

SEN Information

Report



Acorn Park

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<p>1. Our aims and values.</p>	<p>At Acorn Park our vision is for every child to be safe, nurtured and supported to succeed. Our mission is to care and educate our children, empowering them to reach their full potential to think big and dream bigger! Our values are to act on the central principles and widespread truths that impact on our practice, how we collaborate as a team, how we build our core methods and how we present our mission. Within Acorn Park our aim is to:</p> <p>Care: we are courageous, in advocating, educating and caring for every child, confident in our purpose to promote kindness and respect.</p> <p>Strive: we are striving for a better future by always doing our best with the young people we work with. Our inventive efforts support children at Acorn Park to aspire to healthier futures.</p> <p>Grow: We help our young people fulfil their personal growth and build positive relationships. Our young people are empowered to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Thrive: We uphold the belief that by being reliable and consistent in our therapeutic practices, by advocating for our young people and promoting the setting's values they will thrive on the next step of their life journey.</p>
<p>2. What is the range of need that we can meet?</p>	<p>We currently meet the needs of 124 children and young people aged 6 to 19 who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We provide residential care for either 38 or 52 week placements for up to 26 pupils. The combination of specialists from education, therapy and residential promotes an integrated working team around the child to ensure the best outcomes. All our young people have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies their diagnosed learning difficulties/disabilities and range of barriers to their learning. These include ASD, Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties, Speech and Language needs and Sensory impairments. We fully comply with Special Education Needs Code of Practice (2014). We ensure that we make all reasonable adjustments so as to comply with the Equalities Act (2010).</p> <p>(Reg 1, 13, 6.81)</p>
<p>3. How does the school adapt to meet the needs of our pupils?</p>	<p>Each pupil has a Pupil profile which includes their individualised learning plan, demonstrating the progress made towards the short term targets set from their Education, Health and Care plan outcomes. Each student will have a Pupil Passport; a one-page profile which includes the view of the pupil, a Pupil Enablement Support Plan and a possible risk reduction plan if needed. These documents are personalised to include any adaptations to the curriculum or school environment that need to be put in place. Acorn Park ensures that any specialist needs are met by training and accessing professional expertise. Our education and residential setting work closely with our therapy team within our joint policies to ensure we support the needs of our pupils. This development is supported by assessment feeds, our School Development Plan, the Single Equalities Action Plan, Governor Monitoring and appropriate medical training. A strong Induction programme and continual CPD opportunities ensure staff are trained with current information and up to date practice. Our training matrix means we can make targeted decisions around training linked to Acorn Park's needs and development plan. Staff attend annual statutory safeguarding awareness and training which is monitored through the annual OFSTED Inspection of our Residential homes. We encourage all pupils to be as independent as</p>

possible. Each pupil has opportunities to get involved with extra-curricular activities to support their interests or educational/ residential targets.

We have a school council who represent their peers and play an active part in school life. They report to the Governors and give pupils the opportunity to have their say.

At Acorn Park the designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of all LAC children (Clause 1 and 3(a)) It is vital that we consider the whole child. Therefore, staff, families and pupils work closely and collaboratively to ensure this is central to our planning and considers the pupils and their families. The Designated teacher also works with the school's attendance officer, the EHCP coordinators, from a range of county LA's, as well as other professionals such as Children's Services to ensure that a joined-up approach in supporting pupils and their families is at the heart of all that we do in promoting positive outcomes.

At Acorn Park we identify pupils who are on roll as looked after, previously looked after, have special guardianship orders and adopted to enable us to track and monitor the progress of specific groups of pupils ensuring that pupils are given the best opportunity to achieve their full potential. In addition to the annual Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) review, a Pupil Education Plan (PEP) meeting is held termly. This is attended by members of education, therapy and residential staff in the school as well as the class teacher and any other staff pertinent to that young person to attend. During this meeting appropriate targets are discussed and set in line with outcomes from the young person's EHCP. Information of how the wider school promote the educational achievement of LAC Pupil progress is analysed on a termly basis and shared during the whole settings pupil progress meetings each term. Targets and progress for pupils who are within any of the groups as identified above are discussed ensuring that all staff are aware, trained and supporting pupils appropriately.

