

Mainstream Plus

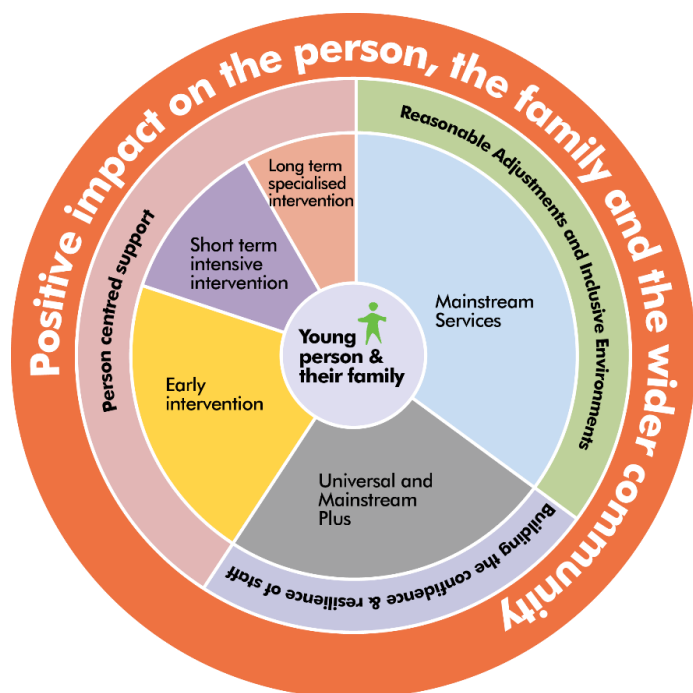
**Mainstream Plus Approach: working towards a universal offer
by supporting the workforce and system leaders**

CONTENTS

A MAINSTREAM PLUS APPROACH	2	APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT	16
THE BENEFITS OF A MAINSTREAM PLUS APPROACH	4	APPENDIX 2: MONEGA SCHOOL	18
i. Children and Young People	4	APPENDIX 3: WESTON COLLEGE	21
Monega School	4	APPENDIX 4: BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL	24
ii. Commissioners	5	APPENDIX 5: DERBY COLLEGE	26
Weston College	5	APPENDIX 6: CLEVES AND ROYAL DOCKS SCHOOLS	30
iii. Local Authority and CCG Leaders	6	Cleves	30
Bristol City Council	7	Royal Docks Academy	33
iv. Leaders in Education Settings	8		
Derby College	8		
v. Classroom practitioners	9		
Cleves School	9		
Royal Docks Academy	10		
WHAT DOES MAINSTREAM PLUS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE IN AN EDUCATION SETTING?	11		
i. Enabling Environments	11		
ii. Positive and Effective Relationships	12		
iii. Understanding the Individual	13		
iv. Learning and Development	13		
CHANGING CULTURE TO MATCH THE ASPIRATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	14		

A MAINSTREAM PLUS APPROACH

The Education and Training Foundation has commissioned the National Development Team for Inclusion to write this report which articulates the concept of Mainstream Plus. **Mainstream Plus as conceptualised in this context was developed by the Institute of Public Care in their Commissioning Model for Ordinary Lives (2017). The Autism Education Trust has taken the model and applied it to the way they work in local areas across England.**



Traditionally, the approach to supporting children and young people has been to focus on the child and their diagnosis and to provide interventions. When an intervention for an individual child does not work it is usually because not enough attention has been paid to the environment and the values embedded within the setting. The Mainstream Plus approach recognises the need for specialist services, early intervention, and short-term therapeutic intervention but it emphasises the need for support aimed at system leaders and the workforce that results in culture change. Specialist services, early intervention and therapeutic intervention all focus on individual children / young people and their immediate circle. These interventions are crucial, but they do not result in the systemic, sustainable culture change required to ensure equal access to a positive education that supports wellbeing for ALL children and young people.

This is not to say that a focus on the child or young person is not required. For many children and young people additional specialist input is required but these interventions are much more successful if they are within the context of a mainstream plus approach where there has been a change in culture and the workforce has been upskilled so that they have the confidence and resilience to support and educate autistic and learning-disabled children and young people.

The mainstream plus approach will only work if it is understood and implemented in a system wide way. For commissioners this means commissioning services which meet the needs of the population. The model developed so far focuses on children and young people with autism but can be applied across the whole population of children and young people who face barriers to learning and social inclusion. **Appendix 1** of this report provides the context within which mainstream plus should be considered and why it is such an important model.

Autistic people and learning-disabled people have the same rights and aspirations as those without these barriers. Commissioners need to develop services that reduce or even prevent the need for more intensive, costly services. A mainstream plus approach sees commissioners not just thinking in terms of services but thinking in terms of workforce. A mainstream plus approach sees commissioners investing in workforce development and the upskilling of mainstream staff. In the AET example this involves local authority commissioners investing in an AET license to deliver high quality, accredited, DfE supported autism training in their local area. LAs that fully invest in this approach make the training freely available to education settings and provide it in conjunction with support to enable education settings to not just improve knowledge about autism but to change attitudes and develop skills that result in sustained culture change. In these local areas the training and support is mandatory for any setting wishing to refer individual children and young people to services for targeted intervention.

This approach and its focus on staff development closely links to the **National Teaching Standards for Professional Development** which expect effective teacher professional development to be a partnership between head teachers and other members of the leadership team and those with professional expertise. In order for this partnership to be successful:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.

And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:

5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

To support achievement of the standards it will be necessary for more specialists to work in mainstream provision so that children and young people can be served well within the mainstream system with all the benefits that provides to the children, young people, the workforce, the wider community, and society as people learn and work alongside people with disabilities.

Mainstream Plus supports commissioners, local authority officers, school and college leaders and classroom practitioners to understand a strengths-based position and helps local areas to reduce exclusions and demand on specialist services, which either makes savings for the public purse or enables local authorities to meet the needs of more people without compromising outcomes or increasing budgets.

THE BENEFITS OF A MAINSTREAM PLUS APPROACH

i. Children and Young People

If education settings adopt a mainstream plus approach, children and young people feel welcome and that they belong. They receive an education that challenges them while at the same time being fully accessible to them. Their teachers are confident because they have had the training and support they need and the whole staff understand how to support all children and young people. The governors understand the Equality Act as well as their duties under the Children and Families Act. Everyone has had the training they need to understand “what works” in supporting a very wide range of learning and personal needs. Autistic children and young people as well as those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and other disabilities have a voice in the school and are represented on the school or college council. The school or college understands the importance of children and young people being supported socially and emotionally around friendships, and all children and young people understand that to be different is fine – that we are all in fact different but society decides which differences matter and which don't.

Monega School

Monega primary school is also a Boleyn Trust school. Boleyn Trust promotes the entitlement and life chances of children in disadvantaged communities.

The school believes that inclusion is about supporting and celebrating diversity and that it works because it gives all children the potential to achieve, by creating an environment where those with additional needs are not segregated and seen as 'other' but are part of the same community of learners.

“Mainstream schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.” (Taken from the Salamanca Statement – UNESCO World Conference on SEN)

Inclusion in Monega

Monega School has 5 core values to their approach. Care, Commitment, Courtesy, Consideration and Cooperation

In the classroom:

- Adapted curriculum that it is ambitious and meets the needs of children with additional needs providing them with knowledge, skills, and abilities to develop confidence and independence
- Learning is accessible and achievable by differentiating tasks such as colouring, overwriting and copying, matching, cutting and sticking
- A meaningful curriculum for all children with robust lesson plans, and learning objectives
- Use of key words to simplify and take it right back to basics
- Lessons that are meaningful for each child, using pictures, symbols, objects of reference etc. to make it accessible
- Review to make sure it meets each child's learning targets
- To support children with Autism there is a low stimuli approach in every classroom
- Supported children spend all of their time in the classroom but do come out for some specialist activity such as music therapy, speech and language, occupational therapy, attention autism groups.

Around the school – 3 fluid modes of inclusion:

- Locational – in regular classes working on their own personalised curriculum with their peers. For example, if the class are studying Egyptians, the child with additional needs might be making a model of a pyramid
- Linked - supported children will work with their peers in their classes and be involved in the learning activities set out for the class
- Social - children are included in all aspects of the social school day – play times, assemblies, lunch and breaks, outings, and residential visits.

Leadership and continued professional development:

- Leaders strongly support the message that difference is OK and provide coaching and mentoring to support school staff with inclusion
- The quality of teaching for children with additional needs, and the progress they make, is a core part of the schools' performance management
- CPD is embedded in the school to ensure every teacher is a teacher and a leader of SEND, and includes sessions on differentiation and variation
- All children are discussed every term to ensure the school is meeting their need.

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 2**.

ii. Commissioners

By adopting a Mainstream Plus approach, local authority and health commissioners will achieve value for money and better outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs. Commissioning services without a consideration of the quality of these services in relation to children's and young people's aspirations does not drive culture change. A focus on workforce development and support for system leaders done well will support culture change.

