



## The Link School Self-Evaluation and Development Plan 2023-24

Written: September 2023

### Context

- The Link School is a special co-educational school that caters for children and young people aged from 4 to 18 who have speech, language and communication needs. All students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Just over two thirds of the student population have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. At the Primary site, many children have started at the Link mid key stage when mainstream or special schools they have previously attended can no longer meet need. At the Secondary site the majority of the students have progressed through education in a special school or a base-type setting, with a smaller number joining the school from mainstream provisions. The school has a Satellite site, opened in September 2022, based just over a mile away from the Primary and Secondary sites. This site caters particularly for learners with ASD, ADHD and a demand avoidant profile who require a highly specialised learning environment and pedagogy. The majority of children at the Satellite have had a complex school history, with many having had long periods of time out of education.
- The range of complex social and communication needs experienced by the young people at the Link makes them more susceptible to high levels of anxiety and emotional well-being issues, and they can present as more vulnerable than peers within mainstream and other special school settings. Many pupils benefit from additional wellbeing therapies, such as music and drama therapy, creative counselling and canine assisted learning. Young people have access to wellbeing mentors when required and 13 pupils currently have direct CAMHS involvement.
- The ethnic mix reflects the ethnicity of the local landscape. 50.6% of current students are White British, with the remainder coming from a range of different ethnic backgrounds.
- 27% of pupils in the Primary and Satellite sites are supported by the pupil premium fund and 48.48% at the Secondary site, which is an above average portion.
- There are currently 151 students on role, with 52 pupils on the Primary site, 26 pupils in the Satellite site, and 73 pupils on the Secondary site, 11 of whom are in the sixth form. All sites are full to capacity for their current physical size. The school population has doubled in size over the last five years due to a commitment to providing for the increased numbers of children in the local area with special educational needs. This has brought with it increased teaching and support teams and a changing leadership model with a more distributed leadership.
- The school provides an outreach service for pupils who are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream or special schools or who are out of education if they fit the ASD / demand avoidant profile which has become one of the school specialisms.
- The Link Primary and Secondary School joined Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHCAT) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017; the Trust consists of 14 special schools located in London, Surrey and West Sussex. The two schools amalgamated under the original Primary DfE number in

	<p>September 22 to become “The Link School” as part of a plan to provide a more cohesive educational and personal package of support for children and young people with language and communication needs in the local area. The Link School is part of the Sutton and Croydon Hub and works closely with the other Academy schools in the locality, Carew Academy and Addington Valley Academy (AVA). The school also works closely with the Cirrus Trust, a local mainstream Academy with which the school has a rental and service level agreement for the Satellite site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal at The Primary school from January 2017, oversaw the transfer of the school to an Academy and the amalgamation of the Primary and Secondary school. She remains the Principal of The Link School. The Primary secured their 4th “Outstanding judgement” in a row from OFSTED in November 2019. The Secondary School secured a “Good judgement with Outstanding for Behaviour” in January 2022.</li> <li>• The school previously worked with a number of different London Boroughs, however in line with the Academy vision and values that seek to educate children and young people with special needs within their local communities the number of Local Authorities that the school supports is reducing over time. The main boroughs are now Sutton, Croydon, Surrey and Merton.</li> <li>• As a response to students’ complex social, speech, language and communication needs, the school offers a structured comprehensive therapy package to support progress. All students receive onsite speech and language therapy and occupational therapy from therapists employed by the school or private therapy companies.</li> <li>• The school has a strong personalized learning philosophy with embedded values that support the overarching vision, “digging deep to aim high”.</li> </ul>
<p>School Improvement priorities – 5 year plan (22-27)</p>	<p>By the end of the academic year 2027 we will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained our outstanding provision for children and young people with complex speech, language and communication difficulties through an Educational and Therapeutic model ensuring that quality is not lost as the school expands to cover the broad age group from 4 to 18 across three separate sites.</li> <li>• Become a flagship provision known for its expertise in Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN), Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), providing open classrooms alongside training and outreach for OHCAT, Sutton schools and beyond.</li> <li>• Impacted SEN provision in mainstream schools through bespoke support and the planned virtual OHCAT Academy.</li> <li>• Secured positive long- term results in terms of work/ social outcomes for our school leavers.</li> </ul>
<p>School Improvement priorities – 2023-24</p>	<p>QUALITY OF EDUCATION</p> <p><b>PRIMARY SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Assessment for learning: Staff to find and use the most effective way of evidencing learning between lessons for their pathway group.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Reading development: Choose and implement an additional literacy assessment, alongside SOLAR English, that will support next step teaching in word reading and phonics development and record small step progress well.</b></p> <p><b>SECONDARY SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Curriculum: Revisit and strengthen sequential planning and cross curricular learning across the key stage ability-based groups.</b></p>

**1.2 Reading development: Literacy teaching and interventions will effectively teach to small next step gaps through the introduction of a new literacy assessment tool.**

**SATELLITE SITE**

**1.1 Teaching and Learning: Embed and extend the backdoor learning strategy to include wider and broader areas of the curriculum related to young people's interests.**

**1.2 Assessment: Improve the quality of evidence of learning for accountability groups through the "Wow files".**

**BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES**

**PRIMARY SITE**

**2.1 Pupil well-being meetings will include a focus on staff self-reflection to identify adaptations to staff communication or actions that will aid pupil regulation.**

**SECONDARY SITE**

**2.1 Students will play an active role in supporting the wellbeing of their peers through the introduction of a senior student leadership team and through student safeguarding ambassadors.**

**SATELLITE SITE**

**2.1 An Alsup target will be identified for every child and young person across the home and school environment in order to make progress against the lagging skill that most affects their regulation.**

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**PRIMARY SITE AND SECONDARY SITE**

**3.1 Develop a series of key link priority steps to match another 10 of the Link Priority key targets.**

**SATELLITE SITE**

**3.1**

**Improve the cultural capital on offer to Satellite pupils, via access to additional therapies as well as increased opportunities for community visits relevant to pupil interests and aspirations.**

**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**ALL SITES**

**4.1 Identify the strengths and challenges in terms of workplace wellbeing from the OHCAT education audit. Identify a target for each site to improve workplace wellbeing over the year 23-24.**

**4.2 Tweak and embed the systems and structures that bring strength to the school organisation and enable the strategies to continue to be effective.**

**4.3 Develop formalised training packages around school strengths (SLCN, ASD, PDA) in order to train and maintain skills of our own staff as well as supporting colleagues in other special schools or mainstream schools, locally or nationally.**

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION - GOOD

### Strengths

#### PRIMARY SITE

##### Intent

- The school's "Linked Curriculum" has a **deep breadth and careful balance** borne from an openness to finding the most effective model for the **individual children** that make up the site's **wide-ranging cohort**.
- The curriculum covers **all National Curriculum** subjects and **more** and is carefully sequenced to ensure pupils start at their **emerging levels of development** and proceed to grow their **knowledge and skills over time**.
- The principles of the **SEN Code of Practice** have been taken seriously and have resulted in the development of "Person Centred EHCPs" and "The Link Priority Curriculum" which forms the **springboard** from where all other curriculum learning grows. This enables pupils to **overcome their main barriers** to learning as far as it is possible and to develop the personal skills that they will need to be successful both in **the present and in their next stage of Education**.
- The ability to **generalise** knowledge and skills in **different settings** and in the **community** is a key element that runs throughout all aspects of the Curriculum.

##### Implementation

- The site has developed quality **flat leadership** with all teachers taking responsibility for key areas of the curriculum or school priorities based on an "**Impact Evaluation**" model. Teachers understand and articulate the school's "**child centred**" vision and values well and ensure this flows into the intent and implementation of their own responsibility area.
- Teaching is of a **high quality across the school** with no teacher working below a "solidly good" 2b in the Academy Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES). Many teachers are working consistently at the top end of good, 2a, and others moving into the outstanding grading 1c and 1b. This consistent standard ensures pupils benefit from **good subject knowledge across the curriculum**.
- Pupils are **grouped by their learning style and ability** and although there are common strategies effective for the majority, no two classrooms are the same in their structure, environment or pedagogy. This ensures **pupils receive the best and most effective provision for their ability and need**.
- The "**Linked Curriculum**" covers subjects taught through **cross curricular topics**. These have been carefully selected through impact research which has identified the topics that are most **motivating and meaningful** to the pupils as well as those that supply them with **useful knowledge and skills** for their **most likely pathways**.
- The site Curriculum Lead ensures every pupil receives a **broad subject coverage over time** and does not repeat work unnecessarily whatever age they are on arrival at school and whatever learning pathway they travel through during their time in the school.
- The graduated targets based on the key learning groups (**Engagers, Discoverers, Explorers, Investigators, Inquisitors**) ensure that pupils are **carefully baselined** for skills and knowledge with the aim always of **moving them forward** in their learning. This also enables pupils who are the most able in the school to be sufficiently challenged.

- The **Literacy Plan** is also carefully developed with similar graduated targets and strategies to ensure pupils have access to suitable work for their ability and barriers in reading, writing and handwriting. The **Maths curriculum** is individualised to pupil ability and has a focus on **applying mathematical skills** and **generalising** these into **everyday situations**.
- The **“Link Priority” Assessment scales** outline the key steps pupils will need to develop their **learning to learn and personal development** skills and provides an effective way of presenting qualitative information in a quantifiable form. The **“Wilson Stuart P Steps”** assessed in the online **SOLAR** system give an equally effective way of measuring pupils’ **National Curriculum Progress** and cover the whole range of ability in the school well. These levels are matched to the **National Pre-Key Stage Standards** for measuring progress for pupils with special educational needs and this enables receiving secondary schools to correctly identify suitable next step learning pathways. The combination of these main assessments that make up **“The Link Bespoke Assessment System”**, enables the leadership team to make **accurate individual, group and whole school judgements** on which to base **interventions or next steps**.
- The school’s **“Learning Sandwich” marking policy** clearly outlines the expectation of staff to observe, identify learning problems either with the learning process or concept and adapt the teaching in lessons as a response to this. Senior leadership **“Coaching learning walks”** have proved to be the most effective model to embed this policy.
- The site uses its **additional funding** resources well and as a response to identified additional needs. A range of school data is used to identify pupils that will most benefit from the **tutoring fund** for example. Good progress has been seen for learners that have previously been identified as working below expected levels of attainment socially and academically. Progress for **pathway 1** learners has been noted over the last year in cause-and-effect cognition and ability to form meaningful learning relationships. Progress has been seen for **pathway 2** learners in the closing of the progress gap in English and Maths SOLAR levels.

