Oakley School

Skills for Life and Independence

SEN Information Report 2025

Date reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

Appendices: None

Introduction

At Oakley School we put pupils' learning and wellbeing at the heart of all we do and constantly analyse, reflect and seek ways to improve our provision in order that we give every child and young person in our care the best possible options and life opportunities, whilst they are with us, when they leave and beyond. Oakley School aims to encourage and enable all our children and young people to gain skills for life and independence.

To do this we:

- Promote the highest standards of teaching and learning in a caring, stimulating and orderly environment to engage our children and young people in learning; encourage and enthuse them, and thus enable everyone to achieve the best that they can and become as independent, skilled and confident as possible.

- Promote the enjoyment of learning and support progress, successes and achievements of all pupils.

- Create an inclusive ethos in which pupils develop independence, learn to value themselves, others and their environment and prepare for adult life and citizenship by working with others.

- Support all members of the school community to enable them to communicate and interact effectively, be confident, motivated to succeed and develop life and independence skills.

- Work in partnership with all families and organisations in the community to provide a high quality service that is committed to safeguarding children and young people that will have positive, sustainable impact for individuals and partner organisations locally, regionally and, where possible, nationally and internationally.

1: What kind of Special Education Needs does Oakley School address?

Oakley School is the Tunbridge Wells district co-educational, Special School for day pupils, aged from 4 to 19 years, all of whom have profound, severe and complex needs.

2: How does Oakley School know if children or young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special education needs?

As a maintained Special School our admissions are managed by Kent Local Authority and an Education, Health and Care Plan is a condition of entry to the school. Further information can be found on the Kent County Council website.

The exact nature of each child's needs will have been identified in advance of attendance at the school as part of the assessments associated with the admissions process. In addition to this upon entry to the

school, every child is assessed using the school's own assessment. This enables us to be able to make accurate decisions with regard to each individual child's developmental priorities.

We also work closely with a team of NHS Speech and Language, Physio/Occupational Therapists and school nursing, who are able to advise and support the school in identifying and addressing any particular needs in these areas and therapeutic/health approaches are embedded into the curriculum.

3: How does Oakley School match the curriculum to its children's and young people's needs?

Our pupils access our Creative Curriculum. This is characterised by an ethos of high expectations evidenced through additional provisions such as day and residential trips, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and accreditation. The Creative Curriculum is personalised to individual pupils' needs and their learning will be differentiated to enable them to make progress.

- The Creative Curriculum enables pupils to recognise and understand the links between learning in different Curriculum areas.
- Learning is focussed on being relevant, meaningful and fun.
- Technology is used, where appropriate to engage pupils and support access to learning. The school has full wi-fi coverage, with Interactive Smart Boards in all classes and access to a host of Ipads and laptops to meet all abilities and needs.

Pupils are grouped in three Learning Pathways according to their learning needs and learning styles. This ensures that they receive the greatest challenge and provides for an appropriate peer group. (Engage, Explore and Discover)

Pupils who are in Phase 4 also follow an accreditation offer which is appropriate for their ability, this includes following nationally recognised qualifications. Pupils' needs drive the accreditation they may follow.

The quality of teaching and learning, curriculum, lesson planning and progress are monitored by the Leadership Team.

Pupils are continually assessed to ensure their needs are being met and are given the opportunity to make excellent progress.

Individual pathways are followed, planned by school staff using their knowledge of the pupils in their class—pupils all have varying needs which are met within our small, highly staffed classes.

All staff have experience and expertise in the area of special educational needs and can support pupils in all areas of the curriculum, including social & communication skills, pupils to regulate their behaviour and supporting sensory and health needs.

Learning activities are tailored throughout each class in school according to cognitive ability, social and sensory/physical needs. Staff may work in small groups or individually with pupils to maximise learning outcomes.

The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance and the National Curriculum in a creative way and at a level that allows access for all pupils.

The school offers a wide range of opportunities including dance, soft play, sensory room , work experience, out of school visits and residentials.

Pupils have varying therapy needs. At Oakley we work closely with our therapists to ensure that the pupils' holistic development needs are met.

4: How does Oakley School evaluate its effectiveness and review Pupils' progress?

We work hard at Oakley, to ensure that we are a highly reflective and analytical school, with a culture of continuous improvement, striving towards excellence. In order to help achieve this we set individual targets for every child which are monitored on a regular basis. These are based on the evidence of thorough assessment and, where required, advice from the Assistant Head for Curriculum and Pupil Progress, Phase Leaders, the Senior Leadership team and from other professionals. Pupils' work, marking and feedback is reviewed regularly by the Extended Leadership Team in their fortnightly meetings.

