LOCAL OFFER

Name of School	The Link School		
Address	Primary Site 138 Croydon Road Beddington	Secondary Site 82-86 Croydon Road Beddington	Satellite Site Mollison Drive Wallington
Postcode	CR0 4PG	CR0 4PD	SM6 9JN
Name of contact person	Sandy Turner, Executive Principal of The Link School		
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Website	www.thelinkschool.co.uk		
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Contact to discuss child needs Who will I contact to discuss the concerns or needs of my child?	Sandy Turner – Executive Principal Primary Site – Sue Denman – Head of site Secondary Site - Hannah Wallwork – Deputy head teacher Satellite site – Nic Andrews – Head of site		
About the school	The Link School is part of the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust. The Link School is a Special School catering for students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs from aged 4 to 18. The school caters for up to 148 children and young people. All the students attending The Link have an EHCP within which the student's primary need has been identified as a Speech Language and Communication Need. As well as SLCN, we cater for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder ('ASD'). We also cater for students with a range of other needs, but these are always secondary to the speech and language and communication need. Increasingly children and young people accepted at the school have a dual diagnosis with both diagnoses presenting as significant barriers to their learning. The school have also developed a flagship provision for learners with ASD with a demand avoidant profile or Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). Learners work in small classes with a high ratio of adults. We have eighteen		

	classes or tutor groups where children and young people are grouped by learning style and ability. This ensures learners work within a suitable peer group and that work is differentiated consistently to enable sustained progress.
Assessing children How does the school know how well my child is doing?	The school uses an assessment system called SOLAR which is designed around the need to not only track attainment but also for the identification of targets and next steps for the learners. Therapists work in partnership with the students, teachers and staff, parents/carers, the school counsellor and external agencies to provide an informed and accurate picture of the learners' strengths and difficulties and how best to maximise their potential. Where a student needs additional external input, the family is supported through the referral process and attendance at appointments. When a young person moves on from the school, therapists provide a detailed account of the student's needs and the type of provision required to meet those needs.
Informing parents/carers and carers How will I be kept informed about how well my child is doing? **Updates on progress** How regularly will I be updated on my child's progress?	Formal and informal information sharing methods are used on a regular basis. We recognise the need for home schoolbooks or diaries, and these are used in addition to Parent Mail across the school to inform parents/carers of day-to-day events. Bespoke support packages are in place for parents who want or would benefit from a more individualised approach to supporting their child's needs. On the Primary and Satellite site formal progress review meetings take place termly and thorough reports are prepared for the Annual Review of progress towards EHCP outcomes. On the Secondary site there are three parent evening consultations each year, at which teachers and therapists are present and where student progress and attainment is discussed. Progress reports are sent home three times a year. The termly parent meetings give those closely involved with the young person opportunity to talk through the reports, strategies that are having the most impact and any additional interventions that may be needed. Detailed SLT reports and assessments, OT reports, as well as reports from any additional therapy input, such as counselling and other therapies, are produced for annual review and EHCP meetings.
If a child is not making progress	Rigorous monitoring and evaluation take place in order to review the effectiveness of every learner's plan. If a child or young person is not making the progress they should then programmes are reviewed and specialised

Will I know if my child is not making progress and what will happen?	interventions put into place in a timely way to ensure that learners overcome any additional barriers so they begin to make at least the progress that would be expected.
Curriculum What is the curriculum and how is it taught?	**Primary Site** We believe that children learn best when they enjoy and value coming into school to participate in an exciting, practical and relevant learning curriculum. Lessons and activities are planned to give children new experiences and to help them embed learning through hands-on approaches. We offer a lively and vibrant curriculum which studies core discrete subjects as well as cross curricular based topics in conjunction with individual educational outcomes from EHCP's. Our spiral Relationship and Health Education (RHE) Curriculum offers discrete topics which help our pupils develop their social skills and emotional regulation at their appropriate levels. A Curriculum of additional priorities called "The Link Priorities" underpin the National Curriculum offer. The use of child centred planning from individuals' EHCP long term targets help tailor the goals that we believe will make a difference to our pupils' achieving their full potential. **Secondary Site** Obtaining the best possible outcomes for students is one of our highest priorities. We have developed a pathway system that lets us support the whole range of needs and talents that our students display. Every student has a timetable that reflects their specific requirements, with sessions delivered by subject specialist teachers and therapists. Regardless of Key Stage, our students' curriculum will be based on three elements: Formal (English, Maths, ICT, Science)– followed by all students Physical / Expressive (PE, Art, Humanities, D.T., Projects)– accessed by the majority of students Access and Link Priority Curriculum– therapy programmes to support and develop language, learning, life and social skills. **Satellite Site**