All of the evidence shows that children and young people want to be included and do the things that other children and young people of their age do and therefore, commissioning on the basis of Mainstream Plus is essential. Commissioners in local authorities need to ensure the placements and services they commission reflect the needs and desired outcomes of the population, are based on effective practice, and ensure they are planned and organised to best meet the outcomes of the population.

A Mainstream Plus commissioning strategy will articulate children and young people's desire to have a good stimulating education, to have friends and relationships and to go into employment. The strategy will also be based on children and young people's right to be supported to have high self-esteem and wellbeing, to be safe, to have equal opportunities and access to the things that other young people of their age do. Working with children, young people and families to develop commissioning strategies leads to services which are inclusive, use resources effectively, plan well for the future and reduce demand for specialist services and Education, Health and Care assessments. Joint commissioning across local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) is a statutory requirement of the Children and Families Act

Weston College

Weston College has been on an improvement journey since 2001 and has located inclusion at the heart of everything it has done. Improving and expanding SEND provision has been a catalyst and the impact on the whole college has been proven.

The college believes that the benefits of becoming an inclusive organisation are:

- Good practice for all
- Widening participation therefore increased learner numbers
- Raising aspirations of staff, learners and partners
- Innovation – leading to a more attractive organisation
- Increased reputation
- Recognising talent from all
- Efficient high-quality organisation
- Higher retention and success rates
- Positive progression to meaningful and sustainable outcomes
- Higher level of recruitment of staff and learners
- A responsive organisation with people at the centre

Every learner has an individualised timetable so that they can access what they need rather than having to fit in to something that is not appropriate for them. The college focuses on the barriers that learners face in achieving their aspirations and puts support in place to overcome those barriers. Learners can access level one programmes without necessarily having the traditional entry requirements, thus giving them access to a wide curriculum offer.

In 2010, it was agreed that the college with the local authority and other partners would develop provision for learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities. As the result of a successful capital grant bid, spaces within the main college building were reconstructed. The new provision includes a sensory learning base. These developments have meant that the college is now able to include learners who previously had no choice but to attend colleges out of the area if they wanted to continue their tertiary education. The new provision has meant that these learners have been able to stay in their local community. The developments also included the Weston Bay residential provision for autistic learners. This provision enables autistic learners to spend from one night to three months learning some of the skills they need as they move into adulthood at the same time as participating in college academic and vocational courses.

Value for Money

By enabling learners to participate in their further education in local mainstream provision, the amount of money spent on out of area specialist post 16 placements has reduced from £3,500,000 in 2007/08 to £1,140,000 in 2019/20. In addition to this the focus for as many young people as possible to progress to employment will also reap lifetime benefits and better outcomes for the young people.

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 3**.

iii. Local Authority and CCG Leaders

Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups are under an enormous amount of pressure. This pressure is caused by needing to operate within a fixed budget, deliver specific national indicators such as the timescales for developing Education, Health and Care plans and place children and young people in education settings. Adopting a Mainstream Plus approach has several benefits. Children and young people want high quality education and ordinary lives, and this provides the opportunity to develop a local vision and to use resources more effectively.

All staff working to support children and young people need to be involved in developing the shared vision and understand what it means for their day-to-day work. Therapy, nursing and mental health services, social care teams, learning and behaviour support services and school improvement services must have a clear understanding of the aspirations of children and young people, what works to support them to achieve their aspirations and clear ways of working that will support

providers. These high-quality central services need to facilitate a training and development programme for nurseries, schools and colleges that will support them to achieve the aspirations of children and young people and to continually review and improve. The more resources used for upskilling the workforce, the less will be needed to fund expensive placements (especially out-of-area) that are often made in crisis situations.

Bristol City Council

Bristol Council has a comprehensive integrated service which supports early years' settings and families to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. Continuing professional development is prioritised and has a focus on ethos and leadership as well as best practice teaching and learning, SEND pedagogy and multi-agency working. Training is available to:

- develop early years providers skills to include children with disabilities and/or special educational needs
- empower early years practitioners to support children with disabilities and/or special educational needs in the longer term from within their delegated resources.

A series of training events are available from the Early Years Inclusion Service throughout the academic year. Topics are based on needs identified through inclusion visits to settings, previous feedback, data and information from the Early Years SEN Panel.

Bespoke in-house workshops are available for early years settings at inset days or team meetings and can be booked as one of a setting's inclusion visits.

The Autism Education Trust Early Years Programme of training is available to all Early Years settings and runs throughout the year. It will develop practitioner confidence in:

- Understanding individual autistic children on the autism and their profile of strengths and challenges
- Identifying key areas to help children build positive relationships
- Supporting children who are unusually sensitive to sensory stimuli

A system of measuring the value, effectiveness and impact of training accessed by early years providers has been introduced. The approach gathers evidence to show the difference accessing the training has made to practitioners and settings.

All participants in training are required to complete an evaluation form at the end of each training session. They are then contacted in a further 6-8 weeks asking for a follow up feedback form to be completed which will identify the impact of training session. This will then enable the service to continually monitor the effectiveness of the training be delivered. Settings can also access training provided by other services, such as training in administration of medication and use of specialist equipment. There is also a specific training programme for childminders.

As well as a robust programme of professional development, there are a range of supports. Early years settings are supported to include and meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities in the following ways:

- Specialist Leaders in Education (Inclusion) who are responsible for leading and supporting inclusive practice. These practitioners are based in a setting but are responsible for supporting all of the settings in an area
- Early years SENCO cluster meetings twice a term
- Inclusion support package

Value for Money

Funding is available to support children in early years' settings without the need for an Education, Health and Care plan and the funding follows children into their school setting.

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 4**.

iv. Leaders in Education Settings

An investment in whole workforce development programme for Mainstream Plus approach will benefit education leaders. Being aware of the aspirations of children and young people will focus their strategic planning on the importance of workforce development. A workforce development plan for all staff in the setting is essential for creating an environment in which all children and young people can thrive. Everyone in the setting needs to understand the law and in particular the Equality Act 2010 so that disability discrimination is avoided, and every child has access to a challenging yet accessible curriculum.

Derby College

Derby College is a large General Further Education college serving Derby, Derbyshire, and the wider East Midlands. The college serves around 20,000 learners, both young people and adults and provides a broad range of vocational, A level and apprenticeship programmes. The college also provides higher education. The current CEO has been in post since 2013 and says that the journey she started will never end. Her role has been to facilitate the development of the strategic view, the mission and purpose and to make sure these are clear internally and externally and to articulate the longer-term vision.

Everything that the college does is based on the values of inclusion, encouraging creativity and empowerment and the college structure enables the strategy to be implemented. There is a very strong priority placed on staff development. There is an acknowledgement that all staff are recruited with the right attitude and ability to realise the vision, including specialists. Everyone is expected to focus on the experience of the learners, employers and the staff team.

The Director of Inclusion at the college also started in 2013. The department looked at the language in use at the time to describe learners with certain characteristics and a strategic decision was made in consultation with learners that the college would move away from the language of SEND, additional needs and of the medical model of disability and to use positive aspirational language. This provided the opportunity to have conversations with staff to set a new context and the department became the Inclusion and Support Service with a mission to support the curriculum and the community. The college articulates inclusion as being about everyone, with understanding around culture, age, gender diversity, sexual orientation, disability or impairment.

All lecturers are inclusion lecturers. Inclusive teaching plans are detailed and provide a summary of everything people need to know about the learner. Lecturers have the plans before learners step through the door. All teachers know the profile of their group before they start teaching them and what adjustments they need to make for them. Inclusion teaching plans are reviewed three times a year to adjust for emerging confidence and independence. The staffing structure in place at the college to realise the vision includes:

- Inclusion and Support Specialists
- Inclusion and Support Trainers
- Inclusion coordinators
- Pathway to working life programme
- Pathway to independence programme
- Education support workers

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 5**.

v. Classroom practitioners

The SEND Area Inspections carried out by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have highlighted the lack of confidence experienced by many classroom practitioners across education settings in meeting the needs of autistic and learning-disabled children and young people. Adopting a Mainstream Plus approach will develop practitioners who are confident and resilient in the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning to a diverse learning community, including children and young people with autism, learning disabilities and others who face challenges in their learning. They will have the skills to work with parents, other family members and other professionals, know how to set outcomes and measure progress.

Cleves School

“As future leaders’ children can start to challenge misconceptions of inclusion.”
(Deputy Head of Inclusion, Cleves School)

Cleves primary school is part of the Boleyn Trust, a collection of 7 schools across the London Borough of Newham. The schools in the Trust have a strong collaborative approach that fosters a close working relationship to support, challenge, share and learn. Inclusion is at the heart of everything they do. Cleves school provides 23 places for children with profound and complex needs (called supported children) out of a total of 480 places.

