

Dolphin Class Rationale 2023-2024

The Unique Learner: Dolphin Class consists of 10 pupils (8 boys and 2 girls) in years 5,6 and 7. Most of our pupils are multi-sensory learners and need support to understand their world around them using lots of highly sensory, visual, audible and textured resources. A small group are engaging in more formal teaching activities and may work in a separate space to the rest of the group. Many of our class require support with their mobility, being wheelchair users, and we can often be seen exercising using specialist physiotherapy equipment in class and in the corridors - which is a very important part of our day.

Positive Relationships: Staffing in Dolphin Class comprises of 1 Teacher, 4 Teaching Assistants and 2 Special Needs Support Workers. There is a wonderful working relationship between staff and pupils to ensure all of the needs of the pupils are met throughout the day. One role of the adults working in our class includes implementing and delivering the curriculum to our pupils with individualised support. All staff are aware and consistent with the health needs of the pupils and the daily routines they need to keep all of the children healthy, safe and happy. In this way they are given the maximum opportunity to access all of the experiences offered. Dolphin Class also really values the relationship with families, and encourages regular communication through daily virtual diaries, an online evidence portal and regular family learning opportunities and events.

Engaging Environments: Dolphin Class has several interactive displays and areas which include sensory resources that pupils can be supported to interact with as independently as possible. A small group may use the table area of the room for more formal learning activities. We have two areas with soft mats to support with physical movement and for pupils to move freely when out of their chairs. We utilise many areas of school for all of our learning needs. Class staff may change the ambience within the classroom dependent upon need – at times there will be a calm, quiet, therapeutic and relaxing atmosphere but at other times it is a lively, fun and happy classroom!

Learning and Development: Dolphin Class pupils require a variety of approaches and opportunities during their time at school. When communicating with our pupils we may use intensive interaction, objects of reference and tactile signing. For other pupils, they may have specific communication aid including communication books and Aided Language Displays that they use to communicate. Communication is at the heart of everything we do. For most pupils the timetable includes a full curriculum offer including multisensory English, Maths and Science delivered with a multi- sensory approach and supporting experiencing early skills and engagement within each area. We also include some therapy- based practices within our curriculum – including TACPAC and Sensology, in class and in the sensory room, to support our pupils in a holistic way and give them opportunities to respond to different types of experiences. For our Pathway 3 learners they will have a separate timetable to follow subject specific learning as per their curriculum offer.

Moving our bodies and positional changes are a high priority for pupils in Dolphin Class – for both physiotherapy and sensory needs. We follow pupils' individual plans daily. We love to move around in class, corridors, soft play, our outside pen and the playground where appropriate. We work on both fine and gross motor skills throughout the day – including self- help skills and working towards independence.

We are a very sociable group who love to play with each other and we love the opportunities especially during our learning to play sessions where we interact and respond well with each other. Participating in actions songs and parachute games is a particular favourite in our class!

September 2023