	"Backdoor learning" and nurture approaches prove the most effective system for our pupils, and we offer 3 curriculum pathways for our learners on the satellite site (informal, semi formal and formal). We do not have set topics of study but instead use learner motivations alongside assessment criteria to plan the curriculum offer. Our learner's journey is individualised to them to promote the best outcomes. Students who wish to gain qualifications on the formal pathway study appropriate topics for the qualification. We deliver a range of national curriculum subjects within all our learning approaches. Backdoor learning forms the main approach for our learners, however as learners' anxieties reduce class teachers are able to increase more traditional learning resources and styles, often referred to by students as 'daily challenges'. Alongside the academic subjects we recognise the significant and important social and regulatory skills that our learners need to develop in order to maintain successful skills within their social and academic worlds. These areas are as much a focus as the national curriculum subjects. All learners work upon building their skills in relation to the satellite site Link Priorities and termly IEPS related to outcomes in their EHCP.
Adapting for child needs How will the curriculum be adapted to meet the needs of my child?	The Curriculum is differentiated for each learner, either by modification, or support, outcome or level, so that every child or young person is included and has full access to the curriculum, at their level and their pace. The students are grouped in ability-based classes of approximately 6-10 young people. This ensures fined tuned differentiation and better progress as well as the opportunity to work alongside a similar peer group with comparable social strengths and needs.
Teacher flexibility on child needs How flexible can teachers be in meeting the needs of my child?	Each classroom is organised into different learning areas, enabling students to be taught within groups. Commonly these groups may be based on ability, allowing for a high degree of differentiation by support, outcome and teaching strategy. Assessment takes place throughout the year, with three data collections set for the end of each term. This data is used to set targets, identify learners who need to be supported to make accelerated progress and to ensure progress is monitored and reported. It also enables teachers to ensure learners are challenged within their own working levels.
Additional support Is there any additional support available to help my child reach his/her expected outcomes?	Therapists plan, prepare and deliver key lessons and social skills groups. Learners may be withdrawn for 1:1 work, for example on speech sound disorders but this is timetabled in collaboration with the teaching staff to provide an effective and efficient means of incorporating therapy targets into the classroom.

Learning strategies Are there any special features or strategies to help children learn?	Small classes and high staff ratios mean that all learners have a high level of individual support. Our school vision statement 'Digging deep to aim high' embodies what we believe as a school which is that collaborative practice and additional support results in a quality offer where "young people overcome barriers today so that they and their parents can look forward to a bright future tomorrow". The Link provides a curriculum that is tailored to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all the learners. Evidence based approaches are familiar to all staff, such as blank levels, colourful semantics, social stories, comic strip conversations and zones of regulation. Learners are provided with regular, planned opportunities to use and apply their skills across all subjects and settings. Children and young people have regular planned access to community environments so that they can generalise their skills and learning. As the young people progress through the school the Curriculum strategies extends to include, travel training, enterprise activities, work-related learning, independence and self-help skills, FE link courses and work experience.
Meeting child needs How do I know my child's particular need will be met?	A collaborative team including Teacher, Speech and Language Therapist, OT and Support Staff devises a learning pathway for every learner. All staff are experienced in teaching students with Speech, Language and Communication impairment and or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. Therapists work closely with students, parents/carers, class teachers, support assistants and external agencies to provide a whole school approach to ensuring the students achieve their full potential both at school and in their life beyond school. A high level of visual support is offered including pictures and symbols to support concepts and understanding. Social stories and visual timetables are used regularly to help the students cope with changes to daily routines and other more significant events.
Access to exams What arrangements are available for students to access tests and assessments?	Our students sit public examinations and are supported to access these via the Access Arrangements provided by Examination Boards. Assessments to determine what arrangements are permissible, such as scribes, readers, oral language modifiers, use of laptops, are carried out by our Speech and language Therapists. Students in KS4 follow accredited courses at Pre- entry, Entry Levels 1 to 3 as