Inclusion at Cleves

In the classroom:

- Curriculum support to plan for individual children and liaise with all the agencies that support the school to ensure a holistic approach
- Strong partnership with parents to provide the bridge between the school and home
- Children are classed based with some flexibility to support a sensory curriculum where needed
- Supported children make real relationships with peers, which last beyond the life of the school

Around the school:

- The school is fully accessible, so able to meet the needs of children with physical impairments, and those with additional needs are included in the whole curriculum including after school activities and residential trips
- Children are fully involved in school life with all aspects of their development supported in an inclusive way

Leadership and continued professional development:

- A range of skilled and experienced staff to support the thread of inclusion through every class
- Training for all staff is wide ranging, to develop all aspects of the curriculum including more specialised areas such as Enteral Feeding, Epilepsy, Autism or Music Therapy.

“The beauty of Cleves is that we have an ownership and a loyalty to the place which means that when one person leaves the whole thing doesn’t come crashing down! We are not totally reliant on any one of us to make sure the vision of being an inclusive school continues.” (Deputy Head)

Value for Money

- Multi agency approach with therapy recommendations woven into curriculum
- Learning mentors and counsellors provide early intervention and additional support where needed, avoiding long waiting lists and potential school breakdown
- Children are able to go to a local school with their siblings rather than in expensive out of area schools.

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 6**.

Royal Docks Academy

Royal Docks Academy is a purpose built, mixed, community comprehensive school for pupils aged 11 to 16. The school is one of the feeder secondary schools for the children with profound learning needs at Cleves school which is also featured as a case study in this report. The school was designed to be fully inclusive and has achieved national architectural recognition for its design. The school opened in 1999 and there are currently 950 pupils on roll, children with the whole range of special needs and disabilities and has a dedicated resource for 25 pupils who have profound, severe and multiple learning difficulties.

The school is highly aspirational and expects all children to reach their potential. At key stage four there is the following curriculum offer:

- A full traditional GCSE programme
- A vocational curriculum (Creative and Media and Retail Business accredited by WJEC) at levels one and two which pupils can participate in alongside some GCSEs
- A personalised curriculum at entry level called Aspire. This is a course that pupils are invited to attend if they may not be completing a full range of GCSEs. It allows pupils to study a wide range of subjects and is made up of modules designed to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils completing them.

At Royal Docks Academy all pupils access Quality First teaching and fully embrace the idea that provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the whole school. The school's aim is to ensure that all pupils, whatever their need or disability, make good progress through both pastoral and curriculum support. Teaching assistants are attached to curriculum areas to ensure high quality support. There are strong relationships with parents and outside agencies to ensure holistic planning and integrated working.

The 25 children with profound learning needs are supported by a specialist team of four teachers and fifteen support assistants who provide a differentiated curriculum under the guidance of Equals, the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and ASDAN programmes. Some learning takes place off the school site. For example, the pupils attend the London Regatta Centre (Youth Rowing Club) for adaptive rowing and once a year take part in the National Youth Adaptive Rowing competition. They also go swimming at the local leisure centre.

Value for Money

The 25 children attending Royal Docks school who have profound learning needs and several other children would normally be expected to be attending special school provision and some of these would have been out of the area. By attending an inclusive mainstream school, the resources to support them are used far more effectively and the children enjoy friendships with children in their community which continue into their adult lives.

A fuller version of this case study is at **Appendix 6**.

WHAT DOES MAINSTREAM PLUS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE IN AN EDUCATION SETTING?

A mainstream plus model has four key areas:

- i. Enabling Environments
- ii. Positive and Effective Relationships
- iii. Understanding the Individual
- iv. Learning and Development

These elements are described in tangible terms below:

i. Enabling Environments

The leadership of the setting is such that everyone promotes and models inclusive behaviour. Leaders have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of SEND with regular training/updates which are fed into setting developments at all levels. Governors promote inclusive environments and model inclusive behaviour and hold the setting to account and leaders and managers promote and model inclusive behaviour, demonstrated through policies, practices, communications (website, SEND report, Local Offer, newsletters, conversations), networks, including:

- High aspirations, ambitions, expectations for all
- Promotion of the existence and value of neurodiversity in the setting community
- Celebrate diversity
- Actively track attainment, exclusion and bullying to identify vulnerable group gaps and address this proactively
- Actions to promote vulnerable groups are reflected in ongoing developments in the school improvement plan, self-evaluation, Performance Management, CPD annual cycle
- Trained SENCO part of leadership team
- SEND staff have parity of esteem and status
- Training for cover staff, parents and other volunteers, all who work in the setting in whatever role
- Preparing for Adulthood, life skills, social and emotional development are embedded into explicit and hidden curriculum
- Staff meetings have a slot on sharing information about individuals to ensure consistent approaches across the setting (classes, midday supervisors etc.)
- Person centred ethos with individual needs proactively and positively addressed. Stereotypes are not part of the equation.

Practitioners promote and model inclusive behaviour with inclusive approaches embedded as part of usual practice in teaching and learning, listening, and acting on the voice of children and young people, collaborative partnership working with parents and carers. Consistent approaches are used across and throughout the setting with partnership working with parents and outside agencies, acting on pupil voice and demonstrating flexibility as required.

Physical spaces (accessibility considered for physical and learning disabilities and neurodiversity):

- Ramps, lifts
- Sensory; colours, sound....

Shared spaces e.g., reception, hall:

- Ordered and without clutter
- Visual timetables with behaviour/rewards

- Demarcations of what happens where
- Careful presentation of written and visual notices

Learning spaces:

- Ordered and without clutter, clear signposts of what happens where
- Labelled drawers
- White space around displays/whiteboards
- Displays organised and relevant to learning
- Seating plan and space for quiet working with flexibility for individual needs
- Visual timetable (not just displayed but used)
- Visual behaviour expectations and rewards
- Clearly understood approach for getting help (help cards...)
- Sensory reduced area

Outdoor spaces:

- Play areas clearly marked for their purpose
- Visual timetables, now/next boards/turn taking support
- Age-appropriate activities explicitly taught in advance as needed with generalisation activities as needed.

Learning:

- Curriculum devised for neurodiversity and learning disability
- Technology/ICT used effectively
- Visual timetable on display, referred to and used across the day
- Now next boards
- All transitions carefully planned and taught
- Work schedules
- Calm manner, language and communication
- Routines for help, buddy support.

Teaching approaches for inside and outside the classroom:

- Careful use of language, consistently understood and applied across the setting
- Explicit social and emotional teaching, independence, life skills planned into the curriculum
- Explicit teaching for break and lunchtime routines and activities, use of buddy systems and 'friendship benches'
- Work schedules
- Help cards
- Active teaching to manage change
- Independence promoted
- Teachers teach most vulnerable children, TA supporting other groups/classroom as a whole
- Taught routines for breaks and lunchtimes, assemblies etc. i.e., provide structure for all unstructured times
- Clubs linked to interests and friendship skills actively taught. Autistic CYP lead clubs and develop friendships in this way
- Exposure to a range of experiences including creative/artistic and 'what is possible'.

ii. Positive and Effective Relationships

- Pupils and parents have a voice in the development of the inclusive environment and provisions for autistic and learning-disabled children and young people based on co-production of policies and the school improvement plan
- Good relationships based on trust, respect and honesty are proactively developed
- Working in partnership and collaboration
- Use of person-centred tools including person centred reviews and a coaching approach to

- develop and include parent/carer voice as part of setting developments
- Parent networking groups
- Parent helpers/volunteers encouraged and included in training opportunities and inclusive environment developments
- Training and development requirements identified at least annually to respond to the cohort within the setting and the anticipatory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure gaps are filled and the need to keep up to date are addressed.
- Staff confidence checked termly as part of performance management and the assess, plan, do, review cycle. Necessary actions taken because of this, including appropriate training, coaching and outside agency support. As much as possible embedded within the inclusive environment for all
- Annual training needs identified through self-evaluation, school improvement plan and ambitions of the setting.
- Workforce developments link with the school improvement plan school improvement plan, self-evaluation, Ofsted and performance management.
- Autism Champion as part of the leadership team to ensure empathy and confidence in whole school community to respond appropriately to the needs of autistic CYP.

iii. Understanding the Individual

- Positive and respectful relationship with children and young people
- Children and young people's voices are sought, listened to, accepted by everyone working with them and responded to by forming the basis of their outcomes
- Work with parent/carers to understand the individual
- Understand the impact of eating, sleeping, toileting differences, anxiety and co-morbidity
- Develop a consistent approach across all settings; home, school or college, after school clubs etc.
- Use of strengths in all aspects of academic learning, social emotional development etc.
- View behaviour as communication and understand the perspective of the individual to implement appropriate approaches. Embed into usual practice whenever possible
- Dovetail knowledge of the individual with whole class work, clubs, reading material, friendship groups, outdoor activities etc. But ensure that they are exposed to other experiences too
- Develop strategies to enable pupil voice for those that are unable to engage in the usual way of learner panels etc such as use of mind maps, touring the setting
- Allow trusted individual to work with the individual to input views
- Plan individual approaches via person centred tools
- Engagement strategies at governance and leadership levels.

iv. Learning and Development

- Full understanding of SEND, appropriate strategies and approaches and why these would be applied to recognise uniqueness and enable personalisation
- Evidenced based approaches
- Inclusive curriculum planned in line with the OFSTED Framework 2019 (Intent, Implementation, Impact) with additional differentiation for personalisation.
- Teach beyond the national curriculum e.g., hidden curriculum, preparing for adulthood and all this entails
- Generalisation beyond learning in one setting planned for
- Additional support for homework, revision and exam concessions.

