

Special School Provision Descriptors



Federation of Old Hall and Mary Elliot Schools

Old Hall (Primary, Nursery, EYFS – Yr6) and Mary Elliot School (Secondary, Yr7 – Yr14) have joined together in a federation of schools which share senior leadership and have a joint governing body. Both schools work closely with Oakwood School (North Star Federation - Primary, Nursery, EYFS – Yr6) to provide education for the children and young people in Walsall with severe or profound learning need, autism, HI, VI and a range of complex medical needs. At present both Old Hall School and Mary Elliot School do not offer provision for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH).

The Federation of two schools allows for quality transitions to be planned across all age ranges and into adulthood. The schools work closely with each other to share staffing, resources and expertise for the benefit of all of our children and young people.

Old Hall School

Old Hall is a maintained day school for children aged 3 -11years. Pupils are provided with an appropriately paced, differentiated curriculum. We currently have planned places for 98 pupils. The pupils' identified needs are Severe Learning Difficulties or Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties. In addition some pupils have additional needs including autistic spectrum conditions and complex medical needs. Our focus is on three key areas of learning:

Communication and Interaction: where children with speech language and communication needs have difficulty in communicating with others. Our young people with autism spectrum conditions (ASC) are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction.

Cognition and Learning: our support for students with severe learning difficulties (SLD) covers a wide range of need; our students are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and may have associated difficulties with mobility and communication ranging to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where students are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical difficulty or sensory impairment.

Sensory and/or physical need: some of our students require specialist support and equipment because of a visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or multi-sensory impairment (MSI). Students with MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

Our dedicated staff team has wide knowledge, skill and expertise in the primary education of pupils with learning difficulties. The school is committed to providing high quality training for all staff. The governors and staff are committed to promoting the development of the whole child and all staff are vigilant in ensuring that all aspects of our pupils' development are constantly under review.

Admission criteria

All admissions will be determined by the Local Authority in accordance with the 'SEN and Disability code of practise: 0-25years', July 2015. Consultation with the school will be in accordance with this document before the Local Authority makes a decision about placement. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP). Placements are determined by the Local Authority in response to preferences expressed by parents. Our young people live in Walsall and travel to school by school transport, though a small number of our young people come from further afield: Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. Prior to finalising the placement; parents and carers will have the opportunity to visit school so that they can make an informed decision. Transfer to Old Hall School can occur at any age from Nursery, EYFS to Yr. 6

School resources

Old Hall is a fully equipped maintained special school with hygiene rooms, a Hydrotherapy pool, soft play area, sensory rooms, tracking for hoists, specialist outdoor area and a nurse's suite. The school is fully accessible to all, whatever their needs.

Old Hall has excellent multi – professional collaboration. We have input from: a community school nurse, a nurse practitioner, physiotherapist, Speech and Language therapists, and an Educational psychologist. We host professionals to hold clinics at the school: Consultant paediatrician, audiologist, dietician, orthotics and occupational therapist. Additional funds are spent on support from the psychology service, Speech and Language therapists, Physiotherapists and a specialist music teacher. We hold lunchtime clubs and offer residential experiences. Pupils also have the opportunity to experience outdoor pursuits, including sailing and climbing.

Curriculum

The development of social and emotional skills is at the core of our curriculum. We all work to a clear behaviour policy which promotes respect and choice making. The whole team and the leadership team in particular is experienced in pastoral care and we offer support to pupils and their families. We run a successful 'Family Hub' for parents to meet regular in school for training, support and networking opportunities.

Our curriculum provides a rich and varied experience which consistently promotes British Values and pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Upon entry to Old Hall in our Early Years Department, children are encouraged to become independent and curious learners developing the necessary skills and positive relationships required to engage with the world about them as they grow.

Throughout the school, core subject objectives and pedagogy are matched exactly to the children's individual needs and taught daily with a high staff to pupil ratio. To complement this we deliver a creative curriculum which is based around whole school themes which incorporate enrichment activities including special experiences both inside and outside of school, fully immersing children in their learning. Specialist teachers provide PE and music teaching alongside whole school celebration days which are interspersed throughout the terms allowing children deeper exploration of religious festivals and curriculum areas.

Assessment

All statements of Special Educational Needs or EHCs are reviewed annually, involving parents, school staff and other professionals. The meeting includes a review of educational progress, placement opportunities, transition, transport and opportunities for inclusion activities.

Progress is regularly assessed and recorded, and reported through the annual review report, and further assists the setting of new targets and objectives. On-going progress and assessment through the year takes place using a wide range of detailed assessment tools. Where appropriate Personal Education plans (PEPS) are in place.

The school is included within the Local Authorities monitoring cycle and works with the LA School Improvement Partner (SIP). The SIP will work with the school to monitor and challenge our practice to ensure a high quality provision is available to students. A report is written and shared with governors who also have a programme of school monitoring to hold senior leaders to account for the quality of provision.

Future plans

Old Hall School is continually striving to enhance and improve the education of and environment for the pupils in our care so that all can achieve to their full potential and achieve quality transitions into their next school placement – many of our children transfer to Mary Elliot School. A detailed School Development Plan focussing on improving the quality of Leadership, Teaching and Learning, Behaviour, Safety and Personal Development as well as Outcomes for students can be found on the school website.

We are working with the Local Authority to expand the number of school placements available to Walsall students and aim to open an additional two class spaces equipped for the most complex young people in our borough in October 2018.