## SECONDARY SITE

### Intent

- At The Link Secondary Site, we believe in an entitlement to **‘powerful knowledge’** for every student on our roll.
- Our curriculum is designed to provide ‘powerful knowledge’ for all students as both learned **academic information** and an acquired set of **social and life skills**. The majority of our young people do not learn social skills naturally. We aim to ensure young people learn these important skills in the same way they learn, for example, algebra or grammatical structure
- The curriculum is also designed to promote our key vision of **wellbeing, independence, communication and achievement** for all. This drives our curriculum structure, implementation and any evaluation or adaptations.

Over time we want to see:

- students **gaining up to nine external accreditations** including English and Maths at their **optimum cognitive level**
- students equipped with the skills to enable them to look after themselves in the **wider community**
- students leaving school with the ability to complete straightforward aspects of **everyday living**
- curriculum content and quality of teaching that provides a **deep breath and balance of knowledge** in **formal, physical / expressive** and **RSE** aspects of learning.

### Implementation

- Teaching is of a **high quality across the site** with no teacher working below a ‘solidly good’ 2b in the Academy Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES). Many teachers are working consistently at the top end of good (i.e. 2a), and others are moving into the outstanding grading of 1c or 1b. This consistent standard ensures students benefit from teachers’ **good subject knowledge across the curriculum**
- Students are grouped according to their learning ability and learning styles to match the pathways through the school, ensuring students **receive the best and most effective provision for their need**. The majority of teaching takes place through subject-specific learning with specialist subject teachers. The important place of the Access curriculum and targeted EHCP interventions led by the school therapists and the SENCO team is integral to the curriculum, ensuring learners work towards understanding and overcoming their key barriers so that they can make progress through the more formal curriculum. At Sixth Form level, students receive a highly differentiated curriculum with greater opportunities for external independent learning and preparation for college.
- To ensure students receive a good balance of academic and life skills learning, the curriculum is delivered through the following areas: **Formal, Physical/Expressive, RSE / SMSC, and External / Independent**.
- Progress through the curriculum is measured and evidenced in both **formative and summative** forms of assessment, using the assessment monitoring software **SOLAR**. We use a series of levels called ‘**Link Steps**’ based around **Pre -National Curriculum** and **National Curriculum** levels in **Formal** subjects. Other subjects are also recorded though SOLAR, but key performance indicators have been created by our own **subject specialists** with a range of targets matched to the ability range of students within the school. We also use the specification criteria from all of the **externally accredited courses** taught in school to our Key Stage 4 and 5 students in order to assess progress towards the final outcomes at **Pre entry, Entry Level 1, 2 or 3** or **Level 1 or 2 qualifications**.
- The site has enough data collated over a period of five years now to be able to make judgements about the amount of progress individuals and groups of students make in subjects across the curriculum. This enables teachers and school leaders to set **challenging individual and whole school targets** and to put interventions in place for those making less than expected progress
- SOLAR progression is updated by teachers as an ongoing process and each term a **progress report** is generated and sent home to parents. This acts as a good catalyst for discussion and home/school support.
- Student progress towards the key vision is also underpinned by the work of the therapy team. Therapists report termly and annually on progress against **therapy targets** and **interventions** outlined in EHCPs. This contributes to the monitoring of the holistic progress of the students which is vital to inform overall progress towards the site outcomes in the vision statement – Wellbeing, Independence, Communication and Achievement for all.
- **Formative assessment** - questioning and feedback is used at regular intervals throughout lessons. We encourage a **learning dialogue** at all times. All marking and feedback follows the **whole-school marking policy** and includes “next Steps, students’ comments, and codes” to assess whether or not learning objectives have been met. Formative assessment is also used to understand common and individual barriers to learning which promotes the vision of being a **personalised learning** school.

#### **SATELLITE SITE**

##### **Intent**

- At our satellite site we believe that our students need our support to aid them to balance their anxiety against the demands of everyday life in order to support them to be able to balance the demands of academic studying.
- Our curriculum is designed to allow students to feel learning is meaningful and functional – reducing their anxiety around demands.

- The mantra REGULATE- REACH-TEACH sits as a corner stone for our curriculum; understanding that these students need to be in optimum regulation levels to succeed in their learning. Human connection and interpersonal skills need to be balanced and trust levels gained between staff and students to maximise learning and engagement with eth educational system for our students.
- Learners range from Key Stage 1-3 and we believe each learners' learning offer and journey must be individualised to them to promote the best outcomes. We aim to provide a curriculum offer that promotes acquisition of skills and knowledge in academic, social/interpersonal skills and learning for a more independent life ahead.
- "Backdoor learning" and nurture approaches prove the most effective system to engage our students with the education system which for many has failed them previously and causes them high levels of anxiety.

### Implementation

- Teaching is of a **high quality across the site** with no teacher working below a 'solidly good' 2b in the Academy Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES). Many teachers are working consistently at the top end of good (i.e. 2a), and others are moving into the outstanding grading of 1c. This consistent standard ensures students benefit from teachers' **good subject knowledge across the curriculum**
- Students are grouped into 3 different learning pathways (*informal, semi formal and formal*) which allows the curriculum to be delivered appropriately to individuals learning styles and abilities. Across the site we have 1 informal class, 2 semi formal classes and 1 formal class however we understand that this does not suit all students and some students need to be in the formal class for social interpersonal skills success with an adapted semi formal approach and some students need to be in an informal class for regulation needs but can begin to access semi formal learning approach. Learning pathways are implemented to suit the individual avoiding trying to fit the individual into a model of learning that does not suit them; therefore, the curriculum is adapted to the individual allowing flexibility to meet the demand avoidance/anxiety balance of our students.
- "Backdoor learning" is a key strategy to working with all of our students on the site. This approach allows staff to work with students within their highly motivating subjects/activities to build a safe nurturing and trusting environment which lowers students' anxiety. During this approach staff are able to carefully introduce the outcomes expected of the students and work to challenge and support learning without the demand of perceived work causing students to dysregulate and disengage from the learning.
- Students on our informal pathways access all their learning through backdoor learning techniques.
- Students on the semiformal pathway access 50-75% of their learning though backdoor learning techniques. Students when first upon this pathway will need more back door learning however staff always aim to increase the level of formal learning that can be introduced as trust and anxiety levels allow.
- Students on our formal pathway access 50-75% of their learning through formal learning in 1:1 or class group lessons. Backdoor learning is still present throughout their day to give them a natural anxiety break which is staff led proactive approach rather than student regulation reactive led approach.
- All students face daily "challenges"/work set by staff in English and Maths whether this is through formal group lessons/1:1 sessions/informal backdoor approaches. This will be individualised to each student's learning need and outcomes to support them to work to their best potential despite their barriers to learning.
- A broad and balance curriculum offer is delivered to students through formal or backdoor learning activities of their interests and motivation and where students have a particular interest in a topic they are challenged and inspired to dig deep into the subject content and gain further knowledge. In the formal and semi

formal pathways students will have access to discrete science and topic lessons. We do not limit students but embrace their interests as vessels for learning opportunities.

- Students in the formal pathway have discrete RSE lessons weekly. Students on the semiformal and informal pathways address RSE outcomes through the Link Priorities.
- Alongside the academic subjects we recognise the significant and important social and regulatory skills that our learners need to develop to maintain successful skills within their social and academic worlds. These areas are as much a focus as the national curriculum subjects. All learners will work upon building their skills in relation to the satellite site Link Priorities and be set termly IEPs related to outcomes in their EHCP.
- Progress through the curriculum for English and Maths is measured and evidenced in both **formative and summative** forms of assessment, using the assessment monitoring software **SOLAR**. We use a bespoke assessment series called “The Link Satellite Steps”- this assessment is based upon the EYFS (Development Matters) and National Curriculum; it breaks the expected outcomes for years and key stages into small steps which can show the small step progress students make. Parents can understand how their child is progressing in relation to a mainstream equivalent peer. SOLAR progression is recorded by teachers throughout the term and data is collected each term to monitor progression. As the years continue, we will be able to collate enough data to be able to make judgements about the amount of progress individuals and groups of students make in subjects across the curriculum and be able to set expected progress values for each pathway.
- IEPs are evaluated and reviewed for progression and next steps termly by teachers and reported to parents with discussions regarding generalisation across settings and important next steps.
- Link priorities are assessed termly to assess if students have gained/generalised new skills or identify any areas which may need further intervention.

#### **Impact**

- Pupils at the Primary site are developing a good range of skills and knowledge across the **priority curriculum** and **outstanding holistic progress that prepares them well** for their next step to **secondary education**. The data for 2022-23 has been analysed and in summary 80% of pupils achieved expected or above expected progress in English compared to 88% for 2021-22 and 78% achieved expected or above expected progress in Maths compared to 77% in 2021-22. In IEPs 72% made expected or above expected progress compared to 70% in 2021/22. In the Link Priorities 88% made expected or above expected progress compared to 100% in the previous year. Overall 88% made expected or above expected progress compared to 100% last year. The 100% figures in 2021/22 reflected the additional emphasis which was placed on generalising skills through community visits when off-site trips were allowed to happen after Lockdown.
- Students at the Secondary site are developing a good range of skills and knowledge across the **formal curriculum** and **outstanding progress in the Physical /Expressive and RSE Curriculum that prepares them well** for their next step to **further education**.
- By the end of 2022-23, we had eleven leavers who left with a total of 64 qualifications between them and an additional sixteen students gained 77 qualifications ranging from Entry Level 1 to Level 1 and some GCSEs. These subjects include English, Maths, Science, ICT, Home Cooking, and Art.
- Students across the school made good progress through the academic and personal and social curriculum in 2022-23. 22% of students made expected progress overall, 12% below expected and 66% above expected progress.



- Students all find appropriate next step **destinations** for their learning ability, need and attainment level. All of our leavers from 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022-23 have gone on to various colleges and post-18 provisions with two leavers also currently in gainful employment. These placements have been established after several visits assessing the appropriateness of the college, course and need-specific facilities.
- Students at the Satellite site have developed a good school relationship which encourages them to want to attend school, engage with staff, build trusting relationships and in turn accept challenges and demand of academic work with minimal adverse effects upon their regulation. Connecting and building trust with students has been the cornerstone of success and ensured that we can develop a learning environment which supports students to access learning again and build skills and knowledge for life academically and socially. 3 terms of data has been collected for the Link Priority curriculum and the end of year collation of this showed that on average students gained over 65% new skills and were able to generalise some of them also.

