



# ILLUMINATE MINDS TRUST

## SEND STRATEGY



'EXCELLENCE EVERY DAY'

# Our SEND Commitments

As a Trust, we are aspirational for all learners. We seek to welcome pupils with a range of needs and have developed our staff team and expertise to facilitate this ambition.

We are committed to provide enriching learning environments for every pupil where they can thrive.

Our commitment is to provide a fully inclusive approach. We strive to ensure that our schools are communities where everyone belongs and this is reflected in our Relationships and Behaviour Policy which is underpinned by a combined trauma-informed and restorative approach.

We are committed to ensure that our schools are not only places of learning but safe havens where children are inspired to explore, discover, and be the best versions of themselves.

We promise not to give up on children and to always seek to remove barriers to learning and personal development.



**It is our commitment to foster a love for lifelong learning through our focus on an inclusive education whilst ensuring that each and every child receives the attention, care, and guidance that they need in order to succeed academically and beyond.**

## Our Vision

Through a commitment to strong partnerships, active collaboration, outstanding leadership, exceptional teaching and an exciting and engaging curriculum offer, our schools will ignite the spark of curiosity and grow the flame of learning and achievement.

Providing a holistic educational experience builds character, promotes independence and inspires confidence, we will encourage every pupil to have a voice. develop skills, knowledge and resilience and be the very best version of themselves.



# Our SEND Commitments

## Our priorities

- ✓ To model and promote inclusion of all pupils irrespective of their differences and challenges.
- ✓ To create a culture of belonging based on a trauma-informed approach.
- ✓ To encourage children to develop skills to communicate effectively, with confidence to express themselves.
- ✓ To promote a total communication approach to ensure that all pupils can communicate in the most accessible way to them.
- ✓ To provide a language rich environment.
- ✓ To Equip all of our children with the skills to regulate their own emotions, form positive peer relationship and develop strategies to manage anxiety.
- ✓ To teach our children to take responsibility for their own actions and choices, manage failure and put things right through a restorative approach.
- ✓ To support children in developing the skills to communicate effectively and with confidence, to express themselves and use language to resolve conflict.



## Our approach to SEND

### Identification and assessment of pupils with SEND

At Illuminate Minds Trust we monitor the progress of all pupils 3 times a year. We use a range of assessments with all pupils at identified points. eg Reception baseline assessment, Y1 phonics screening, speech link, language link, dyslexia screener, visual stress test and end of KS1 and KS2 national testing. This is alongside continuous assessment by class teachers regarding the progress of their pupils.



Where progress is not sufficient, even if a special educational need has not been identified, we put in place extra support to enable the pupil to catch up.

At Illuminate Minds Trust we are experienced in using the following assessment tools such as Language Link, Speech Link, Visual stress tests, Dyslexia screening tools, SDQ, Boxall profiles.

In addition, we have access to external advisors and practitioners who are able to use an extensive range of assessment tools, these include an Educational Psychologist, Specialist Speech Therapy Service, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, school nurses, Sensory impairment teams - HI and VI advisory team and the ASD advisory team.



We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used. A SEND passport will be implemented and this passport will be shared with the parents, guardians and 'Team around the child' to provide a consistent approach.

Oracy and language development are embedded in our Trust curriculum offer and from the outset we encourage learning which is active, experiential and multi-sensory.

# SEN Support

At Illuminate Minds Trust we understand that an important feature of the schools within the trust is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching for instance PSHE lessons, circle time and assemblies, as well as indirectly with each conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day. This is embedded within our Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we can provide the following: access to Draw and Talk therapy sessions, learning mentor time, Dog mentor sessions, external referral to MHST, CHEWS or CAMHS, a dedicated safe space to use when upset or agitated, personalised Five-point scale and access to the class regulation station.

For some families that feel that they need additional parental support, we may refer or sign post the family to external services such as, Family Lives, Family Well Being, Living with Autism, Bexley Voice, SNAP, Young Carers (see Bexley Local Offer).



## Our approach to CPD

Illuminate Minds Trust offers an excellent professional development package to develop staff as experts in their areas of strength, we are committed to developing the next generation of leaders, teachers and support staff with a consistent and informed focus on SEN.

Our annual calendar of whole school training includes a minimum of SEND training for all staff at least once every half term with additional training through twilight sessions and INSET Days.



**We are using our apprenticeship levy to ensure that our support staff gain Level 3 accreditation in SEND.**

All staff as part of our universal offer of SEND training have accessed training in the following areas:

- Team Teach Level 1 training (managing behaviour / de-escalation / positive handling)
- Relationships and behaviour training with a focus on restorative justice
- Restorative language and approaches (SALUS)
- Introduction to the principles of nurture
- Trauma-informed practices
- Assess plan do review cycle on EduKey
- Implementation of the Quality First Teaching Bexley toolkit
- Supporting Speech and Language difficulties
- Precision teaching
- Autism in the classroom
- Self regulation and de-escalation
- Sensory trail training
- Use of visuals including Widgit
- Comic strip conversations and social stories
- Deaf Awareness

