



## Victoria Education Centre SEN Information Report 2017 - 18

Welcome to our SEN Information Report which is part 'Our Offer' for students with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) in accordance with the Code of Practice, January 2015.

Our offer has been produced with parents and carers, governors, staff and Local Authorities. We are currently able to deliver the 'core offer' as set out in Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset's Local Offer.

The report states the current provision within Victoria Education Centre and will be updated annually to reflect changes and plans within the school.

### Our vision and values

**Vision:** Victoria is a Centre where successful learning and high levels of achievements prepare children and young adults for fulfilling future lives.

**Values:** At Victoria we believe –

- The individual young person must be at the centre of all that we do.
- Every student must be respected, valued and nurtured and their voice must be heard.
- Learning is the key to students' future lives. We believe that successful learning comes from skilful teaching, an innovative and personalised curriculum and from a real partnership with families.
- Learning should be fun. We emphasise the development of self-esteem and confidence.
- Every student's achievements should be recognised and celebrated.

### Our students

Victoria Education Centre is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' non-maintained special school for children and young people aged 3 to 19 with physical disabilities and complex health needs. Students are mainly referred from across the three Local Authorities Pan Dorset, which include Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth this makes up 85% of our total population. All the students have their needs identified and assessed through the Statutory Assessment process and have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care plan (EHCP).

As well as notable severity of impairment, there is a broader range of difficulties additional to students' main diagnosis. Students confront a range of barriers to learning, many, but not all, arising directly from their physical disabilities. These additional difficulties can include;

- Communication, interaction and imagination
- Personal, social, behavioural and emotional
- Significant and/or specific learning difficulties including effective processing of sensory information

Our students also have learning difficulties, some very profound through to those who are able to achieve GCSE and entry level certificates by the time they leave. Many of our students have a sensory impairment. A very small number of our students can walk with assistance, however the majority use wheelchairs for all or some of the time. Some of our children are non-verbal and all have access to communication techniques suited to them individually.

### Our staff

We have a very highly trained and skilled body of staff. We have many, many years of experience of special education, disability, communication, mobility and sensory needs. As well as a strong education team, we have a large team of therapy experts on site, including a nursing team and rehabilitation engineers.



### **Residential provision**

Our residential provision, Victoria Children's Home, is very flexible. Most of the young people who stay with us are students at the school, but we do take those who are not.

We offer short breaks, which may be a night once in a while, or may be for a longer period if required. We have weekly and fortnightly boarders right through to full-time 52-week residential provision.

We offer special residential placements for young people for after they have had an operation and cannot go home. We have introductory overnight sessions on weekdays for children to get to know our Children's Home staff.

### **Our school**

Our school is part of Livability a non-profit making registered charity (number 1116530) which has been providing education, care and support for children, young people and adults with disabilities and their families for over 100 years.

We are not a local authority school, so placements with us must be made by special arrangement with your local authority or funded privately. We can only take children and young people who really need all our very special support.

<b><i>How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?</i></b>
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All of our students have special educational needs as well as a wide range of physical disabilities, health and sensory needs.
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The highly trained multidisciplinary teams, provide ongoing support for our students. They have a very detailed knowledge of each student and, with a continuous assessment process, are able to notice any changes in their health and wellbeing. We work closely with parents and with each other.
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<b><i>How will the school staff support my child/young person?</i></b>
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We have a high ratio of staff to students because of their very high needs, often 1:1 or more. We have classes of between 6 and 10 students. All staff have comprehensive training, focusing on the specialist knowledge necessary to support the complex needs of our students.
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Our staff are trained to use a variety of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems and work closely with the speech and language therapists (SaLT) to select and develop systems to meet individual needs – we have a library of communication aids for our students to try. There are also specialist Speech and Language Therapists on site. Staff are also trained to use a wide range of ICT devices, including 'Eye-Gaze', which enable students to have the best access learning and leisure.
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All students are given opportunities to use powered mobility, from single-switch equipment through to full independent mobility, enabled by trained staff and occupational therapists, and supported by on-site rehabilitation engineers.
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Physical and communication development is incorporated into every aspect of the school day, planned and supported by on-site physiotherapists and speech and language and occupational therapists.
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Health needs are met by on-site nurses who offer a 24 hour service, 365 days a year. A weekly visit from the Paediatrician informs staff and parents as regards the medical management of our students.
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Additional areas of expertise include a 'Future Options' Advisor who is able to give students and their parents or carers up to date information of what options or courses may be available for students when they leave Victoria. A counselling service is available for students to help with their concerns across a wide range of issues and a 'Beacon Group' offers support for both students and staff in the case of bereavement.