The quality of Education Judgement is considered to be **good with outstanding features**. This is because the curriculum in all subjects is designed to build on former learning and there are **structures for individualised learning** and support in place. Teachers have **good subject knowledge** and work across the curriculum is of a high quality. Appropriate **accredited courses and qualifications** are in place for all abilities and students are prepared well for their next stages. To move to **outstanding**, we need stronger **distributed leadership** to ensure that there is a greater consistency at middle leadership level in terms of development of curriculum areas through **subject action plans**. At the Satellite site next step progression will come through structuring the **backdoor learning approach** as the most effective strategy for bringing **breadth to the curriculum** for PDA learners so that this is understood by **accountability groups**.

#### EVALUATION KEY FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION:

Dark Green	Light Green	Orange	Red
Target complete with proven impact <b>0/6</b>	Target on track – some measurable impact <b>6/6</b>	Target on track – impact to come <b>0/6</b>	Not on track OR target completed without expected impact <b>0/6</b>
Actions from previous year (22-23): <b>Primary Site</b> <b>PRIMARY SITE</b> <b>1.1 Develop consistency and expertise in key reading strategies across the site, ensuring these are outlined through provision mapping documentation (to include object users, symbols users, whole word readers, phonics users).</b>		Impact of actions: Primary Site  <b>1.1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The whole staff received training and are now more aware and have a greater understanding of the different ways that pupils learn to read. In particular, objects of reference and reading development is more clearly understood and used across Pathway 1.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>1.2 Improve the thread between targets in planning and evidence of achievement through “wow file” assessment.</b></p> <p><b>Secondary site</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Whole site reading interventions will create a positive reading culture for all, ensuring that the most effective teaching strategies are used for individuals who still have reading barriers.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Students will complete the relevant qualifications for their ability in a timely way to include the full range of accreditation to match the different pathways on site - (to include pre-entry, entry 1,2 and 3 and where needed GCSE in core skills).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An additional way of assessing reading development, alongside SOLAR, will be looked at in the coming year which will support next step teaching in word reading and phonics development and record small step progress well.</li> </ul> <p>1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WOW files have been ‘re-launched’ and overall, there is more evidence of progress in them for SOLAR, the Link Priorities and IEPs.</li> <li>• The record sheets within the files clearly identify which SOLAR WS P Step, Link Priority or IEP target is the focus.</li> <li>• Further work needs to be completed on matching up the planning and evidence in the WOW files.</li> </ul> <p>Impact of actions: Secondary Site</p> <p>1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school training on using strategies to help overcome barriers associated with specific reading needs, such as reading disorders, struggling readers, and reluctant readers, allowed staff to develop their understanding of the different ways individuals engage with learning to read.</li> <li>• As staff confidence increased and reading interventions developed, students who required a more bespoke approach were more readily identified.</li> <li>• An improvement in well-being was seen as students started to recognise and value their own, and their peers, reading successes.</li> <li>• Using the most effective interventions allowed staff to assess, plan, do and review, which provided further information about the need for targeted next step comprehension interventions.</li> </ul> <p>1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 students gained 141 qualifications between them ranging from EL1- Level 2 and also GCSEs</li> <li>• Pathway 2 students have begun pre-entry level Unit Awards</li> </ul>
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<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Develop a curriculum and assessment system (separate from the Primary and Secondary site model) suitable for the needs of children and young people with a Pathological demand avoidant learning profile.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Ensure all staff on the Satellite site are confident to use the pedagogical strategies most effective for optimum learning for learners with PDA.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 students left with 64 qualifications between them</li> <li>• All accreditation was completed in a timely manner with components spaced over the course of the year and external verification signed off before the end of the year to maximise the time students could spend working towards their maximum potential grades.</li> </ul> <p>Impact of actions: Satellite Site</p> <p>1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Link Satellite Site Priorities were written in Autumn term 22 and implemented. These steps were written by teachers and SLT looking at the Link Priorities of the primary and secondary sites and editing these. There was some merged targets, edited statements and added areas that teachers felt matched the needs of the pupils These are working well- data has been gathered.</li> <li>• Students were baselined upon the Link Steps used by secondary site as it was felt that the WSP steps used by primary had not worked well for our PDA students when at the primary. Data collection for Autumn 2 and Spring term. The data collection showed large variations of progress- some students showed % progress in 10s whilst others made progress which was in 300s. As a site this did not reflect the actual progress teachers had seen their students make academically.</li> <li>• Teachers meeting held with SLT reviewed the broken-down National Curriculum framework upon the SOLAR system and as a collective it was felt this showed a more relevant picture and system of assessment for the students. For students who are working below the equivalent of Year 1 national curriculum then they would be assessed upon the equivalent Development matters statements.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English and Maths will be assessed in depth at least termly and data drawn which can be used comparatively- baselines were completed by end of Summer 23.</li> <li>Science, computing, PE, humanities, Art &amp; design/DT/cookery and music will all be assessed as students access this learning from Autumn 23</li> </ul> <p>1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial and regular training upon backdoor learning have taken place over the year and staff have developed confidence in backdoor learning techniques.</li> <li>Staff have understood the importance of connection and trust and balancing demand and anxiety through training including ALSUP strategy. This has been key in understanding the needs of students in relation to their readiness for learning.</li> <li>Further development of embedding the philosophy will take place over the next year to broaden the curriculum.</li> </ul>
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Areas for Development 23-24	Next Steps	Expected Outcomes
<p><b>PRIMARY SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Assessment for learning: Staff to find and use the most effective way of evidencing learning between lessons for their pathway group.</b> <b>(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Reading development: Choose and implement an additional literacy assessment, alongside SOLAR English, that will support next step teaching in word reading and phonics development and record small step progress well.</b></p>	<p>PRIMARY SITE 1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit marking policy- sandwich model and adaptations for pupils with different learning styles e.g., down syndrome</li> <li>Working groups and coaching sessions to help identify ways of recording barriers and achievements – on paperwork and through practical learning activities.</li> <li>Lesson observations and feedback to focus on the thread between learning lesson on lesson and how this is captured.</li> </ul> <p>PRIMARY SITE 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy co-ordinator to investigate and identify a suitable additional literacy assessment.</li> <li>Assess all relevant pupils and discuss findings with the staff team.</li> <li>Training/ working parties to develop activities and skills around identified common next steps in phonics/ word aware development.</li> </ul>	<p>PRIMARY SITE 1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be evidence of personalised little steps within SOLAR targets in planning or teaching activities.</li> <li>Lesson observations and learning walks will show an increase in staff teaching flexibly and adapting their delivery to the child in front of them.</li> </ul> <p>PRIMARY SITE 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Word and phonics users will make at least expected progress in reading assessments with a good percentage making above expected progress.</li> </ul>

<p><b>(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson observations and learning walks will show staff (teachers and SSA's) using a variety of phonics and word aware strategies confidently.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SECONDARY SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Curriculum: Revisit and strengthen sequential planning and cross curricular learning across the key stage ability-based groups.</b> <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Reading development: Literacy teaching and interventions will effectively teach to small next step gaps through the introduction of a new literacy assessment tool.</b> <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>SECONDARY SITE 1.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and adjust long- term and medium-term planning across key stages / pathway groups to ensure every subject continues to plan sequentially.</li> <li>Teacher planning meetings termly to ensure staff have a wider picture of where their subject/s fit in with other learning taking place in the school.</li> <li>Teachers to implement baseline quiz's before starting new topics to ensure teaching matches the current retention and understanding of the students from the outset.</li> </ul> <p><b>SECONDARY SITE 1.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Literacy Assessment training session will be given to ensure all staff are confident in supporting each other on how best to use the data.</li> <li>All pupils will be assessed through Literacy Assessment.</li> <li>A bank of learning resources will be created, focussing initially on identified common next steps.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SECONDARY SITE 1.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning in all subjects (whether individual topics or spiral topics) will clearly enable progression whatever age or pathway a student is grouped in.</li> <li>Deep dive monitoring of work scrutiny of randomly selected students will show that when topics or skills are revisited student learning is not repeated unnecessarily but is moved forward appropriately.</li> </ul> <p><b>SECONDARY SITE 1.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable evidence will allow progress to be tracked more effectively.</li> <li>Staff in all areas will be better able to personalise teaching and deliver effective interventions.</li> <li>Identifying common whole school anomalies, will provide important information on how best to build remediated approaches for improving literacy standards.</li> </ul>

<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Teaching and Learning: Embed and extend the backdoor learning strategy to include wider and broader areas of the curriculum related to young people’s interests.</b> <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Assessment: Improve the quality of evidence of learning for accountability groups through the “Wow files”.</b> <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE 1.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training upon backdoor learning with focus upon English, Maths, Science, humanities and the arts</li> <li>• Learning walks and coaching sessions</li> <li>• Lesson observations and feedback</li> <li>• Schemes of work which can inspire staff knowledge and skills</li> </ul> <p><b>SATELLITE SITE 1.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff training of the system</li> <li>• Assigned progress SSAs who support the recording of the evidence – taking accountability of their role and inspiring others</li> <li>• Half termly monitoring by head of site and feedback sessions with class teachers who can feedback to their teams.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE 1.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank of topic schemes which support backdoor learning and outcomes</li> <li>• Clear outcomes sought through backdoor learning sessions are evident in lesson observations and learning walks</li> <li>• Generalised skills progress for students</li> <li>• Staff confident in backdoor learning techniques across broad subject areas</li> <li>• Staff confident in reporting progress despite the learning pathway of the student</li> </ul> <p><b>SATELLITE SITE 1.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students will have a WOW folder with accompanying video PowerPoint as needed which shows their progress across a range of subjects, IEPS and Link Priorities for the year</li> <li>• Staff confident in providing relevant and strong evidence of progress despite the learning pathway</li> </ul>

**BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES - OUTSTANDING**

## Strengths

### PRIMARY SITE

- Staff and pupils are expected to look behind **presenting behaviours** to the **reasons for behaviour** before identifying the best supporting strategies and this is commonly understood. A number of children at The Link display **challenging behaviour** related to **their sensory and emotional needs** or **poor past experiences**. The growing expertise and cohesive commitment across the whole school team ensures an appropriate balance for pupils where challenging behaviour and low-level behaviours are **managed well** and **do not disrupt the learning of the majority**.
- The majority of pupils display **positive behaviours** and are supported well by the school's use of the "**Zones of Regulation**" strategy for understanding and managing changing emotional needs. This enables pupils to **reflect well** on their behaviour and make the **best choices** to ensure they are in a **place to learn**. Individual and class reward systems contribute to pupils' commitment to learning and children show that they are proud of their achievements.
- Monitoring systems for behaviour are **robust**. Senior leaders are very involved with pupils who display behaviours that challenge and offer **coaching support** for staff on the front line, and this builds staff confidence and commitment. The Principal, Behaviour Lead and attached Behavioural Consultant work tirelessly to ensure children with the highest-level needs benefit from the **latest thinking and research** to help them overcome their challenges. For some of these children their emotional and sensory needs run deep, yet the school has a **good track record** for turning these children around and keeping them in education.
- **Bullying or discriminatory behaviour is rare** in the school but when this does happen it is not tolerated and is dealt with quickly through bespoke understanding and education. **Exclusions are also rare** but are always appropriate. There were no fixed term or permanent exclusions over the last three years.
- Annual attendance for the Primary site in the year 22-23 was 90.5% which is above average for a special school in the UK.