# Our approach to CPD

## Our specialist SEN training

We also provide the following enhanced and specialist training to members of our SEN support teams across the Trust:

- BSL level 1
- [Draw and Talk](#)
- Therapeutic play
- [Makaton](#)
- PECS
- [Chatterbox](#)
- BLAST
- [Lego Therapy](#)
- Chatty champions
- [Lego therapy](#)
- Jump Ahead
- [Sensory Circuits](#)
- The use of sensory trails
- [Precision teaching](#)
- Dog mentor training
- [Delivering care plans](#)
- Elkan - Speech and Language Support Assistant accreditation
- [ELSA](#)
- Principles of Nurture



## Our approach to Mental health and wellbeing

As a Trust, we are keen to demonstrate that non-exclusion and a strategic approach to SEND, particularly in relation to SEMH pupils, is possible. Our intention is to continue to explore best practice models which enable all classrooms to be “specialist classrooms” where all pupils are included in our wider community. We recognise that the needs of pupils with SEMH may be challenging but have made it our priority to both recruit staff with the necessary skills and experience and to invest in staff training and the upskilling of our staff team. We have modelled our approach on “The Difference”, a charity which was established to bridge the gap between specialist, alternative provision and mainstream schools in order to address the social injustice created by permanent exclusion.

Our approach, like that of The Difference, is founded on the creation of specialist senior school leaders who lead a strategic inclusive culture and ensure that all staff in the school are equipped with the knowledge and skills to work with pupils with challenging behaviour, emotional dysregulation, anxiety, trauma and mental health needs.



# Our approach to SEND

Within our Trust we are able to make provision for all special educational needs that do not require an Education, Health and Care Plan, for instance Dyslexia; Dyspraxia; Speech and language needs; Sensory Impairments; Autism; and ADHD.

If there are other special educational needs, with which the trust is less familiar, we may be able to access specific training and advice in order that these needs can be met.



Oracy and language development are embedded in our Trust curriculum offer and from the outset we encourage learning which is active, experiential and multi-sensory.

## Our Specialist Resource Provision

Our Trust is very proud of our SRP and the impact that this has had on our school and its culture.

The Pelham SRP is not an “add-on”. As with all of our pupils, the SRP children belong within our school. The SRP contributes to the overall characteristics of the organisation. Additionally, the school is part of the Illuminate Minds Trust which promotes inclusion through its ethos of belonging and emphasis on positive relationships.

Illuminate Minds Trust puts children at the heart of every decision, ensures they feel safe and secure because they belong and delivers its ambition for “Excellence Every Day” through a strategic approach to SEND which is centred around the upskilling of staff to meet the needs of all children.

Total Communication approach in that communication is adapted appropriately for each child and immerses children in language through different platforms. This includes:

- oral/aural,
- signing,
- spoken and written English,
- lip reading,
- British Sign Language,
- Signed English,
- Signed Supported English,
- finger-spelling,
- natural gesture and body language / facial expressions,
- pictures or symbols (PECS)
- Makaton.
- Communication boards.
- Speech generating devices.
- Social Stories.
- Mime.
- Image generation / drawing.



# Our SRP



Specialist support may take the form of individualised work, group activities, reverse inclusion, targeted work towards EHC Plan outcomes, listening skills, audiology maintenance, pre or post teaching, speech and language work, etc. Children use hearing aids or cochlear implants as well as FM systems to aid the development of their auditory/listening skills.

Our emphasis is on social interaction and removing the barriers to communication through a combination of relationship building and total communication. No child is isolated or without a peer group. Children who are happy are children who are in the right place to learn because they can thrive.



Our commitment to inclusion and the offer of a peer group for all our children has led to the decision being made that British Sign Language (BSL) should become our modern foreign language offer. At Pelham BSL is taught to all pupils weekly from Year 3 with taster sessions delivered earlier in the school. Our ambition is that our Year 6 pupils achieve Level 1 BSL accreditation before they leave for secondary school.

## Our Approach to Relationships and behaviour

Our focus on a relationship-based approach with all staff trained in trauma-informed practices is key to the way in which we support children with social and emotional regulation. This is then put into practice through our development of our staff as **“Emotionally Available Adults”**.

Our staff adhere to our agreed approach to relationships and behaviour which is based on a trauma-informed model underpinned by the language and associated systems of restoration. This is captured in the key words which are displayed and used in all of our classroom settings:

READY

RESPECT

REFLECT

SAFE



REGULATED

RELATE

REPAIR

PROTECT



Symbols, visual cues, the 5-point scale and social stories are standard in all of our classrooms.

# Our Approach to Relationships and Behaviour



Children and adults are encouraged to put things right together. All members of staff are trained in the key principles of Restorative Practices (RP). We understand the importance of using positive language, modelling behaviour and taking time to develop meaningful relationships with colleagues and pupils, ensuring that we always maintain “positive regard” for every child in our care. When positive relationships are developed and connections are formed, individuals are less likely to cause harm to others or choose to damage relationships because they recognise and appreciate the value of relationships and each other.