Our Phase Leadership structure monitors the effectiveness of the delivery of specific lessons and additional lesson observations from the Senior Leadership Team. Information regarding how successful we have been in enabling all of our pupils to make progress is communicated to the pupils and their families, all staff and the Governing Body, as well as informing the School Improvement Plan. In addition, we have a robust internal meeting structure, termly data reports shared with the Governing Body and reports and families' evenings to discuss pupil progress, as well as Annual Review meetings.

5: How does Oakley School communicate progress and work in partnership with families?

We aim to work in close collaboration with families, the most effective progress will be made by children where home and school are working together.

We offer a variety of methods of daily communication between home and school e.g. Class Dojo, e-mails, telephone calls, meetings, Home/school contact books, which allow school and families to share essential information. Class Dojo is a secure, online journal which enables Class Teachers to share a child's progress with families, using photographs and videos.

In addition to End of Year Progress Reports, we hold two families' evenings during the year and there is also the EHCP Annual Review meetings where we can discuss progress in more detail and agree the education plan for the forthcoming year. In the first term of the academic year we invite families in to 'Meet the Teacher' and we also offer Stay & Play and Share & Learn afternoons for families to come in and join their child's class for an afternoon.

The Annual Family Questionnaire provides families with an opportunity to comment on the school.

The Friends of Oakley School is an active PTA forum supporting several events a year for families and families to come into school and socialise.

On a more general basis, we have a well-developed website where we post a wide range of information about the school, including weekly newsletters, important dates and information. We also have a school Facebook page where we share good news stories, successes and news updates in a less formal format.

If there are any concerns with regards to the education we are offering or any other aspect of school life, then we would encourage families to contact the Class Teacher in the first instance, but if this is not appropriate then members of the Leadership Team are always available for arranged appointments.

6: What does Oakley School offer to support the overall wellbeing of its pupils?

'Work hard, be kind, have fun, stay safe' is the ethos we promote with our pupils. We have a very strong culture of mutual respect and respect for the wider school environment and have well developed systems in place to support pupils who are experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

All leaders are responsible for curriculum, pupil wellbeing, and engagement within the leadership structure, supporting the implementation of school values, ethos, practices, and policies.

We are committed to safeguarding and have robust systems and protocols in place to monitor the well-being of each pupil. All staff receive regular safeguarding training and are fully aware of procedures.

Health and Safety is closely monitored with Risk Assessments undertaken for any and all potentially hazardous activities. The need for Risk Assessments is also built into all curriculum policies and the daily running of the school including off-site activities.

We are committed to multi-agency working to ensure that the needs of the whole child are met.

Some pupils have a Personal Care Plan (PCP) which identifies their care needs including personal care needs and the administration of medication when required. It also identifies emergency procedures to be followed, where appropriate.

Pupil voice is encouraged in all areas of the school through regular meetings of the Student Council.

Pupils contribute to the annual review of their EHCP through the completion of the Section A and attend reviews. Where possible pupils know their targets and can describe their next steps of learning to achieve those targets.

Classes are small and the staff to pupil ration is high, staff therefore know individual pupils very well, they build strong working relationships with pupils which supports the delivery of focussed support in areas such as PSED, SMSC and Relationship & Sex Education.

We work closely with families as this is the best way to support the pupil and understand how best to meet their over-all well-being.

Where appropriate, individual Positive Behaviour Support Plans (PBSPs) are in place for pupils who require specific approaches in meeting their needs.

We also have an embedded Thrive approach - a way of working with children that helps to develop their social and emotional well-being, enabling them to engage with life and learning.

7: What expertise is Oakley School able to offer?

All staff have ongoing specialist training and development relating to SEND.

We liaise closely with other agencies who work collaboratively with school staff in meeting the wider range of pupils' needs including social workers, respite providers, therapists, medical staff etc

The school is a member of KSENT (Kent Special Educational Needs Trust) and collaborates across all levels and areas of the organisation to share expertise and best practice.

The school is also a member of the West Kent Independent State Schools Partnership (ISSP), working together, to create projects that will not only benefit pupils, but also enable our teachers to extend their professional development.

Our staff team share their expertise with local special/mainstream school through partnership working, inclusion and training.

The Governing Body has a wealth of experience and knowledge; education, community, business, parenting which is shared through the governor link programme.

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

All of our staff attend the New Staff Induction Programme and New Teacher Induction Programme as part of their induction, followed by ongoing specialist training and development opportunities throughout the year, both formally and informally.

