



THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

CLUBS AND PROVISIONS

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEND DEPARTMENT

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Department (SEND) works with students who have special educational needs within any one of the four categories of need: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties and Sensory and/or Physical Needs. These categories can include Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Anxiety, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD), dyslexia, dyscalculia and physical disabilities such as visual and hearing impairments or wheelchair bound students.

Our staff work with teachers and parents to make sure that all students can maximise their individual potential. They are well qualified and experienced in working with SEN students.

We also work alongside specialist external agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Speech and Language Therapy Service (SaLT), counselling services and Educational Psychology.

We have a specialist Autism unit (the Matrix) that has its own classrooms, specialist teachers and resources, although most of these students attend mainstream lessons in line with our inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

Our aim is to ensure that all SEND students feel included in our school and recognise that they make a valuable contribution to school life and go on to have successful careers.

The Ofsted Report (November 2019) acknowledged the inclusive ethos of the school.

'Strong and effective inclusive values underpin the school's work. Staff apply these values well. They make pupils feel welcome and safe, no matter what their background'.

OFSTED, November 2019

SEND INTERVENTIONS

We run a number of key SEND interventions to support the learning that is taught within the classrooms. These include Reading Programmes, Nurture groups, Vocabulary Groups, touch typing and ELSA, to name a few. Further details on some of these are given below:

READING PROGRAMMES

We currently use two computer-based reading programmes to support our students that have low literacy skills, 'Reading Plus' and Lexia.

The 'Reading Plus' programme is used to support all students (not just SEND students) in key stage 3 (Years 7-9). Lexia Core 5 is used for our EAL students (those students where English is a second language). This teaches them core English literacy skills with building blocks.



Reading Plus and Lexia begins with an assessment to place students at the appropriate starting point on the programme and the software then tracks pupil's progress as they work independently, automatically providing extra practice on areas of difficulty where needed.

Both programmes also provide individually 'tailored' learning lessons to support students in areas where they are struggling. Students can also access the programme at home, thereby maximizing the student's ability to build on their reading skills through personalised and independent learning at their pace. Both computer programmes have successfully supported the reading skills of many of our students across the curriculum in our school.

"I am really enjoying the 'Reading Plus' programme and I love to do it at home as well"

Zainab Javed
Year 10

LEGO CLUB



Lego Club is a lunch-time club that runs twice a week. It is a social development programme to help students with autism spectrum disorders and social communication difficulties. Children take it in turns to play out defined roles and work together to build Lego models.

This gives them the opportunity to develop social skills such as taking turns, collaboration and social communication. This helps children to make friends, socialise, build natural interaction and improve communication skills.

Research has shown that this therapy helps to make significant improvements in children with social communication difficulties. Our students enjoy the club and engage well with the activities.

“Lego club has helped me listen better and to communicate better”

Luke Sharman, Year 9

TOUCH TYPING

We run Touch Typing classes for students with dyslexia for all year groups (7 to 11). It helps students with speed, accuracy, time saved, fatigue reduction, health, job prospects and focus. Some of our dyslexia students struggle with writing and by touch typing, it improves not only their writing legibility but also their speed. Touch typing keeps the student from having to focus on two things at once. All they need to think about is their output, not finding the individual keys. Touch typing is therefore an invaluable skill when completing student exams.

READING GROUPS

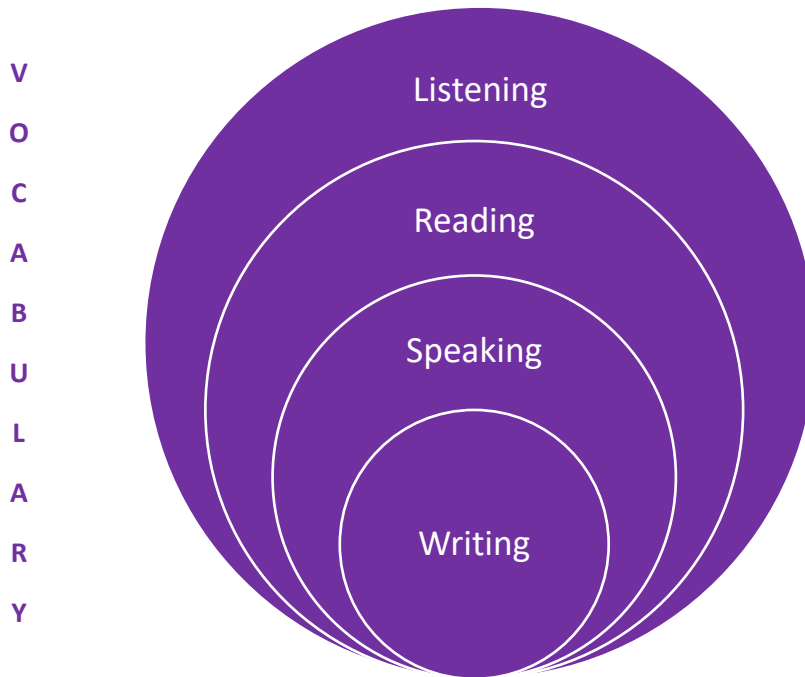
We manage small reading groups for students that may lack confidence in their reading abilities, especially when they are being asked to read aloud in large classrooms. Our aim is to develop and nurture a love of reading in an environment that is welcoming and non-threatening. This is important for our SEND students with Dyslexia that find reading difficult.