We will seek to provide assessments for access arrangements for our students and contact examination boards.

### ***How will the curriculum be matched to my child's young person's needs?***

Victoria Education Centre aims to offer all students a broad and balanced curriculum that provides rewarding and stimulating activities for students and helps them prepare for increasing involvement in a fulfilling social and cultural life.

Our curriculum aims to:

- Promote personal development at the individual's level and pace
- Develop independence and life skills including self-advocacy and employability
- Support students making healthy choices;
- Establish a safe, secure and supportive ethos;
- Support learning which stretches individuals;
- Promote self-confidence and positive behaviour; and,
- Support students in contributing to the wider community.

We have five distinct curriculums covering the Key Phases of learning in our school, Early Years, Complex/Sensory Needs, Semi-Formal, Formal and Transition (Key Stage 4 and Post 16). There is a coherent curriculum structure, based upon prior understanding and which builds systematically throughout the Key Stages. In Early Years (Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1) and Key Stage 2, a 'Thematic' Approach' is employed to integrate the learning opportunities contingent upon individual needs. This is extended through a 'Dimensional Approach' in Key Stages 3 where discrete subjects are taught through mini-projects alongside English and Maths. A semi-formal curriculum is designed for students aged Key Stage 2 or older that are working at a pre-school level. It continues the thematic approach of Early Years and Key Stage 1, whilst prioritising the development of functional life skills, social skills, and play skills. Within the complex needs/sensory curriculum the focus is on the eight different multi-sensory impairment domains; from which learning objectives are set pertinent to individual requirement. Where appropriate 'Routes for Learning' goals are employed to compliment and further diversify learning opportunities.

In Key Stage 4 and Post 16, the curriculum is structured through Foundation Learning and embedded in individual student choice and aspirations identified through the transition review process. As a direct impact each student (Key Stages 4 & 5) has a Learning Pathway which not only reflects their choices but continues to provide challenge in their learning. The students' accredited work is externally validated.

Our curriculum provides well organised, imaginative and effective opportunities for learning for all students. We continue to scrutinise new technologies and their applications to see how we can best use them to augment students learning experiences. The curriculum also promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development exceptionally well and in addition, meets very effectively the learning, communication, mobility and other personal needs of all students.

All staff closely monitor progress, and in conjunction with therapists and families, determine what the next steps of progress should be for each student. We all agree together their 'Personal Learning Priorities', identifying the areas which are most important to work towards for the child. This is not just traditionally curriculum based, but includes every aspect of the child's growth towards their potential: physically, socially, regarding self-esteem, independence and enjoyment of life. These targets are worked on not just in class, but at



playtimes and lunchtimes, on outings and in the evenings and weekends. There are individual learning intentions for each student in every lesson, which all teachers and teaching assistants understand and help the pupils work towards. These may be very small step targets.

Each student has an individual timetable which takes into account their learning and additional needs. This may include using on-site aquatherapy pool, multi-sensory room, horse riding, peripatetic music sessions and therapy sessions.

***How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing and how will you help me to support my child's/young person's learning?***

Assessment of each child's progress happens every day in every lesson. This is how staff learn what is best for each child. Lessons are then planned using this knowledge to meet the individual needs of each pupil and take them to the next step.

Students' progress is recorded regularly. The Education Leadership Team (ELT) and an external consultant monitor each child's progress, and observe lessons for every teacher, reporting regularly to Governors. If a child is not making the progress we expect, the teaching team and therapists assess the situation and new strategies are put in place. These are shared with parents. Progress is tracked and ambitious targets set through a computer based data tracking system called SOLAR. The Assistant Headteacher for Achievement analyses the progress of every student, and of groups, and in so doing, evaluates the effectiveness of interventions. If an individual or a group of students is not making expected progress, the effectiveness of an intervention, or need for a different intervention, will be investigated.