Many support staff have an NVQ level 3 or equivalent qualification or will be offered the support to gain a relevant qualification. The school support staff up to Masters level CPD.

Both teachers and support staff have a programme of training (including 5 INSET days) which keeps them up to date with the specialist skills necessary for working with children with special educational needs.

The school provides training for internal and external professionals (through Outreach) and families in Behaviour and Communication, Understanding Autism, MAKATON etc and have several staff who are licensed to deliver training to staff.

Teaching staff are trained in a variety of teaching strategies to meet pupils' needs.

9: How does Oakley School include children and young people in activities beyond the classroom?

Both Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells sites offer Lunch Clubs and After School Clubs which help our pupils to enjoy additional social situations. Pupils are engaged in a variety of activities, including cookery, art and craft activities, trips to such events as the pantomime and meals out. Visits appropriate to the age group are also made to farms, National Trust properties, historical buildings. Clubs are accessible to all pupils.

We have established links with Early Help Service, Social Care and Kent Assistive Technology Service.

Off-site visits are designed to be educational and provide a wide range of experiences for our pupils to promote independence of our pupils and develop wider opportunities.

Our pupils carry out work experience from Phase 3.

We are a Forest School and therefore, learning outside the classroom and in the school's grounds is promoted for all age groups. Outside play during breaks is supervised by class staff. All pupils are encouraged to be active and join in with playground games and enrichment activities. We have a Phase 1 Sensory outdoor play area, Discovery Zone Play Area, a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), a pirate ship and trim trail for pupils on the Tunbridge Wells site to use. We have an outside gym and an allotment for our Phase 4 students to access. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards and all opportunities the school have.

Pupils have the opportunity to participate in residential trips, including local, national and European destinations (France, Skiing in Italy) For more information please visit our website.

10. How will Oakley school resources, equipment and facilities be secured for my child?

Oakley School is committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to the equipment and facilities they need to fully participate in school life. The school works closely with external agencies, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and the local authority, to assess and identify the specific needs of each pupil.

Equipment such as specialist seating, communication aids, sensory resources, and mobility aids are provided as required, following professional assessment. Funding for such equipment is secured through the school's delegated SEN budget, applications for additional funding from the local authority, and, where appropriate, charitable grants.

The school's facilities are regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure accessibility, including the provision of accessible toilets, ramps, hoists, and sensory rooms. Staff receive training in the use of specialist equipment to ensure safe and effective support for pupils.

11. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?

The Governing Body of Oakley School is committed to working in partnership with families. If a parent or carer has a concern or complaint regarding the provision for their child's special educational needs, they are encouraged to discuss this initially with the Class Teacher or Headteacher.

If the issue is not resolved, the school's Complaints Policy should be followed, which is available on the school website or from the school office. The policy outlines the formal process for raising concerns, including escalation to the Headteacher and, if necessary, the Governing Body. The school aims to resolve all complaints promptly and fairly, ensuring that the views of parents and carers are listened to and acted upon.

12. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEN, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at your Kent County County's Local Offer: About the SEND local offer - Kent County Council

Families can access a range of support services for advice and guidance regarding special educational needs, including:

- **Information, Advice and Support Kent (IASK):**
  Website: https://www.iask.org.uk
  Email: iask@kent.gov.uk
  Telephone: 03000 41 3000
- **Kent Parent Carer Forum:**
  Website: https://www.kentpact.org.uk
  Email: info@kentpact.org.uk
- **SEND Information Hub (Kent County Council):**
  Website: https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs

These services offer impartial advice, support with EHCP processes, and information about local provision.

National charities that offer information and support to families of children with SEN are:

IPSEA
SEND family support
NSPCC
Family Action
Special Needs Jungle

13. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings, or in preparing for adulthood?

Supporting our young people to discover what they would like to do when they are older is part of how we support pupils at Oakley for their next steps after school. For more information please read our Futures & Destinations (Careers) Policy

We start this from Phase 1 with role play and identifying who helps us and continue this work through to Phase 4. We work with pupils and their families to support and shape future & destination choices.

Oakley School places a strong emphasis on supporting pupils through key transitions, whether moving between classes, key stages, or preparing for adulthood and independent living. Transition planning is personalised and may include additional visits, social stories, and meetings with new staff.

For pupils moving on from Oakley School, the school works closely with families, further education providers, and external agencies to ensure a smooth transition. Preparation for adulthood is embedded in the curriculum, focusing on independence, life skills, and employability.