CHANGING CULTURE TO MATCH THE ASPIRATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

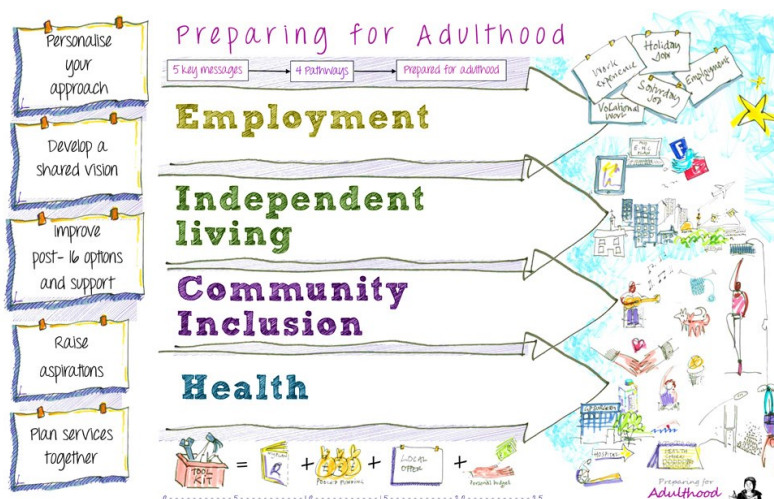
Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are often underestimated in what they are able to achieve. The Green Paper Support and Aspiration which was published in 2011 and preceded the 2014 Children and Families Act focused on this problem of low aspirations and expectations and proposed that there needed to be a focus on raising aspirations and expectations throughout the system around what young people can achieve, both in terms of achievement at school but also across their whole lives.

The Green Paper also highlighted that there has been too much focus on bureaucracy rather than on supporting teaching and learning and that we should shift to a focus on learning rather than on labels. Working out why a child is not reaching milestones and identifying or diagnosing conditions is obviously important, but we must do everything we can to avoid labelling that leads to stereotypical responses from society, including schools. Autistic, learning disabled and other disabled children, young people and adults want to lead ordinary lives and do the things that most people take for granted. They want to study at college, get a job, have relationships and friendships and a good social life. The key theme that has run through national policy and good practice guidance for almost 40 years is the need to provide services that support children, young people and adults to have healthy, meaningful, ordinary lives autistic and learning-disabled children, young people and adults can make the most of their lives and talents, experience equality of opportunity, access options that promote a sense of belonging and inclusion in their communities.

The Preparing for Adulthood Pathways were co-produced by 400 learning disabled and autistic children, young people and their families between 2008 and 2011 as part of the cross-government strategy, Valuing Employment Now. During the three-year programme the young people and their families identified the barriers they faced which prevent them having fulfilling, ordinary lives. The main barriers identified were attributed to:

- Low aspirations for them across the whole system
- Stereotypical assumptions which led to poor interventions and support
- A lack of knowledge on the part of some professionals about what is positive and possible
- Being too “protected” and not allowed to do the things that other children and young people do.

They shared their wisdom about what needs to change and provided the evidence base for chapter eight of the SEND Code of Practice which focuses on participation, having a voice, an aspirational culture across education, health and care services and supporting people to have ordinary lives.



While there is growing awareness of these issues, stereotypical views about young people with autism, learning disabilities and other conditions continue to exist and have a negative and often devastating impact on young people's lives. Autistic young people who do not have additional learning needs have also spoken about how they have been underestimated all their lives, how the mainstream education workforce understands very little about their needs and how they can develop strong academic skills if the environment is made more accessible.

The case studies given in this report demonstrate that it is possible to include a very wide range of children and young people within mainstream settings. However, there is a long way to go before this practice becomes the norm. There is inconsistency across schools, colleges and local authority areas. One main problem is that there is not a national strategy and this leads to confusion and, to some extent, a postcode lottery. The SEND legislation since 1976, including the 2014 Children and Families Act allows for parents (and young people from the age of 16) to choose a mainstream or special school. However, a parent does not necessarily have a choice if they have been along to a school which says that it cannot meet their child's needs or if the child has had a negative experience in a mainstream school. Many parents are not even aware that they have a choice of mainstream education.

There is also a caveat that schools can oppose taking a child on the basis that "they cannot meet the child or young person's needs". At the same time schools are meant to identify their training needs and ensure that they understand the making of reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

These caveats to inclusion create the idea that some children cannot be included in mainstream schools. The question is, "Which children". It may be true that some children cannot be educated in mainstream schools, but inclusion has not really been tested nationally.

The idea that some children need to be in separate places is fraught with difficulties as there is not a consensus as to who these children are and the response nationally is that Local Authorities place between 0.30% and 2.18% of the 2-18 population in special schools. Also, the idea that there is "somewhere else" for children to go can lead to a lack of commitment to their inclusion.

Appendix 1: Context

The education of children with certain characteristics, today described as “special educational needs” has been a topic for debate since the introduction of state education for all in 1870. The debate has largely been about whether children with certain characteristics can and should be educated alongside their peers in ordinary mainstream schools and colleges. The 1976 Education Act introduced comprehensive schools for all children, regardless of ability and promoted the idea that children “who required special educational treatment” should be educated in ordinary schools. This was followed by the 1981 Education Act which further enhanced the expectation that children with special needs would be educated in ordinary schools. The national response to this was for local authorities to begin to develop integration and later inclusion policies. The developments across the country were uneven with some areas being explicit in their desire for all children to be able to be included in mainstream schools and over time to relocate resources from separate provision to mainstream schools and specialist support services, while in other areas only minor changes to the system were made but which nonetheless enabled more children to attend their local schools.

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced the expectation that children, young people and their families would have much more of a voice in the outcomes they want to achieve as well as the support needed to achieve the outcomes. The Act also reiterated the Government’s commitment to inclusive education in chapter one of the Code of Practice 2015:

1.26. As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people.

However, evidence over the last few years is that this move towards inclusive education has slowed and even reversed. Between 2010 and 2020 school exclusions have been rising and there is a particular concern about the exclusion of autistic children and young people, those with learning difficulties and children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs. The report ‘We need an Education’ by Ambitious about Autism (2018) highlighted the increasing number of exclusions in England. Although autistic children and young people represent only 1.7% of the total school population, they account for 2.5% of all exclusions in England (Department for Education, 2018).

As well as children with SEND being excluded, more parents are opting for special schools because they do not have the confidence that mainstream schools have the knowledge and skills to include their children. Between 2010 and 2020 the number of children placed in special schools rose by 52% (National SEN2 dataset).

The joint area inspections of special educational needs and disability by the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted have been taking place since 2016 and have been evaluating the progress made towards implementing the SEND requirements of the Children and Families Act. These inspection reports have highlighted a number of significant issues. Some common themes are illustrated by these quotes:

“Many parents do not feel their mainstream school know how to support their children.”

“Some schools encourage families to agree part-time timetables or educate their children at home.”

“High rates of exclusions for children and young people with EHC plans and SEN Support.”

“Across nearly all local areas inspected, an alarming number of parents said that some school leaders asked them to take their children home. This was in addition, or as an alternative, to fixed-term exclusions. It is illegal.”

“A large proportion of parents in the local areas inspected lacked confidence in the ability of mainstream schools to meet their child’s needs. Many parents of children or young people who have SEND reported concerns about the quality of staff training and teachers’ ability to meet their child’s specific needs when in mainstream school.”

Fewer than half of teachers in a recent study said that they were confident about supporting a child with autism (APPGA, 2017). Goodall (2018) found that autistic pupils felt unsupported and misunderstood by teachers, particularly when it came to their social and sensory needs. Yet a recent survey found that 60% of young autistic people said that having a teacher who understands autism is the main thing that would improve their experience of school (APPGA, 2017).

This lack of confidence has led to a significant increase in the number of requests for statutory education, health and care assessments with a 38% increase in the number of Education, Health and Care plans (previously statements) issued between 2010 and 2020 (this figure does not include the extension to include young people in further education). This growth in statutory assessments has led to many local authorities overspending their high needs budgets and experiencing pressure to find specialist places for children and young people.

The fundamental barrier faced by children and young people with SEND is rooted in the medical model of disability. This model focuses on a child’s impairment and expects interventions and strategies to be put in place to enable them to fit into a system that has not been designed with them in mind. On the other hand, the social model of disability focuses on changing culture and structures to be inclusive. Society has been designed and organised without taking everyone into account, leading to the exclusion of many. The problem therefore lies in values, structures and practices. These barriers can be overcome if everyone is equally valued, welcomed, barriers identified and solutions found. Where inclusion happens, it is the result of a service, an organisation or a whole system changing so that it meets the needs of everyone in its population. This report includes case studies to show how some education settings have created inclusive environments which enable children and young people with autism, learning disabilities and other barriers to be nurtured, thrive, enjoy their learning, do well and be equal citizens in their communities.