	well as some GCSEs. Other accredited courses are also followed including Functional Skills.
Additional support or time for exams How will I know if my child qualifies for additional support or time to access tests?	Parents/carers will be given regular information from teachers, therapists and the senior leadership team where additional support or time has been assessed as a need.
Comfort, safety and socialising How does the school help my child to feel comfortable and safe and manage social situations?	The Link has a strong pastoral ethos and the individual's social, emotional and academic needs are well catered for with robust systems and resources to support this. The school has a Counsellor to whom students can be referred if thought beneficial. Our Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Counsellor are skilled in creating a learning and social environment that reduces anxiety, aids communication and provides a sensory diet that enables learners to regulate their sensory and emotional needs, raising their self- esteem. Some staff have advanced first aid training sessions on the administration of medication for conditions such as epilepsy. All of our support staff are trained in basic first aid and the school meet Health and Safety requirements in terms of first aid personnel.
Developing social & emotional skills How does the school help develop my child's social and emotional skills?	We have an emphasis on whole person learning. We see difficulties and barriers as opportunities. We focus on developing quality relationships that will help us build resilience. Self -regulation of emotional and sensory needs is a priority area of personal development. The zones of regulation framework is embedded across the school and has impact with supporting children and young people to manage their emotional regulation well. On the Secondary site, The Life Skills Curriculum ensures that the following statutory topics are covered throughout both KS3 and KS4: Mental Health, Extremism and Radicalisation, Careers, E-Safety, Relationship education, Bullying and Healthy Living. The programme and long term targets are updated annually to meet the needs of the school population and this ensures that sensitive topics are covered in a way that are meaningful to the learners. A varied food technology curriculum is taught to all students. Students study nutrition and healthy eating and learn how to prepare a range of dishes covering many different cultures. For those students who are ready for increased independent community access the school teaches safer travelling through TfL initiatives on the trams and buses locally.
Early Help Support in the Community (Tier 2)	The Teachers at the Link School are fully qualified teachers. They have a range of additional qualifications that include: B Ed, MA, NPQH, Cert: Ed,

Examples : please include any ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), counselling, Talk and draw, parent groups, support groups for parents/carers and children e.g. Self Esteem and social skills, Clinical Psychology paid for by the school, Mentoring, Anger management / Feelings work.	Diploma SEN, Diploma in Education and Training, Diplomas ASD ASE. We employ five Occupational Therapists, qualified at Degree level, and registered with the College of OT. Two Therapists are additionally qualified in Sensory Integration Therapy. We employ additional therapists, including a School Counsellor. All are fully qualified practitioners. We also buy in additional therapy, such as Drama Therapy, Music therapy and Canine Assisted learning. Many members of staff are ELKLAN trained and some of the therapists are qualified to run ELKLAN courses in order to maintain expertise. The school have an effective contextualized well- being policy that can be viewed from the school website. This outlines a range of universal, targeted and specialist provision available to parents, families and students giving high quality Tier 2 support.
Bullying What is the school's policy on bullying?	We have a positive behaviour policy which recognises that successful management of challenging behaviour is wholly dependent upon our school ethos of creating a culture that values and supports each learner and member of staff by promoting an understanding of behaviour with clear communication, good mental and physical wellbeing for all. Clear boundaries, guidelines and strategies, which are regularly reviewed, help positive behaviour to flourish. We recognise that challenging behaviour, however it manifests itself, is usually an impediment to accessing the curriculum effectively and that positive behaviour is a necessary prerequisite to effective teaching and learning. Please see our Wellbeing and anti- bullying policies on the school website for more detail.
Disability support What facilities are in the school to assist children with disabilities move around the building and take part in lessons?	The school has been developed over time, expanding as demand has increased. The school has undergone a period of improvement in terms of building and the surrounding school environment. The Primary and Secondary site consist of a number of classrooms, an assembly hall, computer room, food technology room and a number of smaller rooms used for individual or small group work. On the Primary site children are able to expand learning beyond the classroom, outside in the form of a sensory garden for regulation needs as well as a horticulture area with raised beds where fruit and vegetable growing is able to take place. The children benefit from a large sunken trampoline in the outside environment as well as an internal sensory diet room with specialist equipment. The Primary site is on two floors. The new

