	The Link School **Self-Evaluation and Development Plan** **2024-25**
Written: September 2024	
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 have direct access to CAHMS with a further 2 pupils accessing psychology services privately. • The ethnic mix reflects the ethnicity of the local landscape. 48% of current students are White British, with the remainder coming from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. • 42% of pupils are entitled to PPG, 11% of that figure are Primary pupils (16 in total) and 31% of Secondary pupils (45 in total), which is an above average portion. • There are currently 155 students on role, with 53 pupils on the Primary site, 27 pupils on the Satellite site, and 75 pupils on the Secondary site, 14 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 six 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 1st 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 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. • 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. • 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. • 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. • The school has a strong personalized learning philosophy with embedded values that support the overarching vision, "digging deep to aim high".
School Improvement priorities – 5 year plan (22-27)	By the end of the academic year 2027 we will have: • 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. • 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. • Impacted SEN provision in mainstream schools through bespoke support and the planned virtual OHCAT Academy. • Secured positive long- term results in terms of work/ social outcomes for our school leavers.
School Improvement	<u>QUALITY OF EDUCATION</u> **PRIMARY SITE** **1.1 Improve the sandwich marking policy to bring the flexibility needed to adapt quality assessment for learning across the different pathway groups and learning needs.**

priorities – 2024-25	**1.2 Embed the use of jolly phonics as a scheme across the site, monitoring the impact carefully to ensure it is effective for those that most need it.** **SECONDARY SITE** **1.1 Develop a culture of peer support in teaching and learning through open classrooms and learning conversations.** **1.2 Implement and embed the final stage of the development of a site reading culture (OFSTED Target).** **SATELLITE SITE** **1.1 Enhance the Satellite Curriculum to include foundation subjects that are personalised to pupil interests as well as meeting appropriate targets outlined in the SOLAR Development Matters goals and National Curriculum.** <u>BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES</u> **2.1 Develop a "dig deep" culture and practice around pupils that need a bespoke offer to managing regulation through:** **PRIMARY SITE- creative timetabling and use of the available environment.** **SECONDARY SITE- the introduction of regular educational and therapeutic wellbeing clinics.** **SATELLITE SITE- a wider understanding of the impact of life trauma and the effective use of PDA regulation strategies (the see saw demand anxiety strategy and the RAG rated "pick your battles" strategy).** <u>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</u> **PRIMARY SITE** **3.1 Complete the planned and responsive Link Priority Personal Development curriculum ensuring it is taught consistently across the site and monitored for impact** **3.2 Therapy target** **Create personalised communication boards for all pupils who will benefit and ensure these are used consistently by staff teams to enable learners to communicate about their bespoke needs.** **SECONDARY SITE** **3.1 Complete the Link Priority small step Personal Development curriculum ensuring it is taught consistently through planned Curriculum sessions in school and in the community as well as through responsive learning activities.** **SATELLITE SITE** **3.1 Write and implement a structured spiral RHE/RSE curriculum for formal and semi formal Satellite learners with incremental developmental targets that can be accessed through backdoor learning projects for informal learners.**

	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT **ALL SITES** **4.1 Develop the capacity and strength needed in the SLT and business team to ensure a deep understanding and contribution to development across all 4 sites as one school.** **4.2 Introduce further wellbeing activities and continue to develop a strong listening culture to support staff wellbeing as required on the different sites as outlined by soft data observation and hard data audits.** **4.3 Complete the 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 "I**mpact 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 skills and knowledge**' for every student on our roll.
- Our curriculum is designed to provide 'powerful skills and 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, multiplication 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, 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 six 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 through the "Link Priorities "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). Some teachers 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 4 different learning pathways *(informal, Semi formal 1, Semi formal 2 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.

- 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. The expected “traditional” teaching approaches that students are exposed to will be dependent upon their current learning cohort pathway.

	Informal	Semi-formal 1	Semi- formal 2	Formal
Teaching approach	100% Backdoor learning approach Learners rely solely upon ‘backdoor learning’ and nurture approaches	25% traditional approaches 75% backdoor learning Learners need ‘backdoor learning’ and nurture approaches but are able to accept short bursts of traditional academic models.	50% traditional approaches 50% backdoor learning Learners need ‘backdoor learning’ and nurture approaches but are able to accept longer bursts of traditional academic models.	75% traditional approaches 25% backdoor learning Learners are becoming less dependent upon ‘backdoor learning’ and nurture approaches but still have access to these in their day. Learners are able to accept an increased demand of traditional academic models.