Appendix 2: Monega School

Introduction

Part of the Boleyn Trust Group of seven schools Monega includes around 20 children with complex needs.

About the School

- Monega School has many years' experience working with children with additional needs, they refer to these children as supported children.
- The school believe that inclusion is about supporting and celebrating diversity so that children have the potential to achieve, in an environment where those with additional needs are not segregated and seen as 'other' but are part of the same community of learners.
- The school comes from a children's rights perspective as described in the Salamanca Statement from the UNESCO world conference on SEND.

“... Those with special educational needs must have access to mainstream schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs. Mainstream schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.”

How Monega Supports Inclusion

Monega school believe expertise together with a strong vision and ethos support its inclusive practice.

The school works to 5 key values, that are embedded across the school and understood by the children and adults who are part of the school community:

1. Care
2. Commitment
3. Courtesy
4. Consideration
5. Cooperation

What Does it Mean in Terms of Leadership?

- As leaders we think about our children with additional needs first, they are our most vulnerable, and when we work to include it gives a clear message that difference is OK and equally valued.
- The quality of teaching for children with additional needs and the progress these children make is considered to be a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- Monega school ensures that every leader commits to the vision of inclusion and speaks the language of inclusion.
- Meetings are held every term and all children are discussed at the same time, including those with additional needs, this helps to reinforce the inclusive approach that the school has.

What Does Inclusion Look Like in the Classroom?

- The curriculum is adapted and developed so that it is ambitious and meets the needs of children with additional needs developing their knowledge, skills, and abilities to apply what they know with increasing confidence and independence (following school inspection handbook). Teachers make sure that children always understand what they have been asked to do
- A fluid model of inclusion that ensures the approach is right for each child:

1. **Locational Inclusion** – Supported Children are educated within regular classes with their peers also working on their own personalised curriculums. So, for example, if the class are studying Egyptians, the child with additional needs might be making a model of a pyramid.
2. **Linked Inclusion** – Supported children will work with their peers in their classes and be involved in the learning activities set out for the class.
3. **Social Inclusion** – All Supported Children included in all aspects of the social school day – play times, assemblies, lunch and breaks, outings, and residential visits.
 - At Monega School they believe that successful inclusion does not mean that the child is always in the classroom, but that time spent away from their peers needs to be purposeful and meaningful. For supported children this could be specialist activities such as, as music therapy, speech and language, occupational therapy, attention autism groups

A Differentiated Curriculum

Classrooms are set up to make sure all learning is accessible and achievable, so lessons in the classroom are often differentiated (and evidence based) to those with additional needs but support all children's learning. For example, colouring, overwriting and copying, matching, cutting and sticking:

- **Colouring:** aids concentration, builds fine motor & finger gripping and coordination that support early writing skills, creativity, colour awareness and sense of achievement.
- **Overwriting and copywriting:** Many children do not learn phonetically and will process words as images overwriting and copywriting are key components for image processing.
- **Matching:** Matching is a pre reading skill, that enables pupils to obtain comprehension of key vocabulary. Matching increases cognitive activation and is essential to comprehend at instructional level. Matching gives meaning to pictures, which leads to giving a context to words. This helps to develop vocabulary enabling the processing of spoken and written language. For example, being able to understand an instruction.
- **Cutting and sticking:** Cutting is a life skill, cutting and sticking develops a range of fine motor movement that transfers to a wide range of other activities like cutlery use. Hand eye co-ordination, independent movement of fingers, strength hand movement, bilateral co-ordination skills, visual perceptual task management directionality in a task, finger hand dexterity, promotes grasp patterns.

The school firmly believe that to be challenged children need to be successful too.

All these teaching and learning methods can be variated to provide rich opportunities to learn, alongside developing things like fine motor skills, hand eye movement etc.

Making the Curriculum Meaningful for Children with Autism

One of the school's areas of expertise is around supporting children with Autism. They use the following techniques to help:

- Develop lesson plan with learning objective that is for all children.
- Break it down to key words to simplify and take it right back to basics
- Make it meaningful for that child, use something valuable such as a skill that they need to reinforce – strip it back to make it accessible, using pictures, symbols, objects of reference etc.
- Assess to make sure it meets that child's learning targets
- Provide a low stimulus approach and ensure all children know to be quiet in lessons and when they are learning.

Continued Professional Development and Training

The leadership team provide lots of coaching and support, particularly to young and emerging leaders within the school not only to ensure they are familiar with their subjects but also to ensure that they properly understand how to vary the curriculum

Every opportunity that the school provides around CPD will include sessions on variation and differentiation of lessons to include children with additional needs

Staff are supported through training on inclusion, with access to a wide range of support and resources and skills for variation for a wide range of additional needs

The Results from An Inclusive School

- When supported children are educated with children of their own age, they learn typical norms from their peers as role models.
- If you are used to being in a classroom with your peers at primary school, you will find transitions much easier to cope with as you move into secondary and further education and into your adult life.
- Adopting an inclusive ethos across the whole school means that all the children who attend are great at challenging those who don't believe in inclusion. They see the children with additional needs as their friends too.
- Significant direct benefits for the non-disabled children in the school, creating a culture and value of inclusion. This impacts on difference on every level, culture, disability, gender, race etc.
- Children see they are all doing the same things and learning the same things, despite the curriculum being differentiated. Children don't see the difference; they are all children together learning with each other.
- Inclusion raises all children's awareness of difference and tolerance for each other.
- Children acknowledge what children with additional needs can do, not what they cannot.
- The experience of inclusion gives children the ability to gain skills in different aspects such as sign language.
- Supported children have increased social skills and communication skills by having non-disabled peers as role models.
- Learning can take place in a variety of environments which keeps children motivated
- For supported children being able to experience more complex environments helps to stimulate their developmental process.
- For supported children it provides a great opportunity to access the national curriculum.

The staff at Monica School say that: "you have to see it to believe it!"

Appendix 3: Weston College

Weston is a college of further education situated in North Somerset. The college includes around 30,000 learners and offers provision at all levels, including higher education. The college is a centre of regional and national expertise in a number of areas, including prison education. Along with Norwich and Derby colleges, Weston is also a **National Centre for Excellence in SEND** and has the role of sharing its SEND expertise with other colleges nationally. The college has specialist provision for a wide range of learners including for those with profound and multiple disabilities and for autistic learners.

The college has been on an improvement journey since 2001 and has located inclusion at the heart of everything it has done. Improving and expanding SEND provision has been a catalyst and the impact on the whole college has been proven.

The college believes that the benefits of becoming an inclusive organisation are:

- Good practice for all
- Widening participation therefore increased learner numbers
- Raising aspirations of staff, learners and partners
- Innovation – leading to a more attractive organisation
- Increased reputation
- Recognising talent from all
- Efficient high-quality organisation
- Higher retention and success rates
- Positive progression to meaningful and sustainable outcomes
- Higher level of recruitment of staff and learners
- A responsive organisation with people at the centre

Every learner has an individualised timetable so that they can access what they need rather than having to fit in to something that is not appropriate for them. The college focuses on the barriers that learners face in achieving their aspirations and puts support in place to overcome those barriers. Learners can access level one programmes without necessarily having the traditional entry requirements, thus giving them access to a wide curriculum offer.

In 2010, it was agreed that the college with the local authority and other partners would develop provision for learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities. As the result of a successful capital grant bid, spaces within the main college building were reconstructed. The new provision includes a sensory learning base. These developments have meant that since 2015, the college has been able to include learners who previously had no choice but to attend colleges out of the area if they wanted to continue their tertiary education. The new provision has meant that these learners have been able to stay in their local community. The specialist team which supports the young people implement a holistic sensory learning approach which acts as the foundation for engagement. The team are highly qualified specialist practitioners all of whom have extended their specialisms beyond degree level and are motivated to expand their knowledge and skills through a person-centred approach. The team focus on skills learned being meaningful, realistic and transferrable to other settings. The team has Positive Behaviour Support Train the Trainer status and has been successful in creating a learning environment that is supportive and capable of meeting young people's needs, increasing independence and leading to a good quality of life. Individualised study programmes enable learners to work towards their outcomes as stated in Education, Health & Care Plans. The team participate in weekly Continuous Professional Development (CPD) with the focus being on developing teaching and learning under the RARPA Framework. This CPD is delivered by faculty progress coach and is then highly differentiated by the team.

The developments have also included the Weston Bay residential provision for autistic learners. This provision enables autistic learners to spend from one night to three months learning some of the skills they need as they move into adulthood at the same time as participating in college academic and vocational courses.

Drawing on its experience and achievements the college now provides support and training through a wide range of activities for other colleges and is a leadership hub on the theme of 'people' which focuses on:

- Improving the quality of provision through motivating staff and learners
- Creating an inclusive culture with young people with special needs and disabilities at its heart
- Putting learners with special needs and disabilities as a top priority to ensure they succeed in adult life.

