

Abbey Park Middle School Star Room Policy

Introduction

The Star Room or Mainstream Autism Base (MAB) at Abbey Park Middle School was established by the Local Education Authority to meet the needs of children who have been diagnosed as having an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Access and admission for children to the Star Room is through Worcestershire Special Educational Needs Services (SEND) and they outline an Admissions Policy which states that all pupils in a STAR ROOM have a diagnosis of ASD; an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and recommendations from Specialist Support Agencies e.g. Autism Specialist Support, an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language or any other agencies involved with the child's assessment.

Children may leave the Star Room and move on to a variety of provisions, following recommendations from Star Room staff, main school teachers, outside agencies involved in the child's education and through consultation with parents. They may leave at any time up until the age of thirteen, when they move on to a high school provision which is able to meet their specific educational needs.

Children with ASD will have special educational needs throughout their school lives. This policy ensures that all pupils in the Star Room have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is designed to have a positive impact on each individual's outcomes and personal development by taking into account each pupil's starting points and specific needs. The National Curriculum is our starting point however every opportunity is used to develop an integrated Autism Curriculum where the development of social communication skills, emotional regulation, organisation and preparing for life skills are taught.

On a day to day basis the Star Room is managed by the Star Room Lead (SENco) and is supported by a team of Teaching Assistants (TA's). This lead has the responsibility of the day to day running of the Star Room with support from the team of TA's, however, the overall responsibility of the Star Room is the responsibility of the Executive Head and Governors.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the policy are:

- to ensure the development of an environment that meets the social, emotional and educational needs of children with ASD;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of the children in the Star Room are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff throughout the school in providing for the children's specific educational needs;
- to enable all children in the Star Room to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum, as well as aspects which are specific to children with ASD;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that the children have a voice in this process;
- to ensure that each child in the Star Room is fully included in the school community.

In our school, we have high expectations of all our children and aim to offer excellence and choice to them all, whatever their ability or needs. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school and community. This is shown through access to appropriate provision, support and understanding from all school staff as well as staff in the Star Room and through integration into the main school. We respect the fact that children with ASD:

- have different educational and behavioral needs;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire/assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- Need a range of different approaches and experiences.

Staff in the Star Room respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, social understanding and access to the curriculum;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their emotional regulation and to take part in learning effectively and safely.
- planning intervention to help children to achieve the outcomes outlined in their EHCP's.

Star Room Lead Role:

- co-ordinates the day to day running of the Star Room with staff input;
- supports and advises colleagues;
- oversees the records of all children in the Star Room;
- acts as the link with parents;
- acts as the link with outside agencies and other support agencies;
- monitors and evaluates the Star Room provision;
- manages a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with ASD;
- contributes to the professional development of all staff.
- Plans, assesses and reviews the Star Room curriculum to ensure positive outcomes for pupils.

Star Room Provision

Transition

When pupils join us they are supported through a thorough transition process. This includes observations and support in the pupils' current setting, transition visits to school at quiet times (such as after school), as well as experiencing lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes before they transition into school.

The transition process also includes meetings with the current staff working with the pupil as well as with parents/carers and also transition meetings as they settle into school.

Personalised Provision

A personalised provision is developed and where helpful, key workers are put in place to develop continuity and security for our pupils. When ready each pupil is encouraged to work with a variety of adults, promoting independent learning. Each pupil will have Individual Educational Plans with targets identified in their EHCP outcomes.

These are reviewed each term with the children, parents, Star Room staff and where appropriate external agencies.

The Star Room Lead will hold an Annual Review in which staff, parents, children and external agencies work together to review the objectives set in the child's Education Health and Care Plan.

If it is identified that support is needed from outside agencies, we will consult parents prior to any support being implemented.

When appropriate the children will be seen in school by external support services e.g. Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists etc.

Access to the Curriculum

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated and personalised to enable children to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Staff in the Star Room will use a range of strategies to meet the specific educational needs of children with ASD, and allow access to the main school curriculum at a level which meets their specific needs. Lessons have a clear learning objective; work is differentiated appropriately and assessment is used to inform the next stage of learning.

The curriculum provided will be flexible and personalised to provide a range of learning opportunities and should include extra-curricular activities. Children with ASD will be supported in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy.

Children are encouraged to integrate into main school classes with their peers with varying levels of support and may also be taught one-to-one or in small groups in the Star Room.

In addition, the Star Room delivers a curriculum to specifically support ASD. It is essential that this curriculum provides opportunities to motivate learning as well as generalise their skills which is why a range of experiences are essential to the curriculum.

ASSESSMENT

The Star Room Lead, Teaching Assistants who work closely with the children in the Star Room and the Main School Teachers, assess and monitor the pupil's academic progress in line with existing school practices.

Additional assessments are undertaken to show all areas of progress and to support the development of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The pupil's emotional regulation, independence and inclusion in class are tracked daily. These assessments inform the pupil's personalised provision. In addition to this, all small steps of progress in relation to the National Curriculum are tracked to inform child specific learning and teaching using Pixl.

At times, the use of Autism specific external assessments are used such as the AET Progression Framework Tool, QCA behavior assessments, Talkabout Assessments and ACE (Alternative Curriculum Enrichment) assessments.

The outcomes of these assessments are discussed by all involved, to review and design the next stages of learning (pupils, parents, Star Room Lead, TA's, Main School Staff and where appropriate external agencies.)

Partnership with Parents/Carers

The school works closely with parents in the support of all children with special educational needs. Staff in the Star Room encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for their children and can also provide valuable information on their children's specific needs. The use of daily conversations, home-school communication diaries, termly meetings, Annual Reviews, parent/carer sharing activities as well as parent and pupil social events. Positive relationships are essential to foster an environment for our pupils to learn.

The Star Room Lead or Star Room TA's meet at least termly with the parents of children who attend the Star Room to share progress, provide support and discuss any specific difficulties they may experience.

We inform the parents of any significant changes in the child's progress and the need for outside support from external agencies. We share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with ASD.

Pupil Participation

In our school we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. The development of independence and social skills is a key element in the education of children with ASD and is included at the heart of all teaching in the MAB. Children are involved, at an appropriate level, in taking responsibility for their targets. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance. We recognise and reward success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of each school has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs including those with ASD.

The Governing Body does its best to secure the necessary provision for pupils with ASD within the school.

Each Governing Body has identified a governor to have special oversight of the school's provision for all pupils with Special Educational Needs. In addition, the Head Teacher and the Star Room Lead ensure that all those who teach a pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to ASD are aware of the needs of individuals with ASD as well as the individual needs.

The SEN Governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's ASD provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Star Room Lead monitors the progress of children with ASD throughout their time at Abbey Park Middle School and maintains regular contact with staff and governors regarding the day to day running of the MAB.

The Star Room Lead is responsible for supporting teachers in teaching children from the Star Room when they are integrating into lessons in main school classes.

The SEN Governor will visit the Star Room periodically to review the work of the MAB.

Complaints received regarding the Abbey Park Middle School Autism Base Unit

Complaints should first be discussed with the SENDCo

Complaints relating to admissions, SEN provision/funding should be referred to SEN Services at Worcestershire County Council.

Complaints relating to specific pupils/parents should be directed to the Governing Body of Abbey Park Federation.

Complaints received regarding a member of staff should be referred to the Executive Head

Dated: January 2022

Review date: January 2023

Executive Head ...Rebecca Scully...

Chair of Governors.....Rachel Clements.....