### SECONDARY SITE

- Students **show confidence and self-awareness in relation to their learning and conduct**, despite their complex speech, language and communication needs, and their social and emotional needs. This is facilitated by staff who have developed excellent relationships with students and who effectively **role-model** high standards of behaviour and positive communication and conduct, underpinned by the **School Values**.
- Staff and students are expected to look behind **presenting behaviours** to the **reasons for behaviour** before identifying the best supporting strategies and this is commonly understood. The school differentiates between **unacceptable behaviour** (behaviour unrelated to student barriers and needs) and **acceptable behaviours** (behaviours understood to be typical given the need of the child).
- Behaviours considered to be typical are **well-managed** through a deep understanding of the effect of social communication and language barriers and the tried and tested strategies needed to overcome these. The **Zones of Regulation** strategy is used coherently across the school to enable students to reflect well on their behaviour and make the best choices to ensure they are in a place to learn. **Social communication strategies** such as **comic strip conversations** and **social stories** are used effectively to challenge poor or confused thinking and to change thinking and behaviours to something more acceptable. The **joint Educational and Therapeutic approach** ensures that **quality training** is in place to maintain and embed the important strategies and these are seen in learning walks being used naturally across all subjects, teachers and times of the school day. The **Access Curriculum** led by the school therapists plays a huge part in up-skilling the students to learn, understand and develop **regulation strategies** that can be self-implemented in the school and home environment. The strategies learnt are useful not just for the here and now but help to develop a **deep resilience** to **managing challenges over time**, preparing the students for a **future of positive emotional wellbeing**.

- Unacceptable behaviour in school is infrequent. All the students are aware of the expectations school holds for them. This has grown through **clearly articulated School Values** that are understood by the learners. The **seven values (Success, Kindness, Courage, Resilience, Charity, Positivity and Fairness)** are linked to famous local people who have demonstrated the value in their life and have been driven by the value to achieve their life goals. These values are embedded in school life through assemblies, wall displays and through the school reward system. To keep the values in mind, teachers, therapists and support staff send postcards home to reward students for work, actions and behaviour that reflect the School Values.
- Students are exceptionally proud of their school, and they take a **proactive approach** to alerting staff to any site concerns. The **Student Council** adds value to securing improvements in the school environment. The learning environment is well maintained, and students enjoy interacting and engaging with school visitors.
- Monitoring systems for behaviour are **robust**. Central records of behaviour incidents are scrutinised by SLT regularly to identify patterns of behaviour, particularly students who require interventions to encourage positive behaviour, and specific lessons where negative student behaviour may be a regular occurrence. This enables **effective and timely intervention** to take place. Behaviour incidents in school tend to be linked to the students' special needs, their high levels of anxiety, and their difficulties with social skills and/or in misunderstanding information.
- Behaviours are managed in line with the school's **Behaviour Procedure**. As well as reporting the details of the incident, actions and outcomes, the form includes the student's recollection, which is **differentiated** with symbols and a **thinking frame**, to support their **narrative**. Senior leaders are involved with students who display behaviours that challenge and offer **coaching support** for staff on the front line, and this builds staff confidence and commitment. The Executive Principal, senior lead with responsibility for pastoral care, and the school SENCO work tirelessly to ensure students with the highest-level needs benefit from the **latest thinking and research** to help them overcome their challenges. Wellbeing meetings and plans for these students are monitored regularly to adapt to any changes that the young person may be facing through their teenage years.
- **Bullying or discriminatory behaviour is rare** on the site, but when this does happen it is not tolerated and is dealt with quickly through bespoke understanding and education. **Exclusions are also rare but** are always appropriate. There were no exclusions or fixed term exclusions in the academic year 2022-23. There were three internal exclusions in the academic year 22-23.
- Annual attendance for the Secondary site in the year 22-23 was 89.31% which is above average for a special school in the UK.

#### **SATELLITE SITE**

- The mantra REGULATE- REACH-TEACH sits as a corner stone of our site. Many of our students have experienced school trauma in their past; some have been previously out of education for several years; some have attended schools with a very reduced timetable (equating to approx. 5 hours a week) and many have seen placement breakdowns (some students up to 4 placement breakdowns). We use many nurture practice techniques with students upon entry to the site or on the outreach service and continue to use those which are necessary throughout the journey of education.
- Connection, trust and relationships amongst staff and students is paramount to success for all students and our site must always maintain a flexibility to the needs and regulation of students.
- The site has offered a safe space to many students who had lost belief in the education system and annual attendance figures reflect their comfort to attend the site. **Annual attendance figures= 87.8%** which is average for a special school in the UK but hugely significant for pupils with a PDA profile.



- As a site all staff are expected to dig deep and look beneath the displayed behaviours of concern to find the root cause. All students upon the site have varying levels of anxiety which generally fuels the behaviours of concern that they can display. Staff work within PDA strategies and theories to balance demand and anxiety and use the metaphorical image of a seesaw to remind practice that when anxiety is high demands may need to be lowered and when anxiety is low we can work to introduce more demands.



- As a site we have used the ALSUP strategy to begin to dig deeper into assessing lagging skills and unsolved problems for our students and begin to work collaboratively with the students to solve their problems which leads to more long-term resolution for students. Some students have individual wellbeing sessions with the head of site to address concerns of staff, parents and/or the students. These sessions are a relaxed meeting where we use emotion games and connection games to dig deeper into anxieties and concerns and work to collaboratively resolve them.
- We work with parents to support behaviour/wellbeing of students within school but also at home – we run a termly PANDA support group for the parents where we can discuss strategies and concerns. Training in the last year has included transitions into school, the ALSUP strategy and a tea party to celebrate PDA Day. Some parents need bespoke support, and this takes place with the head of site or class teacher as well as therapy support or outside agencies such as CAMHS or OT.
- Working collaboratively is essential to support wellbeing and behaviour of students and to reduce the risk of exclusion for students. Exclusion as a system would have a negative impact upon our students' connections, trust and anxiety, especially those who have struggled in previous school placements, so we work to reduce timetable temporarily and develop wellbeing strategies which support the young person to still access the structure, trust and connection of school with minimal negative impact. This has worked successfully with students to ensure that they do not slip into a school refusal state and can make progress in their understanding of their regulation needs. There have been no fixed term or permanent exclusions in 2022-23.
- Due to the nature of our students' reactive natures when anxious they can often be seen to display bullying behaviours so as a class team we work to dig deep and assess the incidents with reflection upon if the actions are STOP (several times on purpose) or are an underlying dysregulation. Where it is deemed bullying (which is rare) the head of site, class teacher and parents work to support the student to understand the impact their behaviour has and how we can reduce it.
- Each student upon the site has an IRA (Individual Risk Assessment) and PWS (Positive Wellbeing Support plan), this allows staff to know the risks and mitigating factors which are in place but also to centralise and cement wellbeing strategies which support students to be able to regulate and reduce anxiety to learn and thrive. These IRA and PWS are monitored closely and reviewed at a minimum termly; they are updated between as necessary so that all staff have current and relevant information.
- As a site we follow Team Teach philosophies and promote 95% de-escalation approach to behaviour management. We recognise that at times for wellbeing and safety of students and staff that we may need to access the 5 % Physical Intervention strategies, but these are only implemented when reasonable, necessary

and proportionate as a last resort when other strategies have not or would not be successful. Any Physical Intervention used will be recorded and reported to parents upon our SOLAR system; following each incident staff will debrief with the head of site and the report will be monitored. If IRA or PWS need updating, then this will be done immediately, and all stakeholders informed of changes. Strategies to reduce the risk of having to use Physical Intervention again will be implemented.

- All behaviours of concern will be recorded either on low level concern forms or upon SOLAR dependent upon the criteria checklist; these will be monitored by the head of site weekly and termly to offer insight into any deep patterns of behaviours of concerns and highlight any need for intervention.
- Most of our students struggle to understand Theory of Mind however have been able to develop some strong friendship connections and it is evident across site that students often support each other to regulate. This is an important skill for our students; showing empathy and knowledge of emotional intelligence but also many students find accepting suggestions from peers less demanding than from an adult and can regulate quicker and will then ask peers for support when they need it going forward also- showing a site of students who can coregulate.
- Student voice is respected and seen as a high priority with regards to behaviour and attitudes. All students are welcomed to join student council in order to make suggestions and feel part of their community. Students understand that they can discuss matters of concern with all staff including leadership team and their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated further as necessary. This leads to our students' respecting those around them and playing a positive role in the school community.
- Our outreach offer has supported parents to manage behaviours of concern in the home but also support preparation for placements.

The behaviour and attitude judgement is considered to be **outstanding** rather than good because both **behaviour and attitudes** to learning across the whole school are **exceptional**. Students themselves have developed a **strong and positive understanding of one another's needs** despite the challenges presented by their poor Theory of Mind. Through the 'Zones of Regulation' strategy or ALSUP, they develop stronger **emotional regulation and self – control over time**. For the students that struggle the most with self- regulation, strategies that are implemented make demonstrable changes. This is particularly true at the Satellite site where young people who have formerly had limited access to education now access school regularly with strong attendance levels. The **School Councils** make a **tangible contribution** to the school and community through their role in the school development plan and through **pro-active support to school community activities and fundraising events for wider community needs**.