As for all young people at Acorn Park, LAC pupils are supported by the education's Attendance Policy. Plans in place to support attendance are discussed at appropriate Attendance, EHCP Annual Review and PEP meetings. Exclusion is not seen as an effective form of consequence for many pupils though it has a limited use in reinforcing the inappropriateness of some behaviour, particularly physical violence, and ensuring that other pupils feel protected. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Action Against Bullying and Social Interaction policy. Provision Map is used alongside the tracking and monitoring of pupils. This includes a wide range of data capturing and benchmarking that may include communication and interaction, cognition and learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), physical and sensory, independence and behaviour. Where needs are identified for pupils Provision Map supports the schools focus in ensuring how these needs can be and are met. This may result in additional interventions being implemented. Interventions can be delivered to whole classes, small groups or on an individual basis. Interventions are made through a referral process which is a 'Cause for concern' to ensure that appropriate intervention is identified for each pupil.

All interventions are tracked and monitored, and outcomes are evaluated appropriately for that intervention. Interventions are discussed at the annual

	<p>EHCP Review meetings. Each year the Senior Education Leadership Team (SELT) reviews the Provision Map termly alongside the school's development plan and works collectively with staff to identify the strengths of Acorn Park's strategies and recognised areas of need to enable the school's development and progression.</p> <p>(Reg 3d, 3e, 6, 6.82) LAC (Reg 6.80)</p>
<p>4. The Curriculum and Learning Environment</p>	<p>All pupils have access to a range of learning experiences that reflect and meet their needs. We have two adjacent pathways enabling our young people depending on their differing level of need.</p> <p>The formal curriculum is broadly based on the National Curriculum, but with a high degree of differentiation and personalisation to ensure it meets the needs of each student. The teaching approach is underpinned by autism strategies, such as visual supports and structured teaching. Emphasis is placed on the core skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, maths, science, humanities and computing skills. We recognise that for some children with additional needs a formal curriculum is not always appropriate. At Acorn Park we have identified an alternative pathway, a semi-formal curriculum which follows the nationally successful Equal's curriculum. This curriculum is aimed at young people with moderate learning difficulties and has been specifically written for pupils working consistently and over time below age related expectations, especially those who struggle with English and Maths. There are 7 areas of learning which pupils access depending on their individual ability, interests and learning journey.</p> <p>Whichever pathway we feel is appropriate for our young people they will be taught in class groups, small groups and on an individual basis depending on the activity/task to be done and the needs of the pupils. Class sizes are small with a high ratio of adult support. Throughout the education setting, we have static classes where most lessons are taught within the tutor base by the class teacher. When pupils following the formal curriculum move further on in KS3 and into KS4, they will experience different learning environments and subject teachers around the school. All classes display a visual timetable and other personalised visuals, together with the education expectation statements which underpin our ethos. These help to support a total communication environment to ensure children can fully access each learning environment at each Key Stage, as appropriate. Learning experiences are structured to the individual pupils, enabling pupils to have a sense of achievement and recognise that they are making progress. Both the formal and semi-formal pathways can lead to accreditations for pupils if appropriate. Accreditations include GCSE's, functional skills qualifications Gateway and ASDAN's. All lessons use a variety of teaching methods to develop individual pupil needs. We use multiple approaches as our student's needs are as individual as they are, and do not suit a standardised approach. We work closely with families and students to develop independence and social resilience. We monitor the site to ensure accessibility for pupils is a priority.</p> <p>(Reg 3c, 3d, 6.81, 6.82)</p>
<p>5. How do we continually assess need?</p>	<p>All our pupils have their needs assessed before they start at Acorn Park and these are identified in the pupil's EHCP. All new pupils are baselined in their first half term to ensure we are working with the most accurate and current information. All pupils at Acorn Park are continually assessed through a range of methods. In cases where we feel that a pupil has newly identified needs we discuss this, in the first instance, with parents and will then involve</p>

other professionals and the LA as appropriate. We are happy to meet with other professionals with parents or to provide parents with a written report outlining our concerns.

Our young people residing with us at Acorn Park are also closely assessed by using an assessment framework with the person's safeguarding and wellbeing at the centre. Regular assessment using a conceptual model ensures effective assessment of:

- the child's developmental needs, including whether they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- the capacity of parents' or carers' (resident and non-resident) and any others to respond to those needs.
- the impact and influence of wider family and any others living in the home, community and environmental circumstances.

Any additional support must allow the pupil to remain an inclusive member of the education and residential community unless there is an identified Health and Safety risk which prevents this. We have regular Internal Team around the Child (ITAC meetings), for our young people these are essential in promoting integrated working between education, therapy and residential. Education ITACs are organised prior to an annual review or called where appropriate. These meetings allow for problem solving ideas where pupil engagement and progress is monitored and discussed, and individuals are highlighted where a concern is expressed.