The overall aim of the Centres of Excellence' work is for the further education sector to create truly inclusive cultures by supporting young people to achieve their aspirations. The transformational approach taken by the college has included:

- Strong partnerships and a collaborative approach with parents, schools, local authority services, including the community learning disability team, social care and health providers
- Being ambitious for young people with special needs and disabilities – (Queen's Anniversary Prize)
- Senior leadership 'buy in' for a whole college approach
- Investment in staff and CPD
- A motivational career structure
- Specialisms – Autism, Mental Health, learning disability, Behaviour for Learning and Assistive Technology
- Personalisation and empowerment
- A high quality effective and efficient model of delivering support.

Investment in staff and continuing professional development has resulted in a college culture that prioritises excellence in teaching and learning based on collaboration with learners to enable them to take control of their learning, manage their needs, develop skills and strategies to be independent and inform others how they learn best. Interventions vary, ensuring specialists with the experience and skills to understand the needs of each individual work with them to minimise anxiety and disengagement thus enabling them to achieve their aspirations. An example of this is that of the Autism Practitioners who have a Training in Autism Degree & Masters level and support colleagues and learners in the following ways:

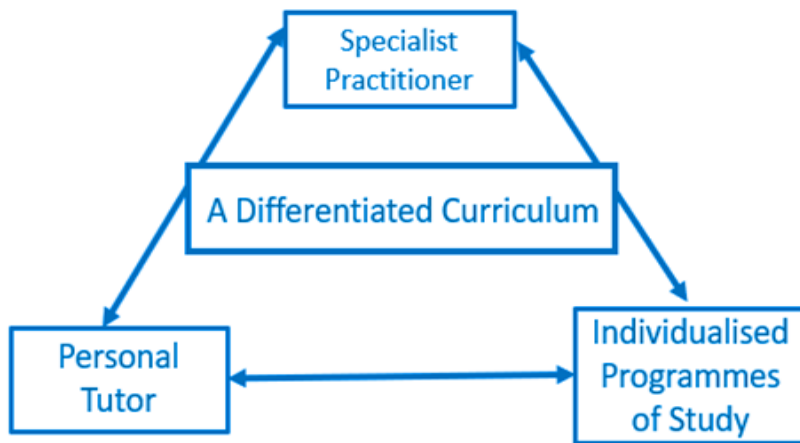
- Cultural interpreter
- Preparation for college life
- Access to low arousal environment
- Differentiation
- Advocacy/Training/ Awareness

Developing staff to have the confidence and skills to support all learners has been achieved through the following routes to meet the changing needs of learners:

- The number of staff specifically employed to support learners with SEND has increased from 24 in 2001 to 163 today
- 81 staff have a foundation degree in Inclusive Practice
- 34 have progressed to full BA (Hons) in Education
- 8 staff have master's degrees in education
- 150 support workers have achieved either level 2 or level 3 in learning support courses

- 76 staff have completed a level 2 programme in Understanding Autism
- There are 150 Mental Health First Aiders
- 336 staff have been trained in Emotional Literacy.

The Specialist Model Based on an Ethos of Empowerment



Value for Money

By enabling learners to participate in their further education in local mainstream provision, the amount of money spent on out of area specialist post 16 placements has reduced from £3,500,000 in 2007/08 to £1,140,000 in 2019/20. In addition to this the focus for as many young people as possible to progress to employment will also reap lifetime benefits and better outcomes for the young people.

Appendix 4: Bristol City Council

Early Years Inclusion Support, Bristol City Council

Bristol City Council has a strong vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities:

Bristol's Strategy and Vision for Children and Young People with SEND (2019-2022): We will support and empower disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs to reach their full potential and have healthy, independent and fulfilling lives.

This vision is supported by an inclusion policy and the One City Bristol plan. The Council has a clear strategy to ensure that early years settings and schools fully understand their responsibilities around including children with special needs and disabilities, as illustrated by the 'Ordinarily Available Provision' document.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/2193095/3538119/BCC+Ordinarily+Available+Provision.pdf/c74bc437-aff3-b867-02fe-835da1c65a46?t=1616418298516>

Early years settings and schools are also encouraged to complete audit templates to ensure they comply with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. The Council provides a strong programme of continuing professional development to support settings to build the confidence and expertise they need to include children and young people with special needs and disabilities.

The Council has a comprehensive integrated service which supports early years settings and families to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. Continuing professional development is prioritised and has a focus on ethos and leadership as well as best practice teaching and learning, SEND pedagogy and multi-agency working. Training is available to:

- develop early years providers skills to include children with disabilities and/or special educational needs
- empower early years practitioners to support children with disabilities and/or special educational needs in the longer term from within their delegated resources.

A series of training events are available from the Early Years Inclusion Service throughout the academic year. Topics are based on needs identified through inclusion visits to settings, previous feedback, data and information from the Early Years SEN Panel. Bespoke in-house workshops are available for early years' settings at inset days or team meetings and can be booked as one of a settings inclusion visits.

The Autism Education Trust Early Years Programme of training is available to all Early Years settings and runs throughout the year. It will develop practitioner confidence in:

- Understanding individual autistic children and their profile of strengths and challenges
- Identifying key areas to help children build positive relationships
- Supporting children who are unusually sensitive to sensory stimuli

A system of measuring the value, effectiveness and impact of training accessed by Early Years providers has been introduced. The approach gathers evidence to show the difference accessing the training has made to practitioners and settings.

All participants in training are required to complete an evaluation form at the end of each training session. They are then contacted in a further 6-8 weeks asking for a follow up feedback form to be

completed which identifies the impact of the training session. This then enables the service to continually monitor the effectiveness of the training delivered. Settings can also access training provided by other services, such as training in administration of medication and use of specialist equipment. There is also a specific training programme for childminders.

As well as a robust programme of professional development, Specialist Leaders in Education: Inclusion, support settings and early years' services. These practitioners are members of the senior leadership team in an early years' setting and are responsible for leading and supporting inclusive practice in all early years' settings in the area, in partnership with the Bristol City Council Early Years Team. They have the capacity, skills and commitment to support early years' settings to improve the quality of learning and teaching, through the development and delivery of a high-quality provision for all children who are disabled or have special educational needs aged 0-5 years. Three of these inclusion leaders work across the city to ensure the early education and family support services within all settings reflect outstanding practice for disabled children and those with SEN and will ensure learning is shared regarding excellent practice and innovative ideas. They are also able to support providers in developing their policies and procedures. The leaders provide a role of support and challenge to the leadership teams of settings when it is felt that the quality of the practice or the environment for children with SEND needs improvement.

Bristol also has a number of services to support families and settings directly in including individual children with special needs and disabilities. The Early Years Portage and inclusion Team provide support from birth through home visiting. The service then supports the positive transfer of children into their early years setting. If a child is autistic or has sensory impairment there are two services which also work with the child and their family and go on to support the child in their early years' setting. In addition, Early Support Practitioners are also available to act as key workers.

The Rainbow Stay and Play Groups provide weekly drop-in sessions for parent/carers and their children with special educational needs and disabilities. These groups continue to run through school holidays when brothers and sisters are welcome to attend.

Early years settings are supported to include and meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities in the following ways:

- Specialist Leaders in Education (Inclusion) who are responsible for leading and supporting inclusive practice. These practitioners are based in a setting but are responsible for supporting all of the settings in an area
- Early years SENCO cluster meetings twice a term
- Inclusion support package.

Value for Money

Funding is available to support children in early years' settings without the need for an Education, Health and Care plan and funding follows children into their school setting.

Appendix 5: Derby College

Derby college is a large General Further Education college serving Derby, Derbyshire and the wider East Midlands. The college serves around 20,000 learners, both young people and adults and provides a broad range of vocational, A level and apprenticeship programmes. The college also provides higher education. The current CEO has been in post since 2013 and says that the journey she started will never end. Her role has been to facilitate the development of the strategic view, the mission and purpose and to make sure these are clear internally and externally and to articulate the longer-term vision.

Everything that the college does is based on the values of inclusion, encouraging creativity and empowerment and the college structure enables the strategy to be implemented. There is a very strong priority placed on staff development. There is an acknowledgement that all staff are recruited with the right attitude and ability to realise the vision, including specialists. Everyone is expected to focus on the experience of the learners, employers and the staff team.

Lots of strategic change has been necessary and this has been achieved by taking a dynamic approach to achieving change called design thinking. This provides a framework to move forward with difficult issues and constantly poses the question “How might we?”. One of the aspects of the approach is that staff are encouraged to work in groups on issues of their choice and then roll an idea out. If things don’t work out, that is fine as all attempts are learning experiences – “if we don’t try, we don’t learn”.

Language is seen as a key issue at the college and the mission is that language is understood by everyone with nobody feeling excluded. The college strategy is embedded in everything that happens in the college rather than standalone. The CEO encourages her senior staff to “compassionately agitate” the overall mission of the college is “Creating Accessible Education for All”.

