

# Education, Therapy and Care – Statement of Purpose

West Heath School



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Copies of this statement is available on the School Website –

<http://www.westheathschool.com/policies-and-procedures>

or as a hard copy on request from the School Office.

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## Introduction

We are a Residential Independent SEN School, based in Sevenoaks, Kent with a successful history of "Rebuilding Lives through Education".

We are designated to educate up to 150 students aged 10-20 years with a range of additional needs within the Social Emotional and Mental Health designation. Our boarding provision caters for students during the week within term time.

## Charitable Objectives

Our Charitable Status (Charity Number 1069677), helps us to make sure funding is directed wholly to our students educational, therapeutic and care needs, along with the facilities they use at school. This helps us to realise our Charitable Objectives:

- *To provide education for children and young people, and in particular those whose mainstream education has broken down, for example, due to trauma, needing expert help to develop their physical, mental, spiritual and moral capabilities. The hope is that all students may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.*
- *To establish research into education of children with special educational needs and to disseminate the results of such research.*
- *To provide training for teachers and other professionals working in the field of education of children with special educational needs.*

The school takes its responsibility seriously to support professionals who are educating students with additional educational needs (AEN) and has established an Outreach Service to realise, more fully, part of our charitable objectives and respond to Lady Lenehan's review (Good Intentions, Good Enough? - 2017).

## Our Vision & Our Mission

Being at the forefront of research and developments with our sector helps West Heath School to realise its "Vision and Mission".

### ***Our Vision***

"Rebuilding Lives through Education"

### ***Our Mission Statement***

"To support and empower every member of our community in the process of developing the capacity to accept and exercise responsibility; to demonstrate respect for themselves and others; to build and maintain relationships based on trust, respect and integrity; and to be courageous enough to continue to build the resilience necessary to flourish."

We believe our educational provision, partnered with the therapeutic and care support in the context of each student's needs, is a powerful combination of support that enables our students to progress, achieve and be prepared for adult life.

## Values

We work with our students whilst being mindful of and committed to our core values.

### Our Values

- | **Respect** – of ourselves and those around us, showing unconditional positive regard to opposing views and beliefs of others.
- | **Responsibility** – to understand our role and the role of others, to self-reflect and aspire to be the best we can.
- | **Relationships**- to promote and participate in healthy, supportive relationships with students, staff and all of those in the West Heath School community.
- | **Resilience** - the quality of being able to deal with the ups and downs of life, and is based on self-esteem. Resilience is a key factor in protecting and promoting good mental health.

We embed our values in our approach.

The following description of how we provide Education, Therapy and Care gives an outline of what we do and how we work to 'rebuild lives through education'.

## Education

At West Heath School we aim to provide every opportunity to develop the full potential of every student. We value all our students and we encourage them to integrate with their peers both socially and academically.

West Heath School has a key responsibility for developing students who are successful learners and for providing the highest possible quality of teaching and learning experiences. We want our students to enjoy, improve and excel in their learning. However, we also strive to improve their ability to become responsible and productive members of society, who have developed life skills across the curriculum and are prepared for adulthood. At the heart of the West Heath curriculum is the ethos of the 4Rs and its aim is to ensure students are happy, healthy and able to form and maintain positive relationships. The 4Rs are mapped into all lessons, the lesson observation structure and promoted in all areas of school life: main school, Heart and the Residential provision.

It is important to note that the mainstream model did not work for the vast majority of our students. West Heath School should look and feel different from the schools that our students have previously experienced, and we want them to associate it with feeling safe, secure and inspired. This is in part achieved through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We have therapeutic expertise in the school that it is to our advantage to listen to and implement into lessons. Though some therapeutic exercises may reduce lesson time, if the student does not have a mindset that is ready to learn then they will not be able to access or remember the lesson content. Students who have experienced trauma, or have additional learning needs, often arrive to lessons in flight or fight mode, which means that they are working in the brain stem, their nervous system is on high alert and the prefrontal cortex will not work effectively. Beginning lessons with Zones of Regulation and West Heath Connect Task helps to calm students' nervous systems and helps them to self-regulate and access the learning. No matter how well students achieve academically, if they are unable to identify and regulate their emotions then they will not be able to be happy or to thrive in the world outside of school.