	build is fully accessible by lift. The second floor in the older part of the building is accessible only by a staircase and is not suitable for children with complex physical needs. On the Secondary site there is a modern teaching block, over three floors, which is fully accessible by stairs and a lift. The entrance to the school has fully accessible sliding doors with ramp access from the car park. The older part of the building, houses our therapy block, specialist classrooms, hall, office and admin facilities. There are some parts of the old building and playground that are not easily accessible to students who require walker or wheelchair access. This is currently part of school improvement through the disability access plan.
Accessing lessons How do I know my child will be able to access all lessons?	Parents/carers will be given regular information from teachers, therapists and the senior leadership team where additional support or time, if needed, will be assessed and discussed.
Who we work with Who does the school work with?	The school works closely with a variety of external agencies across different Local Authorities including physiotherapists, the visual and hearing impairment service, a behaviour consultant, CAMHS and parent in partnership or independent charities such as IPSEA. <u>Specialist services and expertise</u> • Special support assistants • Local Authority SEND caseworkers • Sensory processing support • Speech, language communication support • Autism spectrum disorder support • Occupational therapy support • School nursing services • Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service • Protocols for informing, engaging and empowering parents/carers • Music Therapy • Drama Therapy • Canine Assisted Learning • Yoga and Dance • RDA Horse riding
Working with other agencies How does the school work with other agencies?	We work in a collaborative and mutually respectful way, which includes open dialogue where appropriate to aid a culture of cooperative and supportive working practices, in the best interests of the student and their family.

Informing parents/carers and carers How will I be informed?	Parents/carers are contacted regularly via ParentMail, school newsletters, calls home from teachers, therapists or a member of the senior leadership team, if needed, and regular parents/carers' evenings/events.
Helping your child settle with confidence How will the school help my child settle with confidence and manage change as they move between schools and year groups?	The school has an induction programme to prepare each student before joining the school. This typically consists of visits to the school with parents/carers when there will be guided tours with senior leads and opportunity to ask questions. In the term prior to joining (usually the Summer term) students will spend ½ a day at the school if they are Primary age or a full day if they are Secondary age. Each new student is assigned a 'buddy' and a planned range of activities to include teaching, leisure and social activities. Parents/carers receive an information pack from the school. Staff will liaise with each student's current placement to ensure a smooth transition to The Link School, liaising with or visiting the feeder school, and collating all relevant documents and information. All students' placements are reviewed at the annual review of their statement of special educational needs. Students who progress to Further Education placements are given support through mentoring, taster days as well as a formal transition planning meetings at College which school, therapists and parents/carers/carers and students attend.
Extended School Day What additional facilities do you offer?e.g. Breakfast club; After school clubs; walking train to after school care	All students have access to activities and events outside the classroom, unless in exceptional circumstances where their health and safety, or the health and safety of others would be at risk. Prior to all off-site visits risk assessments are obtained from visiting organisations and all necessary adaptations made for the needs of particular learners with the school carrying out our own risk assessments. All students with medical needs have a health care plan which is taken on all off-site visits. Many curriculum and therapy activities involve short offsite visits to the local area to enable the skills being taught to be practised and reinforced in real life situations. The school has a range of support strategies and resources to assist with access to our 'learning outside the classroom' activities. These include: minibuses, cycle trainers and travel training programmes. Support staff are first aid trained and carry out careful pre-visit planning and briefing for each student. Visiting organisations are given a briefing of the needs of visiting students,

	where appropriate. Parents/carers are always informed in advance of off-site visits and for extended visits, such as work experience placements or school residential trips. Additional parent meetings are held to brief and involve parents/carers. A range of lunch time clubs take place across the sites. After School clubs run twice weekly on a Tuesday and Thursday on the Primary and Secondary sites. These are open to all, including learners based at the Satellite site. Parents or a parent representative is required to pick up a young person when the club has finished.
Policies Add any relevant web links to things like policies here, e.g. SEN policy, Behaviour policy, Equalities policy, Access Plan	**www.thelinkschool.co.uk/key-information/policies/**
Keywords	**The Link Ethos and Vision** Our school value all our learners equally, recognising their individual strengths, barriers, and aspirations. As a school team we are driven by our school vision "**digging deep to aim high**" wanting our learners to **overcome their barriers** and **reach their potential**. This means that the team around the children and young people work together to ensure **every learner is understood**. We seek to **overcome barriers today** so that young people and parents can look forward to **a bright future tomorrow**. **Generalising learning** into community settings, work, and leisure opportunities as well as **quality relationships** is seen as a priority as we help our young people develop **positive self-esteem** and greater independence. The four key strands of our vision for all learners is to achieve optimum - **Communication** - **Wellbeing – physical, emotional, and social** - **Independence** - **Achievement** Our shared ethos and vision enable us to think about and plan for the future of our children and young people with imagination and wisdom.