psychologist and a Speech and Language Therapist.</p> <p>The vast majority of students placed at The Serendipity School have an EHCP, which fully outlines her own area of need and the outcomes expected for each student 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 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 and the virtual school.</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 EHCP and is further broken down in the goals and targets of the IEP. Parents'/carers' contributions are actively sought. This is explained to parents/carers during the admission process and at Annual Reviews.</p> <p>Each teaching group has, on average, one subject leader and up to two learning support assistants (LSAs). This will vary according to 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>The majority of our students in Key Stage 4 access work experience, college opportunities and an enhanced curriculum allowing many opportunities to prepare for Post 16 transition. There are numerous 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 TSCL children's homes, a twice daily verbal handover between care and education staff takes place, in addition to a daily written precis.</p> <p>The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meets on a regular basis to review the needs of individual students and discuss changes which may be required to a student's plan.</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. 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.</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 work regarding Keep Safe / Self Awareness via Tranquillity House, where all our in house therapy takes place.</p>
5	<p>How will I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?</p>	<p>You will receive regular communication from the school about the progress your child is making at school. 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>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 The Serendipity School Levels based on the last set of level descriptors for the National Curriculum, Age Related Expectations (ARE), 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 with.</p> <p>Parents/carers and social workers receive weekly reports, 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 Targets (PPTs) show progress and provision towards agreed targets which are evaluated regularly. The PPTs are shared with parents/carers via the STAR Book.</p> <p>Parents/carers are invited to the termly PEP review meetings and to the EHCP meeting.</p> <p>Parents/carers are invited to an annual Home-School Link afternoon to meet with school staff, to discuss their child's progress.</p>
6	<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 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 Student Voice meetings enable the students to be involved in decision making regarding their school.</p> <p>Exclusions are rare and we work closely with staff and parents/carers to do all we can to proactively improve behaviour.</p> <p>Students contribute to goal setting and review 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, and some have additional training in the administration of controlled medication.</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 school chef. Students also have breakfast at school every morning.</p>
7	<p>What specialist services and</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>expertise are available at or accessed by The Serendipity School?</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 therapy service 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>Specialist careers advice and guidance is provided by Education Business Partnership (EBP).</p> <p>We have an excellent working relationship with the local police force 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 and designated mentors.</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 never exclude any students from an activity because of a disability or SEND. 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	How accessible is the school environment?	<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>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> <p>Where applicable to the individual needs of a child, The Serendipity School will work alongside other practitioners, for example: CAMHS, Occupational Therapists, Paediatricians, specialist nursing support and SALT.</p> <p>Any instances of discrimination in regards to diversity or disability are challenged to maintain and promote a positive environment of respect and understanding.</p> <p>The School's Accessibility Policy is available on request.</p>
11	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>The Serendipity School has a thorough transition programme to support new students moving to the school.</p> <p>The Serendipity School encourages and supports the child to be part of this transition process by encouraging them to visit the school, attend transition meetings, meet with staff and be part of their reviews once in school. The views of the child are essential in providing a personalised timetable and support.</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/carers and social workers (if applicable) using 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 which slowly builds the number of hours/days at college while being supported by a part time timetable in school.</p>

		<p>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.</p> <p>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 of the EHCP.</p> <p>Tutors write a weekly report for each of their tutees which is shared with parents/carers and the LA where appropriate. The school newspaper, 'The Independent', is published on a half termly basis. Parents/carers are also invited to events throughout the year, for example, home –school link meetings and workshops focussed on reading at home and homework have been run.</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 Co-ordinator (SENCo).</p> <p>You are always welcome to contact the school at any time, by telephone on 02380 422255 (option 3), 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 by telephone on 02380 422255 (option 3), is welcomed and staff will help parents/carers contact the appropriate person.</p> <p>You may find useful information in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy which is available upon request.</p>

		<p>The Head Teacher can always be contacted by parents/carers who wish to discuss any fundamental issues about needs and provision.</p>
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