However, progress in learning is not the only way we measure our effectiveness. It is extremely important to us that our students are comfortable, that they feel safe at school, that they are happy and have good confidence and self-esteem. We look for indicators of this through all that we do, and we rely on our relationships with parents and other agencies, to help us respond quickly if a child needs help.

There is a series of meetings with parents to discuss all aspects of the child. These include:

- new student meetings after 6 weeks, looking at provision
- health reviews and multidisciplinary reviews with members of the education, therapy, nursing and care teams
- annual reviews of the statement / Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- parents' open events and consultation evenings

Reports to parents include:

- student planners, which are used on a daily basis and may include photographs
- annual end of year reports, summarising the learning and progress of the child
- annual review reports, including therapy and medical reports
- Personalised Learning Priorities
- Transition Plan (for Year 9 students and older)
- an annual parents' questionnaire

Enquiries from parents about their child's progress and welfare are welcome at any time, as are visits to the school, emails and phone calls.

We offer parents informal training and discussion on a wide variety of topics. Some of this is offered at coffee mornings, to help parents understand common issues, to support each other and most importantly to develop friendships. Some of the training sessions can be more formal.

A Parent Participation Group (PPG) is available to support parents and carers, liaise with external agencies and organise social events and training for parents.



### **What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall wellbeing?**

On admission, parents are welcomed into school and work alongside staff to settle their child and help us to understand their needs. Each student has a named teacher and link worker in school, and a residential keyworker if appropriate.

We take a multidisciplinary and holistic approach to our students' wellbeing. Our specialist team including nurses and therapists, work closely with school and residential staff to ensure students' medical needs are well met and that they are pain free, well-nourished and have good postural management.

Each student has named therapists who undertake a detailed initial assessment which generates an individual care plan, and this is reviewed annually or more frequently if required. There is a 'bleep' system throughout the site to call the medical team for routine calls and emergency situations. Many outpatient clinics are held on site. The school nursing team offers a 24 hour, 365 day nursing service for the school to support the on-going management of complex medical needs and any altered healthcare needs. The nursing team also has 24 hour access to doctors. We also benefit from having access to a specialist in behaviour and clinical psychology, a school counsellor and regular meetings are held in school.

Students' views are voiced through the School Council. An independent advocacy service is offered to help students speak up and express their opinions. Staff will also advocate for the student on less formal occasions. Our 'Open Door' counselling service offers students an opportunity to meet with a trained counsellor who aims to both support and reassure them.

We provide a proactive, comprehensive wellbeing programme to support and promote student resilience, mental, social, physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Mindfulness activities provides students with daily opportunities to calm, decrease anxiety and emotional reactivity, enabling them to respond to their learning opportunities with a greater sense of focus, attention and concentration.

### ***What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?***

Our teachers are highly skilled and trained, we also have specialist teachers of the early years, arts, music, drama, PE and swimming (including rebound therapy and aquatherapy).

All our students have access to paediatricians, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, rehabilitation engineers, and other specialist medical practitioners including 24 hour nursing support. The highly specialist therapy support is also available for Alternative and Augmentative Communication, Switch access, powered mobility and complex postural management.

Equipment reviews for each student are held regularly by physiotherapists, occupational therapists and the rehabilitation engineering service. Troubleshooting is carried out as quickly as possible. On-site engineering can make bespoke adjustments to meet the needs of individual students, and creates innovative ideas/suggestions to support independence.

There are specialist clinics which take place on site. This means that students can have their clinics here rather than having to go off-site. Examples of clinics are: audiology, posture, dental, dietetic, eating and drinking, functional vision and podiatry.



***Do you have specialised equipment (e.g. ancillary aids or assistive technology?)***

We have a fully equipped multi-sensory room which is used for students with sensory impairments to develop sensory awareness, communication and control skills.

Our environmental controls room is designed for students to develop functional life skills through the use of technology and environmental controls. The implementation of Victoria Inclusive Broadcasting Enterprise (VIBE) radio station was sourced to develop students' communication and literacy. Radio gives our students a reason to communicate and interact. It provides them with a sense of purpose and strongly supports the development of speech, language and communication.

Some individuals have personal AAC aids. In addition our school currently has 18 iPads that individuals/small groups can use. Therapy support base is available to assess children's IT and assistive technology needs. A TAPit (Touch Access Platform Interactive Technology) learning station is used to maximise creative potential for students with restricted mobility.