The Director of Inclusion at the college also started in 2013. The department looked at the language in use at the time to describe learners with certain characteristics and a strategic decision was made in consultation with learners that the college would move away from the language of SEND, additional needs and of the medical model of disability and to use positive aspirational language. This provided the opportunity to have conversations with staff to set a new context and the department became the **Inclusion and Support Service** with a mission to support the curriculum and the community. The college articulates inclusion as being about everyone, with understanding around culture, age, gender diversity, sexual orientation, disability or impairment.

The aim of the college is to know all learners who will need any kind of support before they begin. This is done by:

- Attending annual reviews for young people with Education, Health and Care plans from year 10 and increasingly from year 9
- Carrying out robust transition planning based on the starting point of each individual
- Going into schools. During lockdown staff have been using virtual reality headsets to give learners a tour of the college – to look at the spaces they will use. Everyone is sent a graphic or picture of the member of staff that will support them at first
- Planning the curriculum before young person joins.

Through conversations, an inclusive teaching plan is created for the learner and is shared with everybody involved in that person's experience. One of the college's values is that difference is brilliant. The Director of Inclusion says that if a young person needs something different, the college “creates a bowl around them rather than a colander”. The college adopts “Nothing about me, without

me” so that learners are empowered to have a voice and realise that they are the expert in themselves. Parents are supported along with their sons and daughters to be aspirational. The college understands the importance of:

- Providing good careers advice
- Wrap around support
- Holistic working and planning
- Starting where the young person is
- Taking young people seriously

All lecturers are inclusion lecturers. Inclusive teaching plans are detailed and provide a summary of everything people need to know about the learner. Lecturers have the plans before learners step through the door. All teachers know the profile of their group before they start teaching them and what adjustments they need to make for them. Inclusion teaching plans are reviewed three times a year to adjust for emerging confidence and independence.

Performance management and review meetings happen monthly and each curriculum manager is supported to review the data about their cohort as a whole. Consideration is given to learner progress through the lens of gender, ethnicity, ability, starting point, postcodes, free college meals, Education, Health and Care plans or high needs funding. Following these reviews, the outcome is to respond either by more detailed interventions and/or specific training with teaching teams based on trend data. Teacher confidence is built in the conversations they have with learners, working out what can be done differently and identifying training needs which will often be for the whole team, including, for example reception and library staff.

A main aim of the college is to create a truly inclusive workforce enabling everybody to reach their aspirations. There is a real focus on looking at impact and specific activities, plotting movement against them and then celebrating changes. There is an expectation that all teaching is quality all teaching based on the belief that it is a human right for young people to have the best quality education. The college believes that this is best realised in an inclusive environment with breadth of experience for everybody in a classroom enabling everybody to progress. Learners at the college are not just studying a subject or following a course but they will go on to work in an industry and they will not be fazed by meeting people with disabilities because ultimately customers come in all shapes and sizes so it's very much the real- life impact of that.

The Staffing Structure In Place At The College To Realise The Vision

Inclusion and Support Specialists

This team is responsible for meeting learners, completing relevant paperwork and creating inclusive teaching plans. They also deliver 1:1 and small group teaching sessions. All staff are experienced teachers who have a passion and professional interest in inclusion. One member of the team leads on access of deaf learners. This role supports transition from the resourced schools, liaising with learners and parents, providing weekly tutorials, managing the communication support workers and interpreters and tracking the learners' progress.

Inclusion and Support Trainers

This team work closely with teaching staff and also offer:

- Accessible workshops for learners, which promote independent study skills
- On-site and virtual inclusive spaces at all college sites to meeting individual needs
- Support for exams, revision. Drop-in workshops. Help with support plans
- Help people to achieve by knocking down the barriers.

Members of the team also have specialist and specific roles including:

- The lead for assistive technology and digital
- The STEPS programme for young people who need support to bridge the gap between the pathways and level one programmes
- Attending EHC planning and review meetings to support young people to participate
- Liaison with local authorities.

Inclusion Coordinators:

Each member of this team is located in one of the college centres. they work closely with the curriculum leads to create strong teamwork. They have a range of specialist responsibilities, including:

- An advanced practitioner for dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, and ADHD who also manages exam access arrangements and is the college health service disability officer and arranges support for learners with EHC plans and medical needs. She is also the FE coordinator for professional construction T levels.
- Creating teamwork among 25 education support workers, learner progression coaches, welfare officers and learner support officers.

Pathway To Working Life Programme

The aspiration for the 100 learners following this programme is employment. There is also a strong emphasis on independence with only six of the learners travelling to college by taxi. The team have good relationships with schools via careers evenings and attending some annual review meetings.

The programme is over three days but the team work with other agencies and families to make sure that each young person has a “five day offer” and are positively occupied on the other two days. The programme includes a supported internship.

Pathway To Independence Programme

This programme is delivered for 85 young people and 30 adult learners. These learners have more complex inclusion needs. Some join the programme at 16 but for most it is 19. When learners come to the college the first thing that happens is to work out the long-term plan and exit strategy. Most of the learners have been in the same school for many years and there is a well-planned transition, and the goal is a meaningful adult life – ordinary lives with choice and control. When the learners start the course an inclusion support plan is developed. All learning is RARPA based. Much of the curriculum is in the real world – learning in the community so that skills can be generalised. They operate the social model of disability and all staff have positive regard for the learners.

Pathway learners can access vocational programmes either as individuals or groups. There is a group that accesses animal care and one young woman who wanted to do equine studies recently started on a level 2 certificate, achieved highly and went on to the level 3 certificate and achieved it. She is now on a placement at the equestrian centre.

Education Support Workers

This team are managed by three senior members of staff and each has specialist roles including being responsible for specialist equipment and modifications across the college, specialist software, live scribe pens, overlays, anxiety wrist bands etc. modifying documents. RNIB book share.

The education support workers work in partnership with curriculum leads and lecturers. The aim is for inclusive classrooms where room layout is planned and support is discreet. It is clear in the college that the responsibility for teaching and learning is with the lecturers. All support is based on the social model of disability. If a support worker has any concerns these are shared with the senior and the issue is dealt with. They are experienced, hold relevant qualifications and have a specific

professional interest in one or more specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. and work as a member of the team carrying out training needs analysis based on confidence in adjustments. The college provides a level three apprenticeship for education support workers and one of the seniors supports this programme. She trains on the course on autism, British Sign Language, visual impairment etc. The apprentices have 20% of their time as learning time.

The level of liaison with lecturers depends on the young person, the subject and the lecturer. The role includes taking notes, prompting, supporting learners to gather and order their thoughts. They work across the curriculum and every week there are meetings between curriculum and inclusion teams.

Appendix 6: Cleves and Royal Docks Schools

Cleves

Introduction

Part of the Boleyn Trust Group, Cleves School opened in 1993 with the aim to include all children within the school and celebrate the diversity and differences in all of us. The vision for the school came from Newham's drive for inclusion and the school's first Head Teacher – Brigid Jackson-Dooley.

About the School

- 23 places for children with profound and complex needs out of a roll of 480, that reflects the diverse makeup of the surrounding community. Places allocated via an Early Years multi professional panel
- Rated Outstanding by OFSTED with SEND identified as a strength of the school
- Needs range from complex learning disabilities to sensory needs, physical needs, medical needs and Autism
- Fully accessible, able to meet the needs of children with physical impairments, all children are included in the whole curriculum including after school activities and residential trips.
- **How Cleves Supports Inclusion**
- Driven by leadership and the teamwork between staff, parents, and the children – creating an inclusive whole learning community
- A no labels strengths-based approach, that looks at who the children are and what they like to respond to individual needs
- Children talk about difference and celebrate everyone's achievements
- Cleves School adopt a **can-do** attitude which has a positive impact on the ethos of the school
- "Safe" risk taking and pushing the boundaries inside and outside of school, to promote a solution focused approach.

"As future leaders, children can start to challenge misconceptions of inclusion."
(Deputy Head of Inclusion)

What Does It Mean in Terms Of Leadership?

- Leadership structure with a senior leadership team including a Deputy Head for inclusion, safeguarding, SEN, wellbeing, and behaviour, and community cohesion
- Deputy Heads involved in direct teaching as well as the time to support inclusion across the school, including planning for continued professional development
- Strong vision for inclusion that starts with the leadership team and runs throughout the school leading to a sense of ownership and loyalty with inclusion embedded in the school
- Deputy Head for Inclusion provides curriculum support for teachers.

"The beauty of Cleves is that we have an ownership and a loyalty to the place which means that when one person leaves the whole thing doesn't come crashing down! We are not totally reliant on any one of us to make sure the vision of being an inclusive school continues." (Deputy Head)

What Does Inclusion Look Like in The Classroom?

- A range of skilled and experienced staff that enables the thread of inclusion to run through every class.
- An inclusion support team member for year of the Key Stages who work with the other staff to plan holistic support for individual children.