Acorn Park Leadership Team is made up from members of education, therapy and residential and we meet weekly to discuss individual pupil issues as they arise. We have a daily educational briefing which is circulated to all staff. Education and residential staff have daily handovers so that information is shared between settings about our young people's day to ensure that there is continuity between school and home/residential. This is also the case for our day pupils, handovers are offered to parents on a daily or weekly basis.

(Reg 6, 6.82)

6. Identifying Outcomes.

All targets are derived from pupil's EHCPs with long term targets set from identified needs in the areas of Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, SEMH, Sensory and Physical (including Independence). These overriding targets then feed into medium (yearly or bi yearly) and short term (termly) targets based on current assessment. Pupils are encouraged to engage with target setting and outcomes for their next step of learning.

When a pupil has an identified intervention, a target will be set relating to the assessed need and this will be added to their Pupil Profile. These targets are shared with parents to enable them to support pupils at home. The following are some of the interventions we currently offer (subject to identified need of pupils and those priorities in school based on year-to-year decisions made around impact and outcome through Provision Map).

- Independence
- Mentoring
- Speech, Language and Communication
- Colourful Semantics
- smiLE
- TITAN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELSA • Music, Play and Art Emotional Support or Therapy • Intensive interaction • Attention Autism • Music Interaction • Lego Therapy • Social Skills groups • IDL • Reading + • Precision Teaching • Psychological therapies • Blanks • English/Reading and Maths as appropriate • Writing • DESTY <p>(Reg 3c, 6.82)</p>
<p>7. How do we assess progress?</p>	<p>We assess progress on an ongoing basis through observation, achievement of targets and in some cases using assessments. All small step progress is recorded and shared with pupils. We use a variety of methods to record the evidence of progress including photos, videos, written work, drawings and diagrams, as well as speaking and listening tasks. The assessments that we use are:</p> <p>GL Science, Cat4, IDL English and Reading Plus. This is without specialised inhouse testing to identify barriers to leaning.</p> <p>(Reg 3a, 6.82)</p>
<p>8. Support for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support.</p>	<p>We have several Mental Health Champions at Acorn Park, who include, Emma Thompson (Assistant Head and Pastoral Lead), Melissa Bolton, Jenny Banol, Ricky Hughes, Kirstie Andrews (SWIFT) and Ally Shouftas (Wellbeing lead for Education). Having members of staff who have the knowledge to support both staff and young people with Mental Health challenges is integral to promoting a culture of holistic care and integrated working between education, therapy and residential.</p> <p>Our SWIFT team work to promote knowledge and awareness for staff, families and our young people around mental health issues. The Boxall profiling system which enables us to create personalised emotional development targets for each pupil, underpinning our young people’s ability to learn more effectively. Working on these personalised targets informs our practice to offer individual mental health and wellbeing and support to meet individual’s needs. We have high expectations of both work and behaviour. We believe in respecting, valuing and listening to our pupils. We adopt a Restorative Practice approach when supporting our young people at Acorn Park. We believe this powerful tool that uses human emotions and feelings to encourage empathy and emotional literacy helping to build a culture of caring for one another. Behaviour is said to be the silent voice of the child or adult and restorative practice allows that voice to be heard in a supportive and safe manner. We foster a whole site approach to inspiring and motivating young people to feel valued and to value those around them; working within our two Acorn Park expectations: to always be kind and to always try our best.</p>