In these groups, the students read novels/key texts that are currently being read in their year groups and participate in general discussions, focusing on content, key characters, context, setting and key messages. Students also can practice the decoding of difficult words, using a phonics-based teaching programme to improve their reading skills.

Our experience has shown that this builds up the student’s confidence and ability to understand and respond well to comprehension exercises, on key texts in the classroom.

VOCABULARY GROUP

We run a vocabulary Group for our key stage 3-4 students to help with literacy and reading skills. The groups look in detail at the structure of words, meanings, (semantics) and links to other words (word/semantic relationships).



Learning activities are fun-based and enable the students to learn how to sound words, spell the words and use the words in the correct context.

Focusing on vocabulary is useful for developing knowledge and skills in multiple aspects of language and literacy. This includes decoding (phonic awareness), comprehension and fluency. The group assists in improving student's general reading and comprehension skills.

"It has helped me to understand things in class and other words I do not understand".

Luke Sharman McGee
Year 9.

ART THERAPY/FOCUS GROUP

"I love all of the sessions, but the fun part was that I get to draw"

Leah Dixon

Year 9

We use art focus groups to support children in expressing and understanding their emotions, cope with stress, pus worries, as well as to develop self-awareness and self-esteem. Techniques that are used include collage, colouring, doodling, and scribbling, drawing, and finger-painting. This is run by a qualified art teacher and is for Key stage 3 (Years 7 and 8).

NURTURE GROUP

We run a nurture group for students in Year 7.

The students in these groups may have had a difficult start in life or may be finding school life more difficult than most. The activities in these groups include group discussions, role-play, team building and communication exercises, building games, such as Lego, quizzes, bingo, word puzzles, video clips, painting, drawing and news.

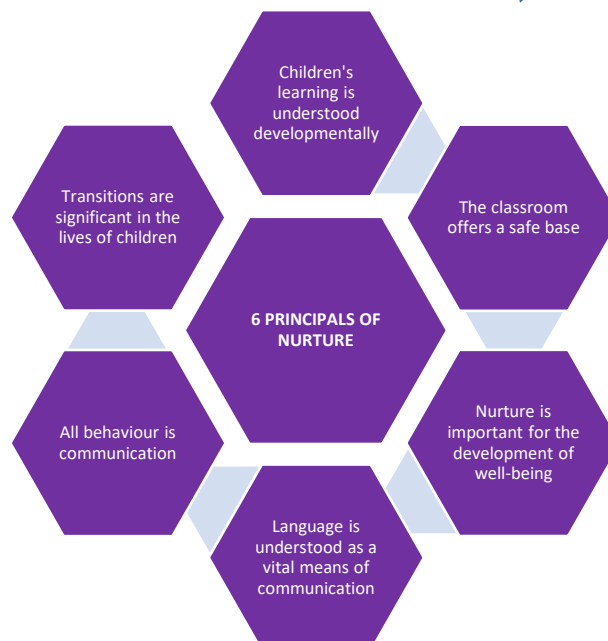
All the groups are set up with the underpinning of the six founding (Marjorie Boxall) principles. These are:

"I think the Nurture Group is really fun because you play games that educate you.

Also, the teachers Ms. Manderson and Ms. Adama are very nice"

Callum Cole

Year 8



As we are a secondary school, the nurture group activities are often linked to the core curriculum. The activities take place in a safe and secure environment where students can build trusting relationships with adults.

We undertake a Boxall Profile on all students at the beginning of their placement within the Nurture Group and at the end, so we are satisfied that the students have moved on to a stage where they are more emotionally equipped to be able to handle learning within a classroom environment.

The aim is to re-integrate the students back into the mainstream cycle of learning by equipping them with the necessary social skills to do this successfully.

ADHD – CONCENTRATION SKILLS GROUP

Students with ADHD can be impulsive and find it difficult to concentrate. This group meets once a week and focuses on playing games to improve students' concentration and attention.

HANDWRITING GROUP

We run a handwriting group for our Year 7 students who sometimes struggle with the presentation of neat handwriting in the lessons. All students undertake several handwriting assessments upon joining the class. They are then taught cursive (joined up) writing through a variety of techniques this includes formal written tasks, modelling, (including how to hold the pen and seating posture), writing tasks and videos, demonstrating the strokes for different letters.

EXAM SUPPORT/ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

We have access exam arrangements for some students that meet the requirements for this. Students are tested to ensure that they receive the right type of access arrangements.

What sorts of exam access arrangements are available?

Some of the most common exam access arrangements are:

Extra time: This is usually 25%.

- A Reader:** Readers can be used for students who have visual impairments or a disability that affects their ability to read accurately themselves. In an exam that assesses reading ability a human reader is not allowed. In some cases, a computer reader will be allowed.
- Assistive Technology:** If the candidate uses assistive technology as their normal way of working, they will be able to continue this for exams, for example using word processors, exam reading pens and computer text readers.
- Separate Room:** Some candidates who have AAs may work in a separate room.

Contact Information

SENCO

Alicia Wignal

alicia.wignal@oasisarena.org

Enhanced Learning Provision Led

Nataliah Douglas

nataliah.douglas@oasisacademyarena.org.uk

Assistant SENCO

Jenny Aarons

jenny.aarons@oasisarena.org

SEND MANAGER

Beverley Manderson

beverley.manderson@oasisarena.org