Everyone in our schools understands that they have a responsibility to support the growth and maintenance of positive relationships and that there will be times when relationships rupture but that we all have a duty to help repair these. Our strategy for behaviour is blended with our valuing of strong relationships which is the foundation on which our policy is built. Adults know that behaviour is a means of communication and that poor behaviour is as a result of an unmet need. The role of adults in our organisations is to create a culture where we all work together in a positive and productive way to support the emotional needs of our children and nurture positive behaviour.

For children to be ready to learn and engage in positive relationships with adults, they have to feel they belong. This is a key reason why we will make every endeavour to avoid permanent exclusion as this is in opposition to our culture of positive relationships and belonging. We will look for the purpose of the behaviour and aim to intervene early and address underlying needs.

## Our Pupil passports

SEN provision is recorded on SEND passports on Edukey. This includes interventions, adaptations and strategies. SEN passports and learning plans with SMART targets are online and accessible by staff and parents/ carers. They are updated at the end of each term and shared at parent teacher consultations.

## Our Pupils

### Our Pupils Commitment

**Our pupils** will be equipped with the beliefs and attributes to develop a personal moral compass which supports them in making good choices, understanding right from wrong and showing respect and consideration to others. Reaching for the stars, dreaming big and always happy and bright, our pupils will make a positive impact on society and leave our schools well rounded, thoughtful individuals who work hard and want to achieve their best.



# Our commitment to Parents and Carers

## Our Staff Commitment

Our staff will light the fire of ambition and create a safe, stimulating educational environment where talents grow and pupils thrive, developing a love of learning which will sustain them throughout their lives whereby everyone in our school communities gets better and better every day and in every way.



## Parents/ carers

Our trust believes that communication is key, parents are offered termly SEN surgeries to discuss their children’s SEN provision. Passports and learning plans are updated accordingly with parents and children’s views at the forefront. Parents can access these at any time. We offer termly SEN Coffee mornings and regularly signpost to external support services too. In addition to this, we offer an open door policy, whereby teachers and SEN staff are easily accessible.

## Our Trust Commitment

Our Trust will strive to deliver “**Excellence Every Day**” through a holistic curriculum offer, a “no excuses” culture and a firm commitment to ensure that all pupils access learning and experience without limits. Our schools will beyond all else ensure that children

and young people are at the heart of our communities, all we do and all decisions we make. Brave and purposeful, open to new ideas and with a willingness to innovate, our schools are preparing the citizens of the future and contributing to the creation of a new society.

## Our SEND offer

The Trust offers the following specialist staff

- Experienced Senior Leaders who prioritise SEND
- An experienced Trust SENCo with previous successful management of a large specialist resource provision in Kent
- Senior leaders with significant prior leadership experience in the running of KS1-4 alternative provision including respite places and outreach / reintegration services
- Senior leaders with significant prior leadership experience in leading Special Schools
- Qualified Nurture staff accredited through Nurture Group UK / experienced and accredited restorative justice facilitator
- A Level 3 Forest School accredited lead.
- ELSA accredited Higher Level Teaching Assistant.
- ELKAN qualified Speech and Language Support Assistant.
- SEND Learning Support Assistant (specialism: Communication and Interaction - PECS and Makaton accredited).
- Two “Team Teach” accredited tutors work within our trust and are part of the senior leadership team.



# Our SEND offer



The Trust offers the following specialist staff:



The Trust has commissioned its own highly experienced Educational Psychologist.

The Trust currently accesses equivalent of three days per week of an Oxleas Speech and Language Therapist.

We have a team of specialist support assistants who are able to offer a menu of interventions including Draw and Talk, Lego Therapy, ELSA and Sensory Circuits as well as adapted Phonics interventions on either a 1:1 or small group basis.

There are a number of staff within the schools who are trained in British Sign Language (BSL) and all staff have training in Deaf Awareness as part of their induction

## Illuminate Minds SEN non negotiables

A fully inclusive classroom should have the following:

- ✓ Five point scale
- ✓ Visual timetable
- ✓ Traffic light cards
- ✓ 'Catch me' reward charts
- ✓ Now/next board
- ✓ Visual prompts (widget)
- ✓ Ear defenders
- ✓ Wobble cushions
- ✓ Access to Sensory trail



# Our SEND offer

## Illuminate Minds SEN non negotiables

### Regulation stations



- ✓ Each classroom should have regulation station.
- ✓ This should be clearly labelled and easily accessible.



### Regulation stations include:

- Visual prompts and strategies
- 5 finger breathing card
- 5 things you can see, hear...
- Five-point scale Restorative question prompts.
- Timer
- Ear defenders
- Range of fidget toys
- Range of fabric swatches
- Squishy
- Bubbles
- Tent/Tepee (optional)

## “Provision not people”



We understand that children with the highest level of need require staff who have the knowledge and experience to deliver the appropriate adaptations and interventions. to meet needs. We therefore only use specialist qualified staff who have the training and expertise.



**Illuminate Minds Trust   Pelham Road   Bexleyheath   DA7 4HL**

**T: 0208 303 6556   E: [office@illuminateminds.org](mailto:office@illuminateminds.org)**

**W: [www.illuminateminds.org](http://www.illuminateminds.org)**