	<p>We recognise that, for some of our young people regulating our feelings and behavioural responses is a barrier to learning, therefore, our curriculums and environment need to support and reinforce positive behaviour models. We give pupils clear choices and responsibilities to enable and encourage them to develop appropriate social skills.</p> <p>Our SWIFT team provide training and advice for pupils, staff and families to support this. All consequences for negative behaviour are educationally or therapeutically based. Where a pupil is finding it hard to cope in a class situation we will work with parents and other agencies to put in appropriate support, therapies and/or change the curriculum. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn and should not be disrupted by the dysregulation of others. Bullying is recognised and addressed promptly by talking through the issues and understanding the effect on others. The Therapy and SWIFT team, ELSA programmes and our bespoke curriculums support the development of Social and Emotional education, and this is delivered in a whole class, small group or individual basis as appropriate or linked to external CAMHS professionals where necessary. (Reg 3e, 3g)</p>
9. Pupil Voice	<p>We believe strongly in the importance of pupils having the skills and confidence to express themselves, either through speech or alternative means of communication. All pupils have numerous opportunities throughout their day in education and in residential to develop these skills and to use them in the following ways: - Lots of opportunities for pupils to talk informally to staff – Breakfast club, break and lunch times, during interventions or debriefing time. Pupil feedback in lesson - Lots of opportunities to make choices - EHCP reviews, Pupil passports, Programmes adapted through Widget. We also have a School Council and LGBTQ+ group that reports to the senior leadership team and Governors on a termly basis and plays a key role in school. All areas of the school are represented, and pupils are keen to be involved and the emphasis in class discussions is that everyone's thoughts and opinions matter. (Reg 8, 6.81)</p>
10.How do we know we are getting it right?	<p>We know this because of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting to Governors through our committee structure and termly full Governor meetings – we share reports with respect to attainment and progress, provision mapping, interventions, attendance, exclusions, behaviour, impact of pupil. They also review policies, attend school meetings and monitor and challenge provision through talking to staff, pupils and parents. - The Head of education and Deputy heads carry out regular learning walks and lesson observations, data analysis and book monitoring as do curriculum leads. - EHCP reviews when we discuss and report on progress and provision with parents and pupils. - Through external accreditation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognised affiliation with Autism and Emotional development specialist such as: AET, NAS, Nurture UK and regular specialist meetings with designated advisors. - Our Self Evaluation Form which is calibrated alongside regular external opinions of Local Authorities and through Governor monitoring. - On a three yearly basis Ofsted judge our effectiveness as an educational setting and on an annual basis we have an Ofsted Social Care Inspection of the effectiveness of our residential arrangements, safeguarding, 24-hour curriculum and behaviour. (Reg 3a, 3b, 7, 8, 10)
<p>11. Communicating with Families</p>	<p>We believe that good communication is vital and are happy to facilitate communication with parents at any time to discuss progress or any other issues. We consult with parents in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Termly progress reports - Daily/Weekly handovers - Phone calls, Teams meetings and email (outside of learning time) - Termly opportunities for parent consultation - Annual EHCP reviews - the expectation is that all parents will attend these, either in school or arrangements are made for a hybrid meeting with parents attending virtually. - Annual questionnaires. - Evaluations of events such as transition, coffee mornings, parent surveys etc. <p>(Reg 7, 11, 6.81)</p>
<p>12.Engagement with other Professionals</p>	<p>As an Independent special needs provision, we work closely with a wide range of professionals and can access services where appropriate. Parents will be made aware if their child is accessing any of these services and in most cases will be involved in the referral process. These include the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational Psychologist - Clinical Psychologist -Psychotherapy/Learning Disabilities Team - Speech and Language Therapy - Occupational Therapy - Sensory Support <p>At Acorn Park, we promote integrated working between education, therapy and residential and to ensure the best outcomes. We access Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy who are based on site, they ensure that appropriate therapeutic interventions are planned and delivered across the school day. We may also provide additional therapies such as Play or Art therapy for particular children if required. (Reg 3e, 5, 6, 11, 6.82)</p>

<p>13. Working with the Wider Community</p>	<p>As a Special School all our pupils present with SEN, though their needs may be very different. We encourage pupils to work together and support each other and there are excellent examples of this across the school. We also engage with the community through our Life and Work Skills programme and through TITAN travel training pupils regularly access the local shops and other amenities.</p> <p>(Reg 5, 8)</p>
<p>14. Professional Development of Staff</p>	<p>We run a very comprehensive Induction programme for all new staff which includes safeguarding and ensures that we embed a consistent approach and ethos. All new staff have an experienced buddy who provides a friendly face and checks in regularly to make sure the new starter is settling in and has a chance to ask questions until they feel more confident in their role. All staff have appraisals and target setting, through these meetings training needs and wants are identified and feed into the SIDP (School, Improvement and Development Plan).</p> <p>As a result, all staff at Acorn Park are trained in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safeguarding - CPI Safety intervention (behaviour de-escalation training) - A basic introduction to ASD. Further training opportunities for staff cover the following areas: - Medical and Personal care - Emotional regulation - Makaton, including training for specific interventions - Specialist interventions - Understanding of SEND including SLC - Extra curriculum activities –Forest schools, - Opportunities to network and visit other schools - Opportunities for staff to work together to share good practice Where possible we train our own trainers or invite trainers into school. Whole school training is often more effective than training individuals. Our ASD provision offers very comprehensive training to staff, both through external accreditation and the time to reflect as a team on strategies to meet the needs of individual pupils. There is an expectation that support staff will have or be working towards a level 2 and preferably a Level 3 in Autism. As a Special School with a wide range of expertise and as a strategic partner with Outcomes First Group and Options Autism. <p>(Reg 1, 5)</p>
<p>15. Joining Acorn Park</p>	<p>All young people require a diagnosis of Autism to apply to Acorn Park education setting, applications are submitted by your child's EHCP coordinator. A more detailed explanation of this process can be found on your county's Local Offer website</p> <p>Here are some of the current county's local offer pages:</p> <p>Norfolk: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer</p> <p>Suffolk: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/send-and-the-local-offer/</p> <p>Essex: http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/</p> <p>Bromley: https://www.bromley.gov.uk/LocalOffer</p> <p>Southend on Sea: https://www.southend.gov.uk/children-disabilities/local-offer-send</p>