**“Pupils behave well at this school. Classrooms are calm. Staff ensure that day-to-day routines are clear and easy to understand, so pupils know exactly what they need to do. This clear communication helps pupils behave well and reduces any anxiety.” OFSTED November 2019 (Primary)**

**“Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning. Even when things get tricky, pupils persevere and try their best. Pupils are respectful to staff and to each other.” OFSTED January 2022 (Secondary)**

## **EVALUATION KEY FOR BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES:**

<b>Dark Green</b>  Target complete with proven impact  <b>1/3</b>	<b>Light Green</b>  Target on track – some measurable impact  1/3	<b>Orange</b>  Target on track – impact to come  1/3	<b>Red</b>  Not on track OR target completed without expected impact  0/3
<p>Actions from previous year:</p> <p><b>Primary site</b>  <b>2.1 Trial DIR floor time as a strategy to combine child centred communication approaches with emotional regulation strategies to identify if it is an effective tool to use across the Primary site.</b></p> <p><b>Secondary site</b>  <b>2.1 Change the way behaviour is recorded on the Secondary site to SOLAR to bring this in line with the other two sites.</b></p> <p><b>Satellite site</b>  <b>2.1 Investigate and implement ALSUP as a way of identifying lagging skills and unresolved behaviour for pupils with demand avoidant behaviour.</b></p>	<p>Impact of Actions</p> <p><b>Primary site</b>  2.1 Two people received DIR floor time training (1 teaching staff / 1 therapist). Interested staff visited Sherwood school to see the strategy in action. After discussion with senior leads a decision has been made to add the strategy as another tool for the toolbox, rather than implementing it fully into every area of the curriculum.</p> <p><b>Secondary site</b>  2.1 Incidents of behaviour have been reviewed by the SLT and each type of incident has been assigned to a Low, Medium or High category. This has been placed in a document known as Reporting Behaviour Guidance which has been shared with the whole staff during a staff meeting allowing staff to contribute to the document. The document is linked to the staff weekly bulletin for their reference when recording incidents of behaviour.</p> <p><b>Satellite site</b>  2.1 Staff received in depth training of the ALSUP strategy. 3 students were highlighted for a trial of the strategy and staff were able to follow the process with informed knowledge and successful small step progress was made upon the unresolved problem the students had. Staff show greater understanding of looking beyond the symptoms of the behaviour and looking deeper into the causes.</p>		
<b>Areas for Development 23-24</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	
<b>PRIMARY SITE</b>	<b>PRIMARY SITE 2.1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify pupils who need additional bespoke support.</li> </ul>	<b>PRIMARY SITE 2.1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will become more confident and open about</li> </ul>	

<p><b>2.1 Pupil well-being meetings will include a focus on staff self-reflection to identify adaptations to staff communication or actions that will aid pupil regulation.</b>  <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour Lead, Behaviour Support and class teachers to adapt current Wellbeing/Behaviour Plan/Risk Assessment.</li> <li>• SD to contact Vicky M (Trailblazers Clinical Psychologist) re: Reflective Practice sessions and arrange as necessary.</li> <li>• Regular wellbeing meetings to take place involving the whole class team.</li> </ul>	<p>reflecting on their responses to situations and adopting different approaches as necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation of pupils, especially for those with behaviour that challenges, will improve.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SECONDARY SITE</b>  <b>2.1 Students will play an active role in supporting the wellbeing of their peers through the introduction of a senior student leadership team and through student safeguarding ambassadors.</b>  <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>SECONDARY SITE 2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Student Leadership team to be established and introduced to the whole school.</li> <li>• SSLT to receive training with regards to the role with LK</li> <li>• SSLT to receive Safeguarding training from Jackie Van West</li> </ul>	<p><b>SECONDARY SITE 2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSLT will fulfil duties as per the job description such as working in partnership with Student Council</li> <li>• SSLT available at breaktimes to offer support to other students</li> <li>• SSLT to contribute to assemblies</li> <li>• SSLT to always lead as excellent role models.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b>  <b>2.1 An Alsup target will be identified for every child and young person across the home and school environment in order to make progress against the lagging skill that most affects their regulation.</b>  <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE 2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresher training of the strategy and induction training for new staff.</li> <li>• PANDA support meeting to develop home school partnership</li> <li>• All students assessed by school and home upon the ALSUP assessment. In some cases, students may be able to undertake the assessments themselves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE 2.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and parents confident in identifying lagging skills and unresolved problems</li> <li>• Staff and parents confident in skills to work collaboratively with students</li> <li>• Students' main barriers and lagging skills will be identified</li> <li>• Collaborative working to resolve problems and develop skills of students</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each pupil to have main areas of concern identified by end of Autumn 23</li> <li>• Staff and families to collaborate to create an ALSUP target that is the main priority for the student</li> <li>• ALSUP target to be added and embedded into IEPs for Spring term 24</li> <li>• Staff working collaboratively with students to resolve problems</li> <li>• Reviewed termly at minimum to assess progress and next steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear progression of lagging skills</li> <li>• Reduced behaviours of concern related to specific lagging skills</li> </ul>
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**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- GOOD**

**Strengths**

**PRIMARY SITE**

- The Primary site provides a strong **Personal Curriculum** that extends beyond the academic. This is made up of three elements: 1) **Personalised EHCPs** and related Individual Education Plans that support pupils to overcome their main barriers to learning 2) **The Link Priority Curriculum** that underpins all other aspects of learning and focuses on those areas of development that will support future personal success 3) **The statutory Relationship, Health and Education Curriculum** where key topics are re-visited through a **spiral model** at an appropriate level for pupils’ cognitive and personal development.
- The Personal Curriculum structures are integrated with **SMSC** development and **British Values**. This area of the curriculum is supported well through a regular focus on a **Link Priority for a half term** as well as through **Assemblies** with a particular SMSC bent – a) **Special Moments** that includes a celebration of achievements in the home as well as **cultural and religious festivals** b) **Sing and Sign Assembly** c) **Sensory Assembly** that develops a sense of “**Awe and Wonder**” and d) **Golden Book** that focuses on **moral and social aspects** and celebrates academic and personal successes in the school setting.
- There is **flexibility** within the school timetable to allow pupils to focus and reflect on **personal events**. A wealth of effective strategies support pupils’ personal development, including comic strip conversations, social stories and running commentaries. These particularly address the **Theory of Mind learning** barrier that is such an obstacle to the majority of the children and opens up opportunities to improve **emotional regulation**.
- High quality work with parent's aids pupil personal development through the “**Graduated Parent Support Plan**”. This gives parents the skills they need to use effective strategies and bring a consistent approach to children. This support plan enables senior leads to quickly identify families that would need timely and increased levels of support.
- The **multi- disciplinary team** at The Link also contribute well to pupils’ Personal Development. The combined SALT and OT expertise contributes to the effective development of pupils’ regulation toolboxes. Attendance at National and Local training events bring new ideas that support the **practitioner research** model of

development in the school finding more effective strategies to overcome personal barriers. For example, the major change in school policy to managing pupils' sensory issues around food has decreased anxieties for pupils at snack and lunch time and improved their mental health.

- All pupils have opportunities to nurture, develop and stretch their **interests**. Within the class curriculum plans there are regular opportunities to tailor work towards children's personal interests. Children access a **range of extra-curricular activities**. **These include** Dance, Yoga, Gardening, Football with Crystal Palace Community Academy and horse-riding with the RDA. Learners have regular access to the **community** to support **generalisation of skills**, including parks, shops, café's, the trampoline park and Holly Lodge, nature and history reserve. An annual **activity centre residential** is available for pupils in years 4 to 6 to develop their **physical, social and emotional resilience** as they prepare for Secondary transition. Over the last four years all pupils who receive **Pupil Premium** support have also accessed bespoke equipment or activities to promote their individual interests and help to raise their self- esteem. This has included equipment to develop their play skills, technology to help them overcome curriculum access barriers as well as items to help with developing emotional regulation.

## SECONDARY SITE

- The Link Secondary Site also provides a strong **Personal Curriculum** that extends beyond the academic. This is made up of three elements:
  - 1) **The therapist-led Access curriculum** that underpins all other aspects of learning and focuses on those areas of development that will support future personal success
  - 2) **The statutory Relationships, Health and Sex Education Curriculum** where key topics are re-visited through a **spiral model** at an appropriate level for students' cognitive and personal development.
  - 3) **The Link Priority Curriculum** that helps staff to focus on individual barriers for learners in personal development from **Education, Health and Care Plans**.
- The **Zones of Regulation** programme is delivered to all class groups as part of the **Access curriculum**. Students are taught to recognise when they are in one of four zones and to develop self-supporting calming, cognitive and sensory strategies to stay in or move from one zone to another. This ensures a **consistent approach**, language and strategies to support students in **regulating themselves physically and emotionally** and **preventing escalation of low-level behaviours**.
- The **Life Skills and RSE 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 is **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 Transport for London initiatives on trams and buses locally.
- The site's **core values of Charity, Positivity, Kindness, Success, Resilience, and Courage** are **embedded** and referenced through the reward system, displays, tutor group names and assemblies. This ensures an emphasis on values that expand to every area of school life and enables students to make the **best choices** when they are faced with difficult decisions, as well as **preparing them** for their future relationships and challenges. The value of **Fairness** was introduced three years ago to bring a stronger awareness of the **equality agenda** into school and particularly the ability to know and understand **personal and peer challenges around disability**. The long-term purpose of this is to **build positive esteem** and the determination for students to **overcome their own life barriers** as well as **supporting those of their peers**.
- The Personal Curriculum structures are integrated with **SMSC** development and **British Values**. This is evident in learning walks and lesson observations. As a result, students are more aware of the **world around them and how the school values relate to it**. Consequently, they show **acceptance** of other faiths, cultures and beliefs.