- The inclusion support team work with parents to provide the bridge between the school and home.
- Opportunities for children to make friendships with peers on equal terms
- Children are all class based but for each child decisions are made in partnership with parents about the balance of smaller group and whole class learning, depending on need.
- All children take part in morning greetings and registration, playtimes, lunchtime, PE, music, art, and foundation subjects.
- Children with the most complex needs may work in smaller groups during the morning sessions with a sensory curriculum to support individual needs and IEP targets.
- Smart use of teaching assistants so that children don't become over dependent on adult support and have access to high quality teaching and learning.
- Bespoke approach with support from other disciplines enables the school to differentiate the curriculum according to need.
- Learning mentors work in the class to support those children who need it.
- National Curriculum is used to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all the children, adapted, and made more personalised for individuals and groups of children, where needed.
- Sensory approach that benefits all children.
- Teachers and curriculum support teachers plan for everyone to be included and make adaptations as needed.

Extra Curricula Activity

- Cleves believe that concrete experiences and real-life learning are key for all children, so all children are involved in all educational trips, residential trips, PE sessions and swimming etc.

Residential Trips

- Available for all children.
- Parents are supported with any worries they may have about their children's needs being met when they are away from home.
- School works closely with Instructors and staff at venues about how all children can be included with adaptations being made when needed.
- During the trip, staff telephone contact and Facetime calls are available so parents can feel confident.
- Detailed planning and risk assessments to remove barriers and to support inclusion.

Annual Reviews

- Used as an opportunity to celebrate what the child has been able to achieve.
- All children are enabled to take part in their annual review.
- Reviews are a positive experience and include a chance for other professionals that work with the children to enjoy what they have been able to achieve.

Continued Professional Development and Training

- Investment in training and development are key to all schools but are even more essential when working with children who have very complex needs.
- Weekly after school specialised training sessions for all staff.
- Wide ranging, including curriculum development and topics like Enteral Feeding, Epilepsy or Music Therapy and Autism.
- All staff are expected to support all children within the class or group and have training and support to make this happen.
- The Deputy Head and the Curriculum Support Teachers are fully involved in all aspects of the training and the responsibilities in school.
- Strong succession planning to support sustainability – inclusion is a whole school approach.
- School is recognised in the area for supporting the development of inclusive teaching and learning.

Bereavement Support

- The children at Cleves School with the most complex needs may also have life limiting conditions so it is important to ensure everyone feels supported within this context. Key staff have been identified for training and teams support families, the children and wider community to deal with loss and celebrate children's lives.

Value For Money

- A strong multi agency approach and early support and intervention leads to a strong team approach, recommendations from therapists can be carried out and integrated into the school curriculum.
- The wider team that exists within Cleves offers support in situ.
- Learning Mentors and Counsellors work with individual children and with groups and liaise with families and other agencies where needed. Support for mental wellbeing can be provided in a timely and proportionate way.
- Children needing support do not have to wait for referrals to other agencies such as CAMHS, which can mean avoiding escalation to something more serious, but if children do require a different type of support, the mentors and counselors are able to liaise with outside agencies to support this to happen.
- Strong relationship with families in the community - a parent group every 2 weeks provides an opportunity to talk about issues and concerns and celebrate what's working well. Parents seen as a voice for their children and work strongly in partnership with them. Home visits help with transitioning children into the school.

Multi-Agency Approaches - the following are frequent visitors to the school:

- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Specialist Sensory Teachers
- Wheelchair Service
- Community Nursing Team
- Complex Needs Team
- Music Therapists
- Educational Psychologists
- Travel Assistance

Royal Docks Academy

Royal Docks Academy is a purpose built, mixed, community comprehensive school for pupils aged 11 to 16. The school is in the London Borough of Newham and is one of the feeder secondary schools for the children with profound learning needs at Cleves school which is also featured as a case study in this report. The school was designed to be fully inclusive and has achieved national architectural recognition for its design. The school opened in 1999 and there are currently 950 pupils on roll.

The school's welcome on its website includes:

We invite you to join with us in creating something very special. We are building a fully inclusive environment that celebrates achievement, aspiration and a life-long passion for learning for all members of our community.

Royal Docks Academy serves the diverse community of Newham and the pupil population is multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. It is also a fully inclusive school and includes children with the whole range of special needs and disabilities and has a dedicated resource for 25 pupils who have profound, severe and multiple learning difficulties.

The school is highly aspirational and expects all children to reach their potential. At key stage four as well as a traditional GCSE offer, it runs a vocational curriculum at levels one and two which pupils can participate in alongside some GCSEs. Pupils can attend a mixture of small group work and mainstream classes, entirely dependent on the needs of the individual. The current vocational programmes are accredited by WJEC and are offered in Creative and Media which gives pupils a broad appreciation of work in the creative industries and Retail and Business which provides pupils with a broad understanding of the industry from customer service, the variety of retail businesses, teamwork and debating to communications, IT and literacy.

The school also offers a personalised curriculum at entry level called Aspire. This is a course that pupils are invited to attend if they may not be completing a full range of GCSEs. It allows pupils to study a wide range of subjects and is made up of modules designed to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils completing them.

Royal Docks Academy believes that all pupils deserve access to Quality First teaching and fully embrace the idea that provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. The school's aim is to ensure that all pupils, whatever their need or disability, make good progress through both pastoral and curriculum support.

There is a team of specialist teachers and support staff led by a leadership team which has very high expectations of all pupils and is committed to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching assistants are attached to curriculum areas to ensure high quality support. There are strong relationships with parents and outside agencies to ensure holistic planning and integrated working.

The 25 children with profound learning needs are supported by a specialist team of four teachers and fifteen support assistants who provide a differentiated curriculum under the guidance of Equals, the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and ASDAN programmes. Some learning takes place off the school site. For example, the pupils attend the London Regatta Centre (Youth Rowing Club) for adaptive rowing and once a year take part in the National Youth Adaptive Rowing competition. They also are included in swimming at the local leisure centre. The school has an independent living flat and a sensory room which some of the pupils' access.

Many of the pupils with profound learning needs did not attend school during lockdown due to their complex medical conditions and the school has been highly praised by parents for how it delivered education and support. Parents have made the following comments:

“Mansoor has the ability to listen and has the skills to touch and feel things. He is listening to the sound of his teachers and following them and listens to the music they play. I have learned that he enjoys us working with him, playing with him and he feels people being around him and giving him company. As a family, we support Mansoor by preparing the laptop for him and other materials that he needs in his lessons.”

“What has worked well is that Saif can understand that he has not been forgotten as he is seeing his peers and teachers. It also gives us, as parents, a platform to discuss any matters or concerns we have with the teacher. We have learnt that Saif has the ability to learn online. I was worried that he might not take to it very well, but as soon as he saw familiar faces on the screen, he seemed very energised and eager to participate.”

The lead teacher for the resourced provision added:

“If you had told me a year ago you would be taking the children away from me and we would be teaching them remotely at home, I would have said ‘absolutely not; it’s not possible’. Our children do not learn in the same way as other children and we have to take that into account. We are doing something we have never done before and rewiring our ways of teaching.”

The team carried out home visits to ensure families were coping with the new ways of learning. A high percentage of pupils were actively engaging in learning from home. The curriculum was revised to include topics which it was felt resources could be created to send home, such as science experiments, cookery, maths and English. Individualised books were made for pupils. As photos of everything pupils do at school are used as evidence of their learning and progress, these images during lockdown were used to create their own personalised video audiobooks to help parents to continue reading with the children at home. The children are familiar with certain words, symbols and actions which were incorporated into online books. Images of the children in character were used, so they could relate to the stories being told and it was also a way of letting them see the faces of their teachers and friends who they were missing. Most of the pupils do not read words but can associate with a picture or symbol which come up as the audiobook is played. It enables them to continue with the work they do in school in their home environment with their parents.

“Our parents are learning more and more about what their children are capable of through activities we are setting them at home, such as these. As the parents share the stories, their child will make the connection with the language we have used with them and respond to the sensory approach, which is vital.”

Online books cover stories such as Romeo and Juliet, Desmond, Dracula and Rainforest and include worksheets for families to complete at home.

Before lockdown, the pupils were taking part in yoga sessions and by using videos this continued for the pupils who were working at home. The pupils were able to see their friends on the video, hear familiar voices and keep that connection with the school environment.

“These yoga sessions are very accessible, with simple instructions. The teacher is narrating what they are doing and why they are doing it.” (Mrs Shoji)

The lead for the resourced provision says:

“At first, we were not sure if it would be possible to adapt yoga to make it accessible to our learners, particularly those who find it difficult to sit quietly for five minutes. But, as ever, our learners – even those with the most challenging needs - have exceeded our expectations and thoroughly enjoy their yoga lessons. When you think outside of the box, it is amazing what you can achieve. We only know what is going to work by giving it a try. Learners who were still attending school feature in the yoga videos to bring familiarity to those taking part from home. Members of staff supported the pupils – some taking part from their wheelchairs – throughout the lessons.”

Value for Money

The 25 children attending Royal Docks school who have profound learning needs and several other children would normally be expected to be attending special school provision and some of these would have been out of the area. By attending an inclusive mainstream school, the resources to support them are used more effectively and the children enjoy friendships with children in their community which will continue into their adult lives.

Thank you

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