- 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. RSE will also be addressed upon a bespoke individualised level as necessary for students.
- 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 2023-24 has been analysed and in summary 80.5% of pupils achieved expected or above expected progress in English compared to 80% for 2022-23 and 76% achieved expected or above expected progress in Maths compared to 78% in 2022-23. In IEPs 64% made expected or above expected progress compared to 72% in 2022/23. The average for expected progress increased this year. In the Link Priorities 87% made expected or above expected progress compared to 88% in the previous year. Overall 95.5% of pupils made expected or above expected progress compared to 88% last year.
- 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**.
- In 2023-24 leavers achieved between 6 and 8 relevant qualifications at their optimum level. This included Entry level English or level 1 English, Entry level or level 1 and 2 or GSCE Maths. Art GCSE, Science BTEC (Principals of Applied Science) or Entry level Science and DT BTEC (Home cooking skills).
- Students across the site made good progress through the academic and personal and social curriculum in 2023-24 – 68% of students made expected progress/ 20% of students made above expected progress overall. The strongest progress took place in English, Maths, Art and Humanities. There were **no significant** differences in progress within the different groups. There were some **less significant** differences. Students in receipt of pupil premium funding made more progress overall than those who were not in receipt of the fund. Students from different ethnic groups made more progress than those from a white British background. Independent and guided learners made more progress than our supported learners.

- Students all find appropriate next step **destinations** for their learning ability, need and attainment level. All of our leavers from 2019, to 2024 have gone on to various appropriate colleges and post-18 provisions. Growing data around longer -term outcomes are showing that a number of alumni are thriving in supported or independent living placements and involved in constructive activities in their day around training, voluntary or active paid employment.

- 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.
- During Academic year 2023-24 students gained over 58% new skills and generalised many within the Link Priorities for the site. In comparison to the previous academic year this is a lower value however the site saw an increase in pupil numbers (by 10), 2 students being on part time timetables and 2 students needing to return to outreach support for mental health which would have affected the data. 60% of students on site achieved expected or above expected progress in the Link Priorities for new and generalised skills.

- Students display individual spikey profiles across subject in English and Maths however this year has given us baseline data on SOLAR small steps to be able to make predictions for progress in the academic year to come. Some students have shown high levels of progress as they have settled into the school and been able to regulate and access learning opportunities; 3 students showed little progress due to their mental health needs including 2 needing to return to outreach programme for periods of time. On the whole most students made progress in every subsection area of English (7 subsections) & Maths (3 subsections)

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, including **preparation for adulthood.** To move to **outstanding,** we need to complete the final stage of our literacy development plan to ensure a quality **whole school reading culture** and need to build a **wider curriculum offer for our developing PDA cohort.**

EVALUATION KEY FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION:

Dark Green	**Light Green**	**Orange**	**Red**
Target complete with proven impact **1/6**	Target on track – some measurable impact 2/6	Target on track – impact to come 3/6	Not on track OR target completed without expected impact 0/6

Actions from previous year (23-24):	Impact of actions:
Primary Site **1.1 Assessment for learning: Staff to find and use the most effective way of evidencing learning between lessons for their pathway group.** **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)**	Primary Site Whole staff training took place with staff bringing examples to share of how they use the 'Learning Sandwich' model. This gave other staff examples of how it could be used and it also identified that the model needs to be adapted for Pathway 1. In Pathway 1 the learning need is identified but then the new learning task has to be introduced at the next session rather than the same one due to the level of attention. There also needs to be a different approach for those with Down Syndrome as they find it hard to cope if they cannot complete a task successfully and need the same activity presented in different ways to cement their learning.

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. **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)**	During whole staff training, each class team broke down Reading WSP Steps suitable for their cohort to help with recording progress on SOLAR. Jolly Phonics has been re-introduced to the school and there have been a number of whole staff training sessions. The scheme is being embedded into each class and an assessment system will be used and developed during 2024/25. A new school library and reading area has been introduced to the school.
Secondary site **1.1 Curriculum: Revisit and strengthen sequential planning and cross curricular learning across the key stage ability-based groups.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Impact of actions: Secondary Site Summary documentation covering all the schemes of work in the school have been established and placed on the website for parents and accountability groups. These include a scheme title, brief outline of the intent, key vocabulary and examples of outcomes. This has enabled leaders to ensure planning is sequential and has helped teachers to see how their subject fits in with other subjects being taught in the school. Planning in all subjects (whether individual topics or spiral topics) clearly enable progression whatever age or pathway a student is grouped in.
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. **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	The new literacy assessment has been implemented across the school. Monitoring has been required to ensure teachers meet deadlines. Data has been analysed at the end of the year and targets and suggestions for students identified so that teachers and support assistants can work on these in intervention times over the coming year.
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.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Impact of actions: Satellite Site Staff training in backdoor learning strategy and theory has been implemented well and staff have learnt to incorporate broader curriculum areas beyond Maths and English into backdoor learning with specific adult focus on outcomes.