We have a fully accessible aquatherapy/swimming pool heated to 32 degrees, a specially designed large sports hall, a soft play room, a creative arts studio, media suite, radio station, food technology room and horticultural department.

The Centre owns a number of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Fixed and portable hoists to give access to different areas/equipment for non-ambulant students.

***What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?***

All staff receive a comprehensive induction programme, including sessions on safeguarding, disability awareness, communication, moving and handling, eating and drinking, behaviour management, and much more. This ensures that the correct skills and knowledge are gained and statutory requirements are fulfilled. There is also an annual programme of training, including updates, refresher training as required to meet statutory health and safety obligations.

Training programmes are delivered either by appropriately trained Centre staff and can be based on the changing needs of the students. All staff complete training to support communication and interaction. We have local trainers for Makaton and complete in-house training for staff and parents. Staff are also trained to use a wide range of ICT devices, including Eye-Gaze, to enable pupils to access learning and leisure. We train some staff with the use of PECS.

School and care staff are trained in many procedures and interventions, and are signed off by nurse assessors. Examples of these are: medicines preparation and administration; venting; gastrostomy; basic life support; seizure management; suctioning; eating and drinking; intimate care management.

In accordance with the requirements of Regulatory Inspection Bodies in Care we support staff to gain their own Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Diploma Level 3 in Health and Social Care.

All drivers must undertake practical assessments before they are allowed to drive our vehicles.

***How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?***

We aim to provide our students with as much variety and differing experiences as possible, both on and off-site. Inclusion in the community is a strong value for us.



Each year, off-site residential trips are organised. Many other trips are arranged including shopping trips, visits to London, science centre, zoos and farm visits, etc.

We have many links with local schools who we visit, and who visit us. We give assemblies at other schools where our students demonstrate how they communicate and use their wheelchairs. We perform music and drama at other schools, including the Shakespeare Schools' Festival. Students in the Upper School are given opportunities to participate in residential activities as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

On-site, we have a aquatherapy pool and are able to offer offsite horse riding with a trained Hippotherapist, where appropriate.

We offer after school activities, both formal and informal, including a variety of sports, creative arts, faith and sensory clubs. We also offer holiday activity clubs throughout the year at a small charge.

### ***How accessible is the school environment?***

Victoria Education Centre is fully wheelchair accessible and we have a proficiency system for some powered chair wheelchair users to promote independence. There is also an accessible aquatherapy pool and an appropriate level 'mounting' station or hoist for therapeutic hippotherapy. We have lovely grounds including wooded areas, a 'a boardwalk' and a playground with swings etc. All areas are accessible.

We offer adapted and responsive environments for our full range of students, and specialist facilities to enable full access to the curriculum.

We have a car park with good capacity for staff and visitors, close to school building. We have accessible toilets and hygiene rooms with accessible facilities for changing and showers.

We work closely with Dorset's Hearing and Visual Impairment specialist.

#### **Auditory environment:**

Acoustic panelling has been installed in identified spaces to ensure satisfactory acoustics in school. A review will be undertaken whenever structural or advisory guidance changes. We comply with regulation BB93 supporting total mean mid - range frequency of speech (500hz to 2000hz) used for children with hearing impairments and children with SEND.

#### **Visual environment:**

Environment audits completed 2014. We ensure that we have predictable classroom environments and reduce clutter to support our VI children. We provide sound objects of reference to support children by design in discussion with parents when appropriate for them. Where appropriate we purposely use contrast colours so children can find depth of field between furniture and the ground.

### ***How will the school prepare and support my child/young person to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?***

On admission, parents are welcomed into school and work alongside staff to settle their child and help us to understand their needs. Each student has a link worker in school, who ensures that all relevant staff know every aspect of the child's needs, and joins up all communication, including with the family.

Transitions between classes and between departments are very carefully organised. There are lots of visits made, to meet new staff and to get to know the new environment, as each department has its own building. Each class moving up will take some familiar staff with them, and those children who have 1:1 teams will move



with someone who knows all their needs. There are coffee mornings and class visits for families to attend.