	<p>Buckinghamshire: https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/localoffer.page</p> <p>Cambridge: https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/local-offer-identifying-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-0-25</p> <p>(Reg 11)</p> <p>In addition to meeting the above criteria, young people must also satisfy Acorn Park of their suitability for a placement by means of an assessment process. Referrals for places are usually received directly from a placing authority; however, parents may also apply for a place for their young person.</p> <p>Acorn Park's assessment team is made up of a Multi-Disciplinary Team who considers each referral carefully prior to making the decision as to whether to proceed with an assessment. Each referral is assessed through discussion with parents/carers and placing authorities. Observation is also carried out to assess the young person in his/her home and education setting where possible. All relevant reports/paperwork for the young person are acquired and carefully examined before a final decision is made based on all information as to whether a placement is offered or withdrawn.</p> <p>For more information, please see our website and search for residential statement of purpose which details each residential house which has its own speciality and skilled team.</p> <p>We encourage visits to view our Education and residential setting and when places have been confirmed we hold transition visits for new pupils. We also send out information to both parents and pupils, including an introduction to Acorn Park. We like to do a home or current placement visit and collect information from everyone involved in the young person's welfare and learning. We use all this information to write a Pupil Passport before a new pupil starts.</p> <p>Our website gives a wealth of information regarding our offer: https://acornpark.org.uk/ (Reg 3)</p> <p>(Reg 7, 12, 6.81)</p>
16.Moving On	<p>At Acorn Park we have a Careers Lead to support and implement transition who works with colleges and careers fairs. Our Post 14 or Transition Annual Review uses person centred planning tools to engage the young person and their family in sharing aspirations for their future and in drawing up a Transition Plan. These focus on education, employment, independent living and participation in society We work across agencies to ensure education, health and care needs are all articulated in the plan. All pupils are given the opportunity to visit their nearest most appropriate Colleges and parents and carers are invited to accompany them. Through our established relationships with the colleges, we are able to monitor pupils progress beyond Acorn Park and when necessary, attend meetings to continue to support them. (Reg 7, 12)</p>
17.Policies	<p>SEND POLICY: All students have an EHCP on entry to the school identifying their special educational needs, aspirations, progress and achievements, provision and arrangements. The EHCP will be evaluated throughout the</p>

	<p>year with an Annual Review meeting to discuss strengths, outcomes and the provision for the student. These Annual Reviews will be conducted with parents, teachers and professionals to ensure that progress can be evaluated. Interventions and strategies will be implemented to support the student make the relevant progress towards meeting their long-term outcomes. The school offers flexible staffing deployment, which allows students and classes to access additional support staff to respond to additional needs.</p> <p>Our SEND policy ensures students have access to the right universal, enhanced and specialist support in all areas of their EHCP and academic learning. Strategies and Interventions can be delivered by Acorn Park staff and/or therapists, EPs, OT and SaLT. Risk plans, analysis of incidents and behaviour support plans may indicate the need for additional support. These will be recorded using Sleuth database, which ensures that relevant staff are aware and that future plans can be implemented to ensure incidents are avoided if possible.</p>
<p>18.Arrangements for handling complaints</p>	<p>If parents have any concerns regarding any aspect of the education or residential setting they should, in the first instance, try to resolve these with the Class Teacher or House Manager. Again, we believe in the importance of good relationships and communication so that where possible we can resolve issues before they become a real problem. Most problems can be met at this level but if concerns are ongoing, please contact the SWIFT team who will advise you on the steps to make a formal complaint. The school's complaints procedure is available on request or can be found on our website. (Reg 7, 9)</p>