1.2 Assessment: Improve the quality of evidence of learning for accountability groups through the "Wow files". **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Staff have produced simple schemes of work matched to student interests which give suggested activities and questions related to 6 curriculum areas (English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Creative arts/Art and Citizenship/PSHE). These schemes need to be built upon over the next academic year, but they give a good framework for continued curriculum development for this cohort and for sharing successes with future pupils with shared interests and motivations. Wow files have increasingly developed over the year and are of a good quality and quantity to show evidence of the academic progress for individuals. Evidence relates to outcomes and ranges across Link Priorities, English, Maths and IEPS and some wider subject areas. Evidence of progress across a wider range of subjects is building over time for our PDA learners and demonstrates the success of the innovative pedagogical approach.

Areas for Development 24-25	Next Steps	Expected Outcomes
PRIMARY SITE **1.1 Improve the sandwich marking policy to bring the flexibility needed to adapt quality assessment for learning across the different pathway groups and learning needs.** **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)**	• SLT to use the TES data to analysis the strengths and challenges in the use of daily classroom-based assessment for learning strategies within the pathway groups and learning needs. (including Down Syndrome) • Learning conversations with teachers and SSA's during staff and breakfast meetings to identify strategies to keep and those to adapt. • Class team meetings to have an emphasis on effective assessment for learning strategies for the class groups. • Gather data from successes – feedback from the teams and learning walks/ lesson observations.	★ Consistency in the quality of assessment for learning across the site and across the key teaching and support assistant staff. (Average 2a in TES and SES) ★ A marking policy in place fully understood and articulated by all staff to accountability groups. ★ Differences in classroom assessment techniques seen in the different class groups in the same way that the curriculum, environment and resources are adapted to meet the personalised needs of the primary cohort.

2.1 Embed the use of Jolly Phonics as a scheme across the school, monitoring the impact carefully to ensure it is effective for those that most need it. **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)**	• Update the Primary site marking policy to include any new effective strategies in "easy speak" to ensure understandable for all. • Ensure IT related resources for Jolly Phonics are working in all the classrooms (liaise with IT). • Literacy co-ordinator to observe literacy sessions in class groups and to implement twice termly training in breakfast meetings to ensure consistency in understanding and applying the phonics stages. • Update literacy audit so staff are aware of the key literacy strategies to use with individuals in their groups e.g. objects of reference, pictures, photos, symbols, phonics, whole word reading. • Consider the use of a separate phonics assessment tool, separate from SOLAR, for those that benefit. • Displays and resources to support the prioritisation of phonics teaching. • Monitor and maintain the other important embedded reading strategies e.g. regular upkeep and use of the library, appropriately resourced and matched reading books for all ability levels, upkeep and increase use of story sacks to match the literacy schemes of work.	★ All children who benefit from phonics-based interventions will be receiving these regularly and systematically. ★ Staff teams will be confident to deliver phonics teaching to the pupils who benefit. ★ Hard and soft data will show an increase in the ability of pupils identified as phonics users to use Jolly Phonics effectively in their independent reading of words and text through the curriculum.
SECONDARY SITE **1.1 Develop a culture of peer support in teaching and learning through open classrooms and learning conversations.** **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority + Nurturing Talent Priority)**	• Teachers to identify areas of teaching and learning, SEN strategies or curriculum links that they are interested in developing or where they know they have strengths to share. • Create opportunities for peer observation and learning conversations through regular training activities. (At Secondary site and across sites).	★ Classrooms will become places of learning for staff as well as children. ★ A sharing culture will grow where teachers become pro-active in both their willingness to share good practice and learn from others. ★ Unknown outstanding strategies will be observed and will be caught and developed by teachers to

1.2 Implement and embed the final stage of the development of a site reading culture (OFSTED Target). **(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)**	• Monitoring of teacher standards to include regular conversations around peer learning and impact on practice. • Teachers to take turns to join parent open mornings or learning walks to benefit from cross curricular and learning pathway practice. • Analyse data from the literacy reading programme and identify students who require interventions. Train staff who will be implementing these. Ensure interventions are implemented through tutor times and intervention lessons. • Continue with the parent reading programme ensuring the system to manage attendance and quality are adhered to consistently. • Continue to update the library with books associated with the young people's interests. • Advertise and encourage students to be part of story/ reading clubs. • Introduce the Ann Sullivan phonics system to the Secondary site through whole school training and small group workshops.	improve their own practice. (50% increase to be seen in teaching and learning aspects of the TES). ★ High involvement in voluntary reading and story clubs. ★ Parent reading programme implemented consistently. ★ Data from the literacy reading programme used well to target appropriate interventions and ensure students make ongoing progress in reading as they move through the school. ★ Teachers and SSA's confident to use the Ann Sullivan phonics programme for students identified to benefit.
SATELLITE SITE **1.1 The Satellite Curriculum will be enhanced to include foundation subjects that are personalised to pupil interests as well as meeting appropriate targets outlined in the SOLAR Development Matters goals and National Curriculum.**	• Teachers to baseline students on SOLAR in additional core and foundation subjects by end of Autumn term 24 (Science, RSHE/Citizenship, ICT, PE, Creative arts, Humanities, languages) • Teachers will use the baselining to provide next steps for students which challenge their learning and knowledge in a broad curriculum despite their pathway- this will be seen through planning	★ 2 terms of data collection in SOLAR in additional core subjects to show progression (it will be noted that progression will be spikey and not necessarily in same high %s of Maths & English) ★ 2 terms of data collection in SOLAR in foundation subjects to show progression (it will be noted that progression will be spikey and not necessarily in same high %s of Maths & English)

(OHCAT Quality and Standards Priority)	• Cohort pathway meetings which build on activities aimed at addressing specific interests of students through activities, questions and outcomes that are relevant to the PDA learning pathways.	★ Teachers will be able to show planning with appropriate outcomes and targets which relate to a broad range of subjects ★ SSAs and teachers will have increased secure knowledge of appropriate outcomes which challenge for students across a broad range of subjects despite the learning pathway the students are accessing. Specified outcomes seen in WOW evidence folders for subject areas

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**.
- Most 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 has been one fixed term exclusion and no permanent exclusions over the last four years.
- Annual attendance for the Primary site in the year 23-24 was 92% which is above average for a special school in the UK.

SECONDARY SITE

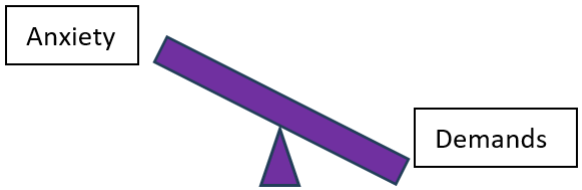
- Students **show confidence and self-awareness in relation to their learning and conduct**, despite their complex speech, language and communication needs, and their social and emotional needs. This is facilitated by staff who have developed excellent relationships with students and who effectively **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 r**egulation 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 though 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 **Senior Student Leadership Team** play an active role in supporting younger students. 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

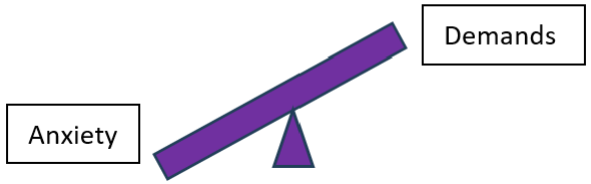
latest thinking and research to help them overcome their challenges. Wellbeing meetings and plans for these students are monitored regularly to adapt to any changes that the young person may be facing through their teenage years.

- **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 only 3 fixed term exclusions, one male student receiving 2 of those fixed term exclusions in the academic year 2023-24. There was one internal exclusion in the academic year 23-24.
- Annual attendance for the Secondary site in the year 23-24 was 93.4% 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 principles** 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 always maintains 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= 78.8%** which is a reduction on the previous academic year. This is due to increased numbers of students on site, 2 students being on parttime timetables (50.5% & 47.2% YTD attendance) and 2 students needing to return to temporary outreach due to mental health and ASD burnout (33% & 38.2% YTD attendance). 56% of students' attendance is above national average. Unauthorised absence = 0.39%, absences often are related to anxiety, medical needs or authorised other absences.
- 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 on site have varying levels of **anxiety** which generally fuels the behaviours of concern that they 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 – this year PANDA support has been bespoke to parents however we aim to continue to run a termly **PANDA support group** for the parents where we can discuss strategies and concerns. 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**. Exclusion would have a negative impact on our students' connections, trust and anxiety, especially those who have struggled in previous school placements, so we work to reduce timetable temporarily to develop wellbeing strategies which support the young person **to continue to 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 was 1 fixed term exclusion in the academic year which has led to a student moving to our secondary PDA annex to support reintegration, mental wellbeing and continued education access.
- Due to the nature of our students' reactive natures when anxious they can often be seen to display **bullying behaviours** so within class teams we work to dig deep and assess the incidents with **reflective practice**, identifying if the actions are **STOP** (several times on purpose) or are an **underlying dysregulation**. Where the behaviour is deemed as 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 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 helps to centralise and cement **wellbeing strategies** which support students 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 in-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. Behaviour data over time shows that the need for Physical Intervention for this complex cohort has **reduced substantially.**
- All behaviours of concern are recorded either on low level concern forms or upon SOLAR dependent upon the criteria checklist; these are 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 they 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 **emotional intelligence**. Many students find accepting suggestions from peers less demanding than from an adult and can regulate more quickly. This has led to a **culture of co-regulation**.
- **Student voice** is respected and seen as a high priority with regards to behaviour and attitudes. All students are welcomed to join **student council** 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 vastly improved 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:

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

	3/3		0/3

Actions from previous year: **Primary site** **2.1 Pupil well-being meetings will include a focus on staff self-reflection to identify adaptions to staff communication or actions that will aid pupil regulation.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Impact of Actions Primary site Ongoing pupil wellbeing meetings have taken place throughout the year, both scheduled and responsive. Scheduled class meetings enabled a brief discussion around all pupils in the class and have been a good opportunity for members of the team to highlight and discuss any pupils of concern displaying low-level behaviours who have not been highlighted by SOLAR incidents and the behaviour reporting systems. These meetings have enabled team-focussed suggestions moving forward. Responsive wellbeing meetings followed requested observation and input from the behaviour consultant as well as de-briefs and plans for moving forward following any difficult incidents throughout the week Whole school staff training on 'The tools of Self-Reflection' was held with the Gibbs Cycle of Reflection used as a tool for staff to reflect individually and in their teams on a particular scenario. Self-reflection was promoted as a positive way forward in preventing escalation in situations Both wellbeing meetings have allowed for non-judgemental questioning around staff's own behaviours at the time of a child's dysregulation, and what could be done differently in the future.
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.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Secondary site From September 23 the secondary site initiated the Senior Student Leadership Team. Students were tasked with going through a job application and process. The SSLT were provided with training from Jackie Van West (Safeguarding Lead for OHC&T) with regards to being Safeguarding Ambassadors. All members of the SSLT were expected to maintain excellent behaviour and be role models for other students, which they did effectively. All supported the wellbeing of other students by reporting on concerns when necessary. The Head boy and Head girl were particularly helpful in supporting tours for visitors. Our SSLT lead for IT worked with the school's IT technician for 2 hours per week. Our SSLT lead for Sports supported our PE teacher in various sporting events. A number of the SSLT helped to set up for the school's Summer Fair. Areas for development: increase number of SSLT meetings with Lynn & Liam, SSLT to contribute to assemblies & newsletters
Satellite site **2.1 An Alsup target will be identified for every child and young person**	Satellite site Staff have worked to analyse the individual lagging skills that students experience termly and highlight the highest lagging skill. They have then been able to implement support around this/these identified skills and provide support to resolve some

across the home and school environment in order to make progress against the lagging skill that most effects their regulation. **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	of the 'problems' in a collaborative manner with students. Language of staff has seen an increase in using the language of "lagging skills" and "unsolved problems" and many students have had specific ALSUP targets set in their IEPS. Due to unforeseen circumstances in Spring 2 the focus around ALSUP training reduced and therefore analysis of impact has been affected and embedding the strategy fully will continue in the next academic year.

Areas for Development 24-25	**Next Steps**	**Expected Outcomes**
PRIMARY SITE **2.1 Develop a "dig deep" culture and practice around pupils that need a bespoke offer to managing regulation through creative timetabling and use of the available environment.**	PRIMARY SITE • Ongoing live wellbeing plans/risk assessments for each child. Update all plans to show the new format which RAG rates medical needs as well as behavioural needs. • SLT to support teachers in timetabling their support staff to ensure that those pupils who are unable to access their class group for periods of time are given the space and time they need to support their regulation. • Teachers to develop 'backpacks' for those pupils needing 'out of class' support to ensure that when pupils are regulated no learning opportunities are lost • Ongoing half termly wellbeing clinics to be scheduled • Debriefs and discussions following observation and input with behaviour consultant as well as responsive clinics throughout the week	PRIMARY SITE ★ Teachers feel supported in their class management, without the concern that they need more staff to manage the few pupils who spend a lot of time out of the class. ★ The school building and grounds will be used effectively to support the regulation of pupils who need to be out of the class ★ Those pupils within a class who can learn in a group will not be negatively impacted by the regulation needs of one or two pupils within the class
SECONDARY SITE **2.1 Develop a "dig deep" culture and practice around students that need a bespoke offer to managing regulation through the introduction of regular educational and therapeutic wellbeing clinics.**	SECONDARY SITE • Utilise the tutor briefing meetings further to review progress of identified students • Review curriculum for identified students and where necessary seek alternative provisions to support needs. • Set up 'clinic time' for any member of staff each Thursday to discuss concerns with Liam & SENDco.	SECONDARY SITE ★ Staff to continue to report that they feel supported by SLT. ★ Demonstrable evidence of improvements in the wellbeing of students

		★ Evidence that the majority of students do not have their education or social times disrupted by the minority. ★ Regular and consistent review of wellbeing plans.
SATELLITE SITE **2.1 Develop a "dig deep" culture and practice around pupils that need a bespoke offer to managing regulation through a wider understanding of the impact of life trauma and the effective use of PDA regulation strategies (the see saw demand anxiety strategy and the RAG rated "pick your battles" strategy).**	SATELLITE SITE • Reviewed IRA to include the 6 stages of crisis • Whole site training on the need for variation in wellbeing responses (see saw strategy and RAG rating) • All class staff to be aware of their own students' IRAs and PWS plan • Site wide sharing of PWS plans of students • Reintroduction of half termly wellbeing clinics for each class as standard • Introduction of RAG rating strategies for students (class and individual) • Highlighted students who need specific bespoke approaches – their class team will have weekly wellbeing discussions related to these students and report back to Head of Site – Head of site will run a specific wellbeing clinic for these students at least twice a half term. – Whole site meetings with updates related to new strategies	SATELLITE SITE ★ Live IRAs and PWS plans ★ All staff are aware of the varying needs of the students across site and able to adapt practice accordingly as necessary ★ Reduction of dysregulation levels and frequency

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT- OUTSTANDING
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 five 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 four 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 and a **Senior Student Leadership Team** made up of 6th Form students. 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. This is an area which is to be developed into more discrete teaching for all over the coming academic year now that students have built trust and connection with staff.

- **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. Students have access to OT and SALT on site. Currently targeted students access **Mindjam**, **Horse riding** and introduction of **animal therapy.** 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** 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 introduction of student-run clubs (sports, Dungeons@& dragons, games & cooking) and social events such as quidditch day and celebrative afternoon teas.
- 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.
- Students have increased their access to the local community through trips. Whilst it is common for students to go on short trips to the local shops they have also increased their community access with larger trips out to sports events, activity centres and larger shops such as the supermarket. Students have accessed the community in a variety of ways including walking, minibus as well as travel training on public transport.
- 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 dragon hunting on the local fields, Quidditch day, wide variety of student run clubs and fundraising. 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 outstanding. 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.

EVALUATION KEY FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Dark Green	**Light Green**	**Orange**	**Red**
Target complete with proven impact **1/3**	Target on track – some measurable impact 2/3	Target on track – impact to come 0/3	Not on track OR target completed without expected impact 0/3

Actions from previous year:	Impact of Actions
Primary and Secondary Site **3.1** **Develop a series of key link priority steps to match another 10 of the Link Priority key targets.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Primary Site and Secondary Site Primary teachers and therapists worked in teams to establish small step criteria for an additional 5 Link Priorities. LPs 4, 6, 10, 11 and 12 now have small steps which class teachers share with their teams when discussing and reviewing progress of the pupils within their class. At the Secondary site 12 Link Priority steps have been completed. The steps support tutor teams in planning for, teaching and reviewing the personal development progress of students.
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.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	Satellite Site Our first year of being open saw 92 trips. These trips were all local community visits, which either aided and enhanced children's backdoor learning projects or were functional life skills trips. All 92 of these trips were local trips. 4/18 children (22%) did not manage a trip due to regulation reasons. 78/92 trips (85%) of the trips that were arranged were to provide opportunities to increase social interaction between the children. 14/92 trips (15%) of those trips were for regulation. 2023/24 saw an increase of trips from 92 to 265, an increase of 288%. 14/265 (5.2%) of these trips were in the wider community, with our children taking either public transport or minibuses to access sports halls, cinemas, restaurants and parks. 1/26 children (4%) did not manage a trip due to regulation reasons. 205/265 (77%) of the trips that were arranged were

	cross class/whole site/class trips to maintain social communication and interaction. 60/265 (23%) of those trips were to build relationships and aid regulation of the children. The trips that have taken place have increased the children's functional skills – the shop visits lending itself to life skills of money management, independent living, travel training, cooking etc. Providing these hands-on experiences and promoting a deeper understanding that stems from the children's interests have meant that we have been able to enrich the curriculum, motivate our children and further spark their curiosity, we have balanced their anxieties around learning by being able to foster and maintain their engagement in their individual interests supporting the child led curriculum. There has been an increase in new and new and generalized skills in Link Priority 9 *(**Community- out and about-** able to manage different environments in the community, overcoming any personal anxieties)* since last year which has been down to students accessing the community more frequently

Areas for Development 24-25	**Next Steps**	**Expected Outcomes**
PRIMARY SITE **3.1 Complete the planned and responsive Link Priority Personal Development curriculum ensuring it is taught consistently across the site and monitored for impact.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	PRIMARY SITE • Ensure the remaining Link Priorities have small step criteria, so that all 22 LPs are completed • SLT to monitor to ensure that teachers and therapists are teaching the Link Priorities as both planned and responsive sessions • Learning walks and observations to ensure the above. • Monitoring of LP reporting through the WOW files • SD (HoS) to present the data to teachers showing which pupils did not make expected progress in the LPs. These will then be specifically targeted.	PRIMARY SITE ★ All 22 Link Priorities with steps completed ★ Further evidence of LP progress within the WOW files ★ Development of LP skills will be seen in and around the school as well as on community visits ★ LPs will be clearly planned for
3.2 Therapy target **Create personalised communication boards for all pupils who will benefit and ensure these are used consistently by staff teams to enable**	• Training for all staff regarding use of communication boards in functional communication.	★ Personalised communication boards will be updated to the changing language development of pupils.

learners to communicate about their bespoke needs. **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	• SALTS/ Teachers to work in class teams in consultation with parents to identify personalised interests and vocabulary relevant to identified pupils. SALTS/ Class teams to provide structured opportunities and responsive opportunities for pupils to use personalised communication boards.	★ They will be used by pupils and staff naturally and frequently becoming part of the communication culture of the school.
SECONDARY SITE **3.1 Complete the Link Priority small step Personal Development curriculum ensuring it is taught consistently through planned Curriculum sessions in school and in the community as well as through responsive learning activities.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	SECONDARY SITE • Complete steps for 8 more Link Priorities to ensure all 20 are completed • Learning Walks once a half term with a focus of ensuring Link Priorities are embedded with the everyday teaching and learning. An overview given to tutors of suggested trips to staff to challenge the Link Priorities demonstrating least progress from 23/24	SECONDARY SITE ★ All 20 Link Priorities with steps completed ★ Evidence of Link Priorities embedded with the curriculum. ★ Overview in place for community trips with staff providing feedback on each trip
SATELLITE SITE **3.1 Write and implement a structured spiral RHE/RSE curriculum for formal and semi formal Satellite learners with incremental developmental targets that can be accessed through backdoor learning projects for informal learners.** **(OHCAT quality and standards priority)**	SATELLITE SITE • Head of site and RHE co-ordinator to work together to create a scheme of work for **RHE** that structures progression and expected outcomes from Develop Matters to National Curriculum for all learners. • RSE audit and consent form sent home to all parents • Head of site and RHE co-ordinator to work together to create a scheme of work for **RSE** that structures progression and expected outcomes from Develop Matters to National Curriculum for all learners aged Year 6 and above (which can be used as a bespoke package for younger students as requested and permissioned by parents)	SATELLITE SITE ★ RHE/RSE curriculum schemes of work in place which offer expected outcomes and range of activity ideas that address how staff can address the outcomes through traditional and backdoor learning approaches for all ★ Weekly planning which highlights how RHE is addressed across the curriculum and intended outcomes ★ RSE sessions/planning for Year 6+ students which takes place for half a term each term ★ Students base lined on SOLAR for RHSE by end of Autumn 24 and progression trackable alongside the Link Priorities by year end

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 i**mplementation**. 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 C**ontextual 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 i**mplementation**. 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.

- 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** continues to be used at the Secondary site, and this has been embedded and impacts 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 students. 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 students 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 and recently one teacher has successfully completed her ECT framework with outstanding practice; 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/ Executive Team** 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 and educational roles. 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 induct new leaders into "The Link way" and ensure that middle leaders have a strong understanding of the curriculum and pedagogy across sites to ensure a golden thread of learning and progress as children move through the school.

"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

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

EVALUATION KEY FOR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT:

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

Actions from previous year	Impact of Action
4.1 Identify the strengths and challenges in terms of workplace wellbeing from the OHCAT edurio audit. Identify a target for each site to improve workplace wellbeing over the year 23-24.	Targets in the People Strategy plan have impacted weaker areas from the wellbeing Edurio Audit. Examples- A 5-minute weekly slot to whole school staff meetings has been introduced- "meet the OHCAT face". This has enabled school staff to be aware of the contribution the central team have made to school development. The central team have stronger links with the school as they have been publicly and privately celebrated.

(OHCAT system leadership priority)	Introducing additional time in the termly training plans for teachers to complete teaching, learning and assessment tasks has enabled teachers to keep up with their teaching and learning responsibilities reducing stress levels due to a build -up of workload. The Introduction of wellbeing support meetings for school staff who are also parents to children with additional needs has benefitted their wellbeing through being given opportunities to share with others who know and understand their challenges. A clear criterion for progression for therapists has been developed that can be used to bring clarity and equity to the appraisal process. A therapy lead team is now in place enabling the therapists to have better communication with the senior team and more of a say in school development.
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. **(OHCAT system leadership and nurturing talent priority)** **All sites** - **A new template for consultations to bring in time efficiencies due to increased numbers of consultations.** - **Embed changes to risk assessments.** - **Leadership training for developing leaders.** **Primary** - **Appraisal purpose for SSA's and leading appraisal for teachers, including recapping challenging conversations.** - **Introducing online training and audits/tests for effective induction or policy awareness.** - **Introduce a year planner and additional leadership time for middle leaders to improve consistency of subject action plans, EHCP's and IEP's.**	New template in place since September 23. This summarises the evidence of need from consultation paperwork and highlights if the school can or cannot meet need according to code of practice criteria. This is useful when responding to follow up questions from LA's, parents or tribunal officers. The risk assessment policy has been updated collaboratively across sites. It is fully embedded at Primary and Satellite and has needed some additional training at Secondary site for full adherence. The Aspiring leader's course was attended by 12 teachers across sites. Initial evidence shows teachers using learning from the course strategically in their own subject areas with some teachers demonstrating wider bigger picture whole school thinking around school development. Time will show how many teachers move on into senior leadership positions. Primary teachers worked together to format a new appraisal form for SSAs. This included examples to support self-grading and discussion at the appraisal. Strengths and areas of development were to be highlighted across the areas of Personal and Professional Conduct, Knowledge and Understanding and Teaching and Learning. New targets will be set in the Autumn term when SSAs are in the class groups for the next academic year.

Secondary - **Embed changes to induction process – organisation and strategy.** - **Back to work interviews and absence management procedures to be implemented consistently.** - **Improve whole team involvement in the EHCP process.** - **Whole school understanding of qualifications and accreditation policy.** - **Development of Arbor for recording of parent communication, literacy progress and homework.** **Satellite** - **Developing flatter leadership further with position of Senior Teacher** - **Incorporating SSAs into the flatter leadership for their classrooms by developing the SSA responsibility areas for Progress/Environment/Wellbeing/Therapy** - **Further embedding online training and audits/tests for effective induction or policy awareness.**	Whole school on-line audits have taken place including for Safeguarding training. The year planner was introduced in the first half of the Autumn term. This was well received and supported teachers and therapists in preparing for deadlines throughout the year. - ? SSAs commencing their employment at the secondary site complete 6, 12 and then 20-week meetings to review progress and ensure that the SSA feels supported in their new role. Absence procedures are in place and the school now has access to support from Shamani Wathsala (HR) to support the process) Time has been set aside to ensure EHCP Mind Maps are reviewed regularly within the tutor teams. Tutor team briefings allow for time to discuss student progress and ensure requirements of the EHCP are being met. All staff have access to the accreditation spreadsheet via the weekly bulletin. This allows staff to view qualifications that have been gained and those that the student is working towards. Nicola (HLTA) has led on training with teachers in the Summer Term 24 to ensure further understanding of the process. Arbor is used to message parents and supports in general with communication with parents. Emails sent via Arbor are automatically saved in the system. Phone calls and meeting can be recorded on Arbor. This MIS system allows for Parents' Evenings to collate appointment times and the setting of H/W.
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)**	A senior teacher is in place and is currently undertaking her NPQSL. She has been able to develop her knowledge of leading over the year despite some unforeseen absence due to medical needs. She has been able to take on leading staff meetings, training and also EHCP reviews.

	SSAs were assigned specific responsibility areas however due to unforeseen circumstances in Spring 2 these roles were not able to be monitored and reviewed as much as expected but will continue to be embedded over the next academic year. Some increase in online training and audits/tests has been implemented but this could benefit from further embedding in the year to come Working groups have taken place through the year to formulate training packages. At Primary and Secondary the descriptions of ASD and SLCN are complete as well as some training on reasonable adjustments. Both sites have started gathering or preparing training for specific bespoke ASD/ SLCN strategies. The PDA training package is mostly complete and has been adapted for training in many settings over the year including, SEN caseworkers, fishbowl open mornings, Sutton nurses, Sutton Educational Psychologists and Therapists, as well as a number of schools.

Areas for Development	**Next Steps**	**Expected Outcomes**
ALL SITES **4.1 Develop the capacity and strength needed in the SLT and business team to ensure a deep understanding and contribution to development across all 4 sites as one school.** **(OHCAT system leadership priority)**	ALL SITES • Early induction for new business manager and new SLT members (Sadie – Sept 24. Will Jan 25) • Weekly joint time management to ensure familiar coverage on all sites with planned opportunities to use SLT strengths on all sites. • Adapt SLT management structure and job descriptions based on strengths and site needs.	ALL SITES ★ New SLT members will be securely inducted into the Link culture and practice. ★ All staff will be aware of SLT responsibilities and will know who to go to for advice and support. ★ SLT members will have a full understanding of one site and a solid overview of all other sites. 2 SLT members will have a full overview of all sites and will be able to lead the whole school in the absence of the other.

4.2 Introduce further wellbeing activities and continue to develop a strong listening culture to support staff wellbeing as required on the different sites as outlined by soft data observation and hard data audits. **(OHCAT Nurturing talent priority)** **4.3 Complete the 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 prior**	• Ensure all staff have timely access to appraisal/ mentoring/ coaching support now the SLT team is at full capacity. • Regular optional wellbeing activities at all sites. Introduce team building activities on INSET days. • Introduce SSA staff forum opportunities. • Increase formal qualification opportunities. • Curriculum leads across sites to have planned opportunities to meet together. • Introduce flow charts to aid staff understanding of HR processes. • Working groups at Primary and Secondary site to formulate remaining bespoke ASD and SLCN strategies established on evidence-based practice and research. • Work with Cognus ASD support team to transfer PDA training into a digital format for use across the borough.	★ Adequate listening time for staff from the SLT team. ★ Good mix of formal and informal wellbeing activities will help staff to manage the complexities of their roles well. ★ Tighter communication between curriculum leads across sites will enable staff to feel confident and prepared for conversations with accountability groups. ★ ASD / SLCN training will be really accessible to all Link staff and will be available in a format to support mainstream professionals who require it. ★ Bespoke ASD/ SLCN strategies will be used consistently by all staff across sites. ★ Digital PDA training will be available to those who need it across the borough – both parents and professionals.

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)