As young adults, our students move on to a variety of different placements. We start planning in earnest for the best possible future placement once the pupil is in year 12, although we will have started the transition process in year 9. We have a dedicated 'Future Options' Advisor who has a vast database of future placements, and whose job is to help families explore potential placements and guide them on the journey. Once a placement is decided upon, visits and familiarisation will begin.

There is an on-site day and residential facility for young adults with disabilities aged 18 to 25 called Next Steps2 and Horizons. This provision offers exciting activities on a pay-as-you-go basis, and is also open to those adults with disabilities living in the community. Please contact us to receive more information about these facilities.

#### ***How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?***

If a local authority recognises that a child's needs will be best met by our expertise and facilities, they will make a referral to us.

When a referral is made an admission assessment process is held over two days. The assessment includes meetings with, specialist teachers, therapists, nurses and residential staff for those who want short breaks or boarding.

Following the assessment, a multidisciplinary meeting is held to determine whether the child's needs would be best met at Victoria Education Centre.

The assessment papers, which will include reports on levels of educational support, residential support, nursing care, therapies required, are then sent to the child's local authority by Victoria Education Centre and to their local clinical commissioning group. The local authority and the local clinical commissioning group then have to agree to fund the placement, and if they do, a place is offered.

We can also take children on privately funded placements and the admission assessment process will be exactly the same as for local authority referrals, although, of course, the administration will differ.

#### ***How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved?***

As well as the formal meetings described in section 4, there are many ways parents can be involved. For example, parents always have skills that are useful with our students, so we have parents who volunteer at the school, supporting swimming for example. We have siblings who come to us for work experience and also to volunteer.

There is an active Parents/Carers group called PPG – Parents Participation for information and peer support. We also have a newly established Friends of Victoria Education Centre (FoVEC) group.

There are a multitude of celebrations and special events throughout the school year to which families are invited. We love to see grandparents and siblings. Members of our children's families often come and visit us, where they can join in with activities, or just spend quality time with their child. It is very rare that there aren't family members around the site.

We have a self-contained accessible holiday home at a local park which is available for parents/families to book. We also find help find local accommodation for parents and families to stay nearby particularly for those travelling long distances so that they can attend Parents' Evenings, Celebration Days, etc.



Victoria Education Centre committed to providing an outstanding service to all its families. Parental concern will be dealt with sensitively and swiftly and resolution is often reached through discussion with the class teacher. We are keen that parents and carers should contact us if they are at all worried or concerned or need clarification on any point.

### **Have Your Say**

This report details our annual offer to learners with SEN. To be effective it needs the views of all: Parents/carers, students, governors and staff. Please engage fully with our annual process to 'assess, plan, do and review' provision for SEN.

If you have any comments, please contact us.

### ***Who can I contact for further information?***

#### **General enquiries:**

Sue Stratis, Business Manager  
[sstratis@victoria.poole.sch.uk](mailto:sstratis@victoria.poole.sch.uk) or 01202 768007 extn 210

#### **School enquiries:**

[office@victoria.poole.sch.uk](mailto:office@victoria.poole.sch.uk) or 01202 763697 extn 200

#### **School Website:**

<http://www.victoria.poole.sch.uk/>

#### **School Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/VictoriaEducationCentre.uk>

#### **The School's link to the Dorset, Poole & Bournemouth Local Offer:**

Information on the Dorset Local Offer is available at  
<http://familyinformationdirectory.dorsetforyou.com/kb5/dorset/fsd/localoffer.page>

Information on the Poole Local Offer is available at  
<http://www.poolefamilyinformationdirectory.com/kb5/poole/fis/localoffer.page>

Information on the Bournemouth Local Offer is available at  
<http://bournemouth.sendlocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/bournemouth/directory/home.page>

#### **Children's Home enquiries:**

Rhiannon Beer, Registered Manager of Children's Home  
[rbeer@victoria.poole.sch.uk](mailto:rbeer@victoria.poole.sch.uk) or 01202 758307 extn 269

#### **Next Steps & Horizons Post 18-25 Residential:**

Emma Hart, Registered Manager of Horizons  
[ehart@victoria.poole.sch.uk](mailto:ehart@victoria.poole.sch.uk) or 01202 758316 extn 267

### ***Other useful information***

Click here for our latest Ofsted report

Please use this link to access our Single Equality Scheme