- The Personal Curriculum is supported well through **assemblies** and **additional internal and external curricular opportunities**. Assembly themes are based on either the Link Priorities or annual calendar events and are chosen to reflect **cultural diversity** in Britain and abroad, as well as the **School Values**. Individuals and class groups lead assemblies with adult support, and this helps them **gain confidence in speaking, listening and presentation skills**. Students are encouraged to support and applaud each other during assemblies. Assemblies are also used to **prepare students** for forthcoming **whole-school events** as well as **local, national or world events** that occur that are worthy of celebration or understanding. Staff are urged to use any unexpected events as a **learning opportunity**. Students from all key stages now have opportunities to access **residential trips** to generalise social, emotional, physical and independence skills as they develop into adults.
- Additional therapies have positive impact on social and emotional progress for targeted students, particularly **Canine Assisted Learning, Creative Therapy with the school counsellor, Drama therapy with Roundabout and Music Therapy with Nordoff Robbins**. The established **Project Curriculum** opens up a **wider variety of curricular opportunities** that students may not have experienced before and often establishes **personal preferences** that can later be utilised through **work projects and work experience placements**. Hence these additional opportunities remain **integral** to the whole school curriculum offer.
- The graduated **Contextualised Safeguarding and Wellbeing** procedure clearly outlines three categories of support for children and families under **universal, targeted** and **specialist** support. This ensures that those young people who are the most vulnerable receive the best kind of support for their need and in a timely way.
- The site has an active **student council** with one selected representative from each class. They meet every two weeks in school and are co-ordinated by a middle manager. The established student voice in the school promotes a **healthy pride** in the school's achievements and also contributes well to the school's **involvement in the local community**. The site works with a range of community-based projects such as Prince William Award, Sutton Farm, Nickel Support, Sutton Food Bank, National Citizens' Service, Turf Project, Diamond Riding Centre, and The Crystal Palace Foundation for Life. The whole school community benefit from contact with two local churches and a variety of local schools.
- Some students have access to Waddon After-School Club. A number of students access twice weekly onsite sport and creative after school clubs supported by experienced members of staff. Regular lunch time clubs are offered and are very popular amongst the current cohort.
- Students' **health needs** are handled **confidentially and sensitively** by all staff. Routine medicines are kept in a locked cabinet and students are supported to take them by trained staff. The medical room accommodates one student at a time. Staff are trained in first aid and in maintaining students' dignity when administering rescue medicines and in minimising the impact on other students. Students are **sensitive to each other's needs** and seek adult help for their peers when they are concerned.
- We have a school-wide plan in action to ensure all aspects of the **Gatsby benchmarks** are implemented across all key stages. This covers life skills lesson content, visits from professionals, visits to careers fairs, enterprise weeks, work experience placements and contact with local colleges. Over the last five years our Year 11 and post-16 students have completed **successful internal or external work placements** and all of our leavers have gone on to **appropriate post-18 provisions**.

#### **SATELLITE SITE**

- The Satellite Site promotes a strong **Personal Curriculum that** extends beyond the academic curriculum. This is made up of key elements including:
  - 1) **Regulation Curriculum** – The philosophy of REGULATE-REACH- TEACH, ALSUP and providing various pathways that support students to be able to reduce anxiety sufficiently to be able to access the school site, celebrate their individualism and support their regulation needs to access strategies and situations which will develop their interpersonal, self-regulation and academic skills and knowledge.

2) **Personalised EHCPs** and related Individual Education Plans that support pupils to overcome their main barriers to learning

3) **The Link Priority Curriculum** that underpins all other aspects of learning and focuses on those areas of development that will support future personal success

- Interpersonal skills can be very complex for the young people upon the site, so staff work daily to support positive interactions and healthy relationships with peers and adults through ad hoc and planned pastoral support
- Student self-esteem is developed and supported through carefully balanced praise. Direct and overt praise for young people with PDA profiles can cause them greater anxiety and fear of “getting it right again”; some students also do not like the feeling of being noticed and celebrated. The site does not run assemblies due to the anxiety that coming together as a whole site can cause but each class takes time at the end of the day to reflect individually or in small groups upon successes and likes of the day. At the end of the week students are given a ‘CONFAB’ certificate and a chance to select a twiddle from the ‘CONFAB’ box. These certificates can be presented to students on 1:1 in a small group or just sent home to parents depending upon the anxiety level of the student. The certificates represent quick Post it notes that staff have said they enjoyed seeing that student do during the week and most students show pride and enjoyment of this celebration in school whilst others enjoy the celebration at home with their parents instead. The flexibility of the approach to praise has seen other students want to add comment to peer’s certificates.
- Due to the nature of the students’ engagement with education the RSE curriculum is covered through the Link Priorities curriculum and reactive conversations for students on the informal and semi formal pathways however some of our semi formal and all our formal pathway learners began to access RSE in discrete sessions from summer term 23.
- Additional therapies/counselling are available for some students whom it is felt can be supported further to develop their emotional and social skills including self-esteem. Currently targeted students access Mindjam, drama therapy with Roundabout, Canine Assisted Learning and Horse riding. Some students also access private external therapy off site as needed. Leadership or class teachers are active in meetings with external agencies such as CAMHS to ensure holistic approaches for students.
- The graduated **Contextualised Safeguarding and Wellbeing** procedure clearly outlines three categories of support for children and families under **universal**, **targeted** and **specialist** support. This ensures that those young people who are the most vulnerable receive the best kind of support for their need and in a timely way.
- All students are welcomed to join student council in order to make suggestions and feel part of their community. Student council voice has seen students work towards ensuring that all peers’ opinions are respected, and they often like to run opinion polls to ensure that the collective student voice is clear, and any further action can be taken. This led to several events such as the Halloween/Autumn dress up day, fundraising for Children in Need and raising chicks from hatching. Students have also worked upon how to improve the environment including a trip to the garden centre to buy plants.
- Students understand that they can discuss matters of concern with all staff including leadership team and their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated further as necessary. This leads to our students’ respecting those around them and playing a positive role in the school community.
- Some students attend the afterschool football club at the secondary site which builds upon their confidence in managing interpersonal skills and led to cross site relationships as the secondary students also come to attend the Palace for Life football sessions at this site.
- Some students have been able to regulate their anxieties and undertake community visits, whilst these have been mainly to the local shops with one visit further to the garden centre this has been a success for many who find being out in the unpredictability of the community difficult. Staff are working to develop this opportunity over the next year.



- Students' **health needs** are handled **confidentially and sensitively** by all staff. Routine medicines are kept in a locked cabinet and students are supported to take them by trained staff. Staff are trained in first aid and in maintaining students' dignity when administering rescue medicines and in minimising the impact on other students. Students are **sensitive to each other's, and staff needs** and seek adult help for people around them when they are concerned.
- As a site staff work alongside students to build upon their understanding of how to be active and respectful citizens; meaningful opportunities are provided as set out above but we also respect students' suggestions to enrich their curriculum including Pokémon day where students wanted to dress as Pokémon and plan events related to the characters; a mini crafting enterprise and the student led zipwire project. Students are encouraged to present and explore all the intricacies of their suggestions such as health and safety, how all involved will be catered for and also consequences and risks.

The Personal Development grade is considered to be good with outstanding features. This is because there is an embedded extension to the academic and vocational curriculum that emphasises the development of the whole student. There is high quality pastoral support with proactive development of active lifestyles and positive mental health. Learners have good opportunities to develop their interests and to be responsible and active citizens within the school community. The school have dug deep with the personalised opportunities offered to learners ensuring that the strategies and activities with the most impact are used to overcome personalised barriers and promote strengths. This is embedded through all age groups. The Personal Development Assessment structure assesses qualitative developments in a quantifiable way so that impact can be measured and shared with accountability groups and others as exemplary practice. The school has worked hard to show how democracy and individual liberty can be understood in a special school context and this has been developed by gaining the right balance between managing individual pupil/ staff need and the needs of the majority. Effective development of British Values over time ensures there is open celebration of diversity. There is a tangible awareness and respect for religious, cultural and disability differences. This has been developed through a focus on Spiritual Development, one of the key elements of "The Link Priorities" on the Primary site and through the "Pictures of Me" diagnosis support programme across all age groups, part of the RHE Curriculum. There has also been a pro-active response to any possible discrimination issues.

To reach an outstanding judgement, the Personal Development Assessment tool (The Link Priorities) requires some refining with the addition of key learning steps to ensure new staff can quickly capture young people's strengths and barriers in this area and be responsive to the challenges young people face as they arise.

### EVALUATION KEY FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

<b>Dark Green</b>  Target complete with proven impact  <b>1/3</b>	<b>Light Green</b>  Target on track – some measurable impact  <b>1/3</b>	<b>Orange</b>  Target on track – impact to come  <b>1/3</b>	<b>Red</b>  Not on track OR target completed without expected impact  <b>0/3</b>
Actions from previous year: <b>Primary and Secondary Site</b>		Impact of Actions Primary Site and Secondary Site	

**3.1 Develop some key milestone steps for The Link Priority Curriculum statements.**

**SATELLITE SITE**

**3.1 Identify a list of key Link Priority Curriculum statements for learners on the satellite site that will enable them to develop the personal skills they will need to have to follow their long-term aspirations.**

**3.2 Conduct a feasibility study to identify if a Forest School pedagogy would be appropriate for some of the learners on the satellite site and if the**

3.1 Educational and therapy teams have worked together using research and evidence- based pedagogy from selected link priority areas to identify up to 10 key developmental statements covering the ability ranges on the sites. Learning walks show that staff consider the priorities to be a main stay of the planned and responsive curriculum. There are still a number of Link Priorities to be visited in terms of developmental statements and this will remain a focus for the next academic year.

Satellite Site

3.1 A comprehensive list of priority statements were developed in Autumn 22 by reviewing and combining the Link Priority statements from the primary and secondary sites, adapting any statements as necessary to meet the needs of the PDA students. 3 terms of data have been collected and the end of year collation of this showed the following progress of skills over the year – showing that on average students gained over 60% new skills and were able to generalise some of them also.