## The Curriculum

West Heath School's curriculum vision is:

'To create an inspiring, trauma-informed curriculum that balances the need for students to achieve academically and improve their social, emotional and mental health. To ensure all teachers have high expectations and that students receive a diverse range of pathway options that capture their interest and empower them to thrive in life beyond the school. The values of the 4Rs are woven into the fabric of our unique Personal Development curriculum, which includes PSHE, Self-Science, Social Skills and oracy lessons, all of which help to support West Heath's mission statement to 'Rebuild Lives through Education'.

We provide a thorough and enriching curriculum across the key stages focusing on attainment and engagement to learning. Our key stages are arranged into Lower, Middle and Upper School as follows:

- Lower School – year 5 to 8 (KS2 & KS3)
- Middle School – year 9 to 10 (KS3 & KS4)
- Upper School – year 11 to Sixth Form (KS4 & KS5)

Our students follow a programme of study that typically includes (this programme is subject to change): English, Maths, Science, Humanities, ICT, Art, Performing Arts, PE, Catering, Life Skills and Self-Science.

Opportunities exist to take part in onsite and offsite enrichment activities e.g., animal care, team and confidence building, cycling, horse riding, water sports, equine therapy, fishing and bush craft.

To increase the capital culture of our students we offer a vast range of educational visits, off-site activities and outdoor learning opportunities throughout the year. External professionals are invited onsite to give workshops or assemblies to enrich the learning of our students.

### Personal Development across the Curriculum

West Heath School views Personal Development as an integral part of the curriculum and at the heart of all students' learning. As an SEMH School, all our students are more vulnerable to all safeguarding threats and are less likely to thrive socioeconomically than their neuro-typical peers. West Heath School is committed to identifying opportunities across the curriculum to celebrate skills and the personal achievements of students, whether academic skills or social skills or practical skills, and whether these are in the classroom, in the Residential provision, or at home. Due to this, the Head of Curriculum and the Head of Personal Development are currently working together to create a holistic assessment framework to compliment the West Heath Step Criteria and are seeking opportunities to develop the Evidence for Learning framework used in the Residential provision to capture students' successes and talents across all areas of the school. The use of Satchel One will also support this approach to learning as students can be awarded badges for skills that go beyond the classroom such as the WH Citizen badge, Personal Safety badge and Self-Care and Personal Hygiene Badges.

Students in KS2 and 3 study up to 13 lessons and students in KS4 study up to 11 lessons in these areas. By structuring the curriculum around these core skills, West Heath School is actively working to 'Rebuild Lives through Education'.

Life Skills is taught x 2 a week at West Heath for all KS2, 3 and 4 students; the SoWs are informed by the PSHE Association and the lessons focus on decision-making, the ability to communicate and collaborate, along with personal and social responsibilities that contribute to good citizenship – all essential skills for success in the 21st century, as well as for healthy societies and for successful and employable individuals.

Self-Science is a bespoke subject unique to West Heath that has been informed by the Speech

and Language Therapists; it is taught x2 a week for KS2, 3 and 4 students and is designed to ensure students are able to manage their mental health and wellbeing as well as develop their social skills. The vast majority of our students have complex backgrounds, and often experience co-morbid diagnoses which can make it extremely hard for them to make sense of the world and to have a genuine sense of their capacity to positively influence events in their lives and form positive relationships with others. As such, Self-Science is a crucial mechanism for supporting them to understand themselves and what makes them who they are, both in terms of their neuropsychology and how the brain works, both also how they self-heal, regulate and understand their own trauma.

Middle School students also receive communication and social skills lessons, which are supported by the School's play therapists. These sessions are to encourage students to develop their social skills and form positive relationships. These lessons are focused around playing board games, but also encourage students to develop empathy, turn-taking and problem-solving skills, which will help our students to develop socially and flourish in the world outside of school.

## **The Curriculum and Safeguarding**

Issues of race, diversity, prejudice and equality are discussed, explored in all lessons and mapped across the KS2, 3 and 4 curriculum. These will ensure that students are able to explore their ideas and voice their opinions on these topics. Students will also complete Votes for School during personal development lessons which gives students the chance to speak out on issues that matter to them, improving oracy, