

Giraffe Class Rationale 2023-2024

The Unique Learner: There are ten primary aged children in Giraffe Class ranging from years 1-4. All the pupils in Giraffe class have a diagnosis of autism and severe learning difficulties. The class follows a clear autism friendly approach with clear routines and structure. The curriculum that the pupils follow is designed to meet the personalised needs of the pupils within this class.

Positive Relationships: The children are supported by a consistent team of one teacher, five teaching assistants and one SEN support worker, to support the children at dinnertime and with personal care. We strive to foster positive relationships with the children and all members of staff support all the children in Giraffe Class. The children have a named Key Worker, who is a member of the Giraffe Class team and part of their role is to communicate with families and other professionals about the child. Class staff communicate with families daily using the School Life virtual diary.

We work with a range of professionals such as the speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, school nurse, school family support worker and any other external agencies and professionals that provide support to the children.

We value the importance of working together with families and multi-agency professionals to improve outcomes for the children.

All our staff members take the time to develop positive relationships with each child, getting to know their likes and dislikes and providing the pupils with emotional support and promoting independence and developing their communication skills.

Engaging Environments: The classroom is presented in a consistent layout which comprises a group area, table area for tabletop activities and mealtimes. A Quiet matted area with soft furnishing and access to books and sensory resources for self-regulation and small 1:1 worktables. We also have a small outdoor area which is used for curriculum and physical activities, providing continuous provision and chances for child led learning and for a quiet space outdoors. A Total Communication approach is used consistently in the classroom and during lessons.

In addition to the classroom, we use smaller therapy rooms for individual work, independent workstations, and sensory diet sessions. We use the primary playground, multi-use games area and the swings and roundabout for outdoor play and additional physical activities. We have weekly timetabled sessions for using specialist rooms such as the soft play room, library, gym, computer room and the outdoor learning area. We also use the interactive magic carpet on a weekly basis.

Learning and Development: The learning and development in Giraffe Class is delivered through our 'Learning to Learn' curriculum involving sessions focussed on My Communication, My Thinking, My Wellbeing and My Body. There is a termly theme which is used to support delivery of the curriculum in the different areas where appropriate. The children have a personal provision plan which provides targets to work on towards their EHCP outcomes. We provide daily opportunities for developing self-help skills and working towards independence as appropriate. Our observations are recorded according to the five areas of

the engagement model; Exploration, Persistence, Realisation, Initiation and Anticipation. We also use the Willow Dene curriculum frameworks to ensure progression. We use multi-sensory resources and children's motivators to engage them in their learning and we have access to specialist equipment and resources to meet the children's emotional and sensory needs. Lessons are taught within a carousel structure to include structured learning, 1:1 and group taught skills, and multi-sensory continuous provision that builds on child led learning and play skills and meets the pupil's sensory needs.

Each day is structured so that we have a consistent daily routine, lessons and a range of therapies and approaches to meet the needs of the children; some of these being additional physical activities, sensory diet, Attention Autism, PECS, ALDs and intensive interaction. We also participate in daily activities linked to the whole school 'SMILE' project which focusses on promoting emotional health and wellbeing. Students are keyed into activities using musical cues and symbols, following a daily timetable, and personalised now and next.

We have weekly timetabled sessions with specialist teachers including the swimming teacher, open theatre and half termly music session provided by Dudley Performing Arts.

We provide homework and resources to support with individual targets for the children to develop and extend their learning at home.

September 2023