	Skills lost (rounded figures)	Skills the same (rounded figures)	New skills gained (rounded figures)	Skills gained and generalised (rounded figures)
Whole site (18 students)	3%	32%	45%	20%
Informal pathway students (6 students)	6%	27%	46%	21%
Semiformal pathway students (8 students)	2%	36%	42%	21%
Formal pathway students (4 students)	0.25%	34%	50%	16%

The data has been valuable in reflecting upon progress in personal development and it reflected that the strongest progress was seen in Link Priorities 1 (friendships), 6 (functional communication), 7 (social communication) & 11 (recognising basic emotions) and the weakest progress was made in Link Priorities 9 (community),10 (community) & 21 (healthy lifestyle- food)

3.1 The nominated teacher gained her Forest School teacher qualification and associated first aid certificate. Some forest school off site sessions were trialled but these were hindered for several reasons including weather and anxieties related to dogs. A local school offered to collaborate with the site for use of their forest school area but then did not respond to any

site would be suitable for this development.	further inquiries. Some onsite sessions were run with success and the aim is to embed these further within the next academic year and discuss use of an onsite forest school with another school.
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Areas for Development 23-24	Next Steps	Expected Outcomes
<p><b>PRIMARY SITE AND SECONDARY SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b>  <b>Develop a series of key link priority steps to match another 10 of the Link Priority key targets.</b>  <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up working groups consisting of education and therapy staff to focus on specific link priorities.</li> <li>• Add the decisions to the Link Priority Power Point curriculum document.</li> <li>• Revisit chosen targets in training sessions with teaching assistants.</li> <li>• Promote and monitor the reporting of link priorities against EHCP targets and in termly reports at the Secondary site.</li> </ul>	<p><b>PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Link Priority curriculum document will be used to train staff to prepare for Personal Development teaching and assessment. Accountability groups and parents will be able to use the document to understand how the school identifies and teaches key personal development targets.</li> <li>• Students will consistently overcome personal development barriers as they move through the school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b>  <b>Improve the cultural capital on offer to Satellite pupils, via access to additional therapies as well as increased opportunities for community visits relevant to pupil interests and aspirations.</b>  <b>(OHCAT quality and standards priority)</b></p>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVC to work with teachers to develop risk assessments and increase visits to local areas</li> <li>• Minibus parking area to be built on site</li> <li>• Minibus from Primary to be stored at the satellite site</li> <li>• Staff to be offered MIDAS training to increase the number of staff who can drive the minibus</li> </ul>	<p><b>SATELLITE SITE</b>  <b>3.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students will access at least one community visit half termly</li> <li>• Students' ability to regulate their anxieties in the community will increase</li> <li>• Skills will be generalised within the community increasing the successes in the link priorities related to community (LP 9&amp; 10 achieving 60% and over for academic year 2023-24)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EVC and staff to develop a bank of places of interest that can be accessed by the students</li> </ul>	

**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT- GOOD**

**Strengths**

**PRIMARY SITE**

- Leaders have a **clear vision** for the site and **strong values**. The values **drive the decision-making processes** of the leaders and the impact of this over time has meant that these are fully accepted and embedded into the life of the school community.
- There is a clear focus on **developing the curriculum** and ensuring staff have the **knowledge and skills** they need for **implementation**. Strong **monitoring processes** for teaching and a **coaching model** for support ensures there is always a focus on improving teaching. The **flat leadership model** has produced a strong middle leadership tier with all teachers taking responsibility for particular subjects or key areas of school life through **impact evaluation plans**.
- The practice of staff has been **solidly good** over a number of years with increasing elements of **outstanding practice**. Currently there is no practice that is less than good. **TES (Teacher Evaluation Scores)** show that practice continues to improve over time. Commitment to our experienced teachers and to new teachers as well as to developing the skills of teaching assistants has been the key to this success.
- Leaders work hard to ensure all pupils follow an **appropriate academic pathway** as they move through the school and thought and time goes into providing the **personalised approaches** the children need to overcome their **learning barriers**. The senior leadership team and therefore the class teams do not give up easily believing there to be a pedagogical solution to all barriers.
- Senior leaders **engage effectively** with pupils. They are visual at the beginning and end of the school day, take a lead role in community activities and assemblies and are “present” in their support for pupils having difficult moments. Leaders are involved in all stages of the **Education, Health and Care Plan processes** and this means they know pupils well and can liaise with outside professionals and the Local Authorities to make the best decisions about provision.
- Leaders engage with **parents** effectively and this is purposeful. The **Graduated Parent Support Plan** that is part of the school’s **Contextual Safeguarding Policy** ensures parents receive support when they most need it and is **effective in preventing family crises** due to the immense stress of managing a child with complex needs.

**SECONDARY SITE**

- The site has a **strong vision and values** that prioritise **holistic long -term outcomes** for young people. Leaders have worked diligently to make sure these are understood by all stakeholders.
- There is a similar **flat leadership model** to the Primary site with consistent policies and monitoring systems that ensure impact in **student progress** and **staff development over time**. Teaching across the site is typically good with many staff showing aspects of outstanding practice.

- There is a clear focus on **developing the curriculum** and ensuring staff have the **knowledge and skills** they need for **implementation**. Leaders work hard to ensure all students follow an **appropriate academic pathway** as they move through their Secondary education and thought, and time goes into providing the **personalised approaches** the young people need to overcome their **personal and learning barriers**. The senior lead with responsibility for Curriculum and Assessment has worked systematically over the last few years to ensure all schemes of work are **developmental building on previous knowledge**. The Assessment system “**SOLAR**” has been adapted well to match the **developmental pathways** in the school. The teachers have been involved in the development of this model and understand how to use it. The analysis system is **simple** but clearly outlines **individual and whole school strengths** through the Curriculum as well as **areas for intervention**. The school **SENCO and the Therapy Team** help to drive the personalised learning approach and do not give up easily, believing there to be a pedagogical solution to all barriers. Leaders support the SENCO well in her role in the **Education, Health and Care Plan processes** and this means they know students well and can liaise with outside professionals and the Local Authorities to make the best decisions about provision.
- The return to regular **on-site parent evenings** have enabled leaders to drip feed any Curriculum and Assessment changes so that parents can be active supporters of their child’s learning. A **Graduated Parent Support Plan** has been introduced to the Secondary site and this is beginning to embed and impact families that require additional help.

#### **SATELLITE SITE**

- The site has a clear set of values and a vision to connect to and then support students who have experienced difficulties overcoming their barriers and often experienced misunderstanding of their needs. These values led to an ambitious vision from leaders to support these students to access the education system to their full potential and this leads to staff striving to develop a curriculum offer that challenges our students to step towards their success.
- Leaders are a present character within the school and available for all staff and students to support effective teamwork and promote best practice by clear monitoring but also co working.
- Senior leaders **engage effectively** with pupils. They are visual at the beginning and end of the school day, take a lead role in school activities and are “present” in their support for pupils having difficult moments. Leaders are involved in all stages of the **Education, Health and Care Plan processes** and this means they know pupils well and can liaise with outside professionals and the Local Authorities to make the best decisions about provision.
- Leaders engage with **parents** effectively and this is purposeful. The **Graduated Parent Support Plan** that is part of the school’s **Contextual Safeguarding Policy** ensures parents receive support when they most need it and is **effective in preventing family crises** due to the immense stress of managing a child with complex needs. Leaders actively led parent support groups at least termly.
- Currently there is no practice that is less than good. **TES (Teacher Evaluation Scores)** Support is given to all teachers including an ECT; an instructional coaching model is used by leaders to support teachers to develop their class vision, ethos and approaches. Work upon emotional intelligence and the coaching model with teachers has led to them being able to relay their vision to their SSAs and develop their teams so that practice is embedded and consistent throughout the team.
- SSA appraisals have been led by teachers and challenge SSAs to dig deep to understand their own needs for development as well as celebrate their achievements. No SSA shows practice which is below good and many show outstanding practice.

#### **ALL SITES**

- The school has a clear weekly **CPD structure** throughout the year and offers training on a wide variety of topics from well-being, to key strategies to support young people with communication needs to particular unusual learning barriers. Staff surveys over the last few years have recognised the improvements in CPD and the resulting **growing expertise** in the school community.

- Leaders engage with **staff** effectively and take account of the main pressures of the various roles. There is support to manage workload for teachers and therapists by giving clear, well-reasoned explanations for **priorities and expectations** with a **personal freedom** to complete tasks in the way that best fits staff **personality and learning style**. Staff appreciate leadership commitment to their development and are proud of the part they play in the bigger picture development of the school. Well thought out **Academy policies** and **local procedures** support staff wellbeing and leaders use these in a **timely way** to protect staff from **bullying or harassment**.
- There is a **strong culture of safeguarding** in the school and this is owned by all. The DSL's and the Principal are experienced and well trained in this role and together with the **strong accountability structures** from Governors and the Academy, this ensures a **pro-active approach** so that every child and family receive **timely** and **quality** support from the appropriate services. The school's **contextual safeguarding policy** has been a particularly useful tool in the safeguarding process and is **effective in preventing family crises** due to the stresses of managing a child with complex needs.
- **School Governors** are helped to understand their role through very clear support and training from the wider **Academy Governance Team**. This enables them to fulfil their **statutory duties** through a clear **scheme of delegation** and **portfolio model**. Governors have been successful in holding leaders to account for the **quality of teaching and learning** in the school and in the use of **finances and resources**. Governors are well versed in the **Teacher Evaluation Schedule (TES)**. This is monitored through the Teaching and Learning Portfolio visits and data is shared with all governors in the LGB via the Principal's Report. The TES, with consistent reporting, allows the Senior Leadership Team to pinpoint areas of concern and for improvement, which in turn informs high quality CPD and training for teaching and support staff. Performance is measured on **'typicality'** from a range of evidence bases across both teaching standards. **Summative reports** capture a range of monitoring across a term, such as **learning walks, lesson observations, classroom displays and work scrutiny** for teachers. Teachers are required to deliver consistently well-rounded practice and are robustly assessed against this benchmark. The result of this is that **pupils of all ages** receive **effective teaching** as they progress through the school whatever pathway is appropriate for them to follow.
- The current Governing body was **established** in the autumn term 2020 and has been formed from members of the former Primary and Secondary Governing bodies. This combined Governing body is **rich in experience and expertise** and is in a good position to hold leaders to account at this important juncture where the two schools have amalgamated into the Link School from September 22 with the expansion onto a third site. The members of the Governing body are committed to the vision of a **whole through school** that can be a **centre of excellence** within the borough for children and young people with speech, **language and communication needs**.
- The **Academy CEO** plays an important part in Governance, supporting the Principal to identify, manage and action any **key risks** and ensuring these are highlighted at **Governing Board level** and fed through to the **Local Governing Body** as necessary.

Leadership and Management is considered to be good with outstanding features. There is a strength and cohesiveness within the senior leadership team that impacts at all other leadership levels. The commitment to middle leaders and new/ less experienced teachers through strong mentoring and coaching has prepared for good succession planning. The recognition and support for staff well-being is valued and produces high levels of commitment to the school and to overcoming the challenges that the community faces. To be fully outstanding the school need to fully communicate the quality systems that sustain the school to the growing staff team, so that everyone is aware of the important role they play and their responsibility to solution focussed communication.

**"Leaders show clear ambition and vision for the school. Staff are relentless in ensuring that pupils achieve their potential." Primary OFSTED November 2019**

“Leaders make sure pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders have thought about the knowledge they want pupils to know and remember in each year group, including the sixth form. Leaders have high expectations of pupils’ behaviour. Leaders have given careful thought to how pupils’ all -round development is promoted.” Secondary OFSTED January 2022

**EVALUATION KEY FOR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT:**

Dark Green	Light Green	Orange	Red
Target complete with proven impact  3/7	Target on track – some measurable impact  4/7	Target on track – impact to come  0/7	Not on track OR target completed without expected impact  0/7

<p>Actions from previous year</p> <p><b>Primary Site</b></p> <p><b>4.1 Ensure the changing leadership structure includes all roles and responsibilities required for continued growth, with skills developed to a high quality across the board.</b></p> <p><b>4.2 Develop effective strategies to improve the culture of support for parents around emotional wellbeing.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Develop outside areas to improve the quality of continuous provision for our pathway 1 learners – particularly an outside canopy area at the back of the new build.</b></p> <p><b>Secondary Site</b></p> <p><b>4.1 Integrate the new leaders on the Secondary site into the leadership</b></p>	<p><b>Impact of Actions</b></p> <p>Primary site</p> <p>4.1 The leadership job descriptions have been re-written to match the new leadership structure. Quality appraisal with regular coaching support has taken place for leaders stepping into new roles. Leaders stepping into altered roles feel confident that they are doing a good job and are fulfilled in their roles. All parts of the leadership jigsaw are in place and moving forward cohesively.</p> <p>4.2 Parents had the opportunity during the PICMs to take time for themselves, make connections with parents and staff and develop a range of strategies to help with their own wellbeing. Parents know that regular support for wellbeing is available in a variety of forms including the informal ‘Side by Side’ coffee mornings. Specific families have requested individual support from SLT.</p> <p>4.3 A combination of capital funding and fundraising efforts have come together to move this project forward. The canopy was built by the selected company over the Summer holidays 2023. This will enable our Pathway 1 learners to be able to use the continuous provision strategy in all weathers. It is predicted that the ability of pathway 1 learners to regulate will be the same in the winter months as they are in warmer weather.</p> <p>Secondary site</p> <p>4.1 The new leaders have received quality appraisal and regular support. The weekly SLT meetings across sites have helped induct them into the school vision, values, strategy and day to day management expectations. The new Assistant Principal and Senco are clear in their roles, have an accurate knowledge of the site and are confident to lead independently and strategically in their roles.</p>
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<p>team ensuring they feel secure within their role and happy within the team.</p> <p><b>4.2 Develop a listening culture on the site in order to improve the wellbeing culture.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Complete stage 2 of the playground improvement plan related to disability compliance.</b></p> <p><b>Satellite site</b>  <b>4.1 The satellite site will have a clear vision and values set that fits in with the wider school vision but has a distinct flavour to reflect young people with a demand avoidant learning profile.</b></p>	<p>4.2 A regular remote communication meeting has been introduced to include all sites with breakout rooms for diary updates and schedule changes. More time has been included for discussion, planning, assessment and coaching within weekly training sessions. All staff have received training on emotional intelligence and developing a listening culture. Teachers and therapists have received training on managing challenging conversations. It has been noted that more staff feel happy to approach senior leads about issues that trouble them and that the wellbeing audits at the end of the Summer term have generally been positive about improved school communication. The Edurio audit undertaken by all OHCAT staff will be analysed carefully with areas and targets for each school to focus on over the next academic year in order to continue to strengthen our wellbeing culture.</p> <p>4.3 Stage 2 of the playground project has been planned with support from the OHCAT business team. It has been jointly funded between the LA SEN capital fund and school reserves. The work has been completed over the Summer holiday 23. This will enable students, parents and visitors to the school with mobility difficulties to access the playground safely and independently. It will also enable students to access leisure activities that match their interests, and which will be more easily accessible to them.</p> <p>Satellite site  4.1 Staff upon the site worked to understand the barriers that our students face and how our unique provision can provide them with strategies, confidence and support to succeed in their futures through drip fed training throughout the year which incorporated leadership led but also class team led training sessions and individual staff tasks to feedback upon. Each class worked upon their class ethos and vision.  All staff show knowledge of the anxiety/demand balance through their practice and can be seen to develop new staff well alongside them. Staff exude the vision and values of the site and the wider school vision by working consistently, empathetically and successfully with students even in the most challenging incidents.</p>	
<p><b>Areas for Development</b></p>	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<p><b>Expected Outcomes</b></p>
<p><b>ALL SITES</b>  <b>4.1 Identify the strengths and challenges in terms of workplace wellbeing from the OHCAT edurion audit. Identify a target for each site to improve workplace wellbeing over the year 23-24.</b>  <b>(OHCAT system leadership priority)</b></p>	<p>ALL SITES  4.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse audit with edurion professionals.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL SITES  4.1  Outcomes to be identified after analysis of edurion audit in October.</p>



<p><b>4.2 Tweak and embed the systems and structures that bring strength to the school organisation and enable the strategies to continue to be effective.</b>  <b>(OHCAT system leadership and nurturing talent priority)</b></p> <p><b>All sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>A new template for consultations to bring in time efficiencies due to increased numbers of consultations.</b></li> <li>- <b>Embed changes to risk assessments.</b></li> <li>- <b>Leadership training for developing leaders.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Primary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Appraisal purpose for SSA's and leading appraisal for teachers, including recapping challenging conversations.</b></li> <li>- <b>Introducing online training and audits/tests for effective induction or policy awareness.</b></li> <li>- <b>Introduce a year planner and additional leadership time for middle leaders to improve consistency of subject action plans, EHCP's and IEP's.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Secondary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Embed changes to induction process – organisation and strategy.</b></li> <li>- <b>Back to work interviews and absence management procedures to be implemented consistently.</b></li> <li>- <b>Improve whole team involvement in the EHCP process.</b></li> <li>- <b>Whole school understanding of qualifications and accreditation policy.</b></li> <li>- <b>Development of Arbor for recording of parent communication, literacy progress and homework.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Satellite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Developing flatter leadership further with position of Senior Teacher</b></li> <li>- <b>Incorporating SSAs into the flatter leadership for their classrooms by developing the SSA responsibility areas for Progress/Environment/Wellbeing/Therapy</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify next step targets for each site and communicate these to staff.</li> <li>• Identify actions, timeline, monitoring schedule and expected impact.</li> </ul> <p>4.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematically identify training opportunities across sites to tackle each of the selected priorities.</li> <li>• Monitor improvements at a regular slot during weekly SLT meetings. Adapt next steps as necessary.</li> </ul>	<p>4.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The senior team will be aware of the impact of key organisational policies and will pick up on any staff who have fallen through the system due to absence or capacity.</li> <li>• Gaps in understanding or awareness of school organisational procedure will be picked up in a timely way and solutions actioned.</li> </ul> <p>4.3</p>
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<p>- Further embedding online training and audits/tests for effective induction or policy awareness.</p> <p><b>4.3 Develop formalised training packages around school strengths (SLCN, ASD, PDA) in order to train and maintain skills of our own staff as well as supporting colleagues in other special schools or mainstream schools, locally or nationally. (OHCAT innovation and specialism priority)</b></p>	<p>4.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working groups across sites with specialisms to bring together latest expertise and research and to formulate training packages.</li> <li>• Deliver packages to our own staff through INSET or twilights.</li> <li>• Termly “fishbowl open mornings” for local professionals to see specialisms in practice and have learning conversations with senior staff.</li> <li>• Continue to write articles, case studies for publishing in SEN/ Educational magazines.</li> <li>• Build our relationship with the PDA society in order to widen the impact of our PDA specialism – e.g. live Q &amp; A sessions.</li> <li>• Further develop our outreach service in consultation with Sutton commissioning for children and young people out of school or at risk of exclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced staff will be reminded of best practice and will be working at their optimum level to help children and young people overcome barriers.</li> <li>• New staff will quickly build up a wide tool kit of experience and strategies that will help them to be effective in their engagement with young people.</li> <li>• Other professionals in Sutton and neighbouring local authorities will benefit from our specialism skill and experience and be able to take back learning to their own context in order to maintain placements and help children and young people flourish within their school settings.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS- GOOD</b></p>
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>The school has strong evidence that they meet the good criteria under each of the judgement areas under the 2019 framework with Behaviour rated as outstanding. This was collaborated by OFSTED at the Secondary site at inspection in January 22. The Primary site whilst receiving an Outstanding judgement overall in November 2019 has been impacted by the Covid pandemic and requires another two terms to upgrade some policy gaps in order to ensure maintenance of the Outstanding criteria.</p>

The hard data from the comprehensive assessment system shows that pupils and students across the age groups consistently make outstanding progress across their holistic development and soft data backs up this judgement.

To reach the outstanding judgement overall there needs to be a further focus on reading across sites that ensures children and young people are receiving the most effective reading strategies for their learning style over time and that a love of reading material becomes embedded into the culture of the school. Developing better evidence of the thread of improvement across subjects is important with curriculum leads being able to articulate this confidently.

Safeguarding procedures in the school are effective. The school have regular termly monitoring visits from the Academy Safeguarding Lead. These show that all documentation for statutory requirements are in place and that the school adheres to these. Child protection incident logs are checked to ensure they are up to date and valid and regular supervision enables designated safeguarding officers to feel confident that they are managing incidents and allegations effectively.

**“There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders make sure that all safeguarding checks are carried out efficiently and in a timely manner. Staff are trained well and kept up to date with the latest information about how to keep pupils safe. Staff demonstrate awareness and understanding of safeguarding around the school. All staff are vigilant about keeping pupils safe. Staff use all opportunities to teach pupils how to stay safe. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil.” PRIMARY OFSTED November 2019**

**“Leaders and staff are well trained and knowledgeable about all aspects of safeguarding. They are aware of pupils’ needs and how they may be at increased vulnerability to harm. Staff know what behaviours and signs to look out for and report any concerns that they have. This enables leaders to put in any additional support as needed. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. Teachers helps pupils to understand boundaries and how to identify possible problems and dangers when out in the community.” SECONDARY OFSTED January 2022**

Areas for development

The areas for development are covered in the Quality of Education and Leadership and Management judgement.

## EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT SUMMARY EVALUATION

OFSTED inspection report -November 2019 Primary/ January 2022 Secondary

Accountability Files in Principal’s Office (Primary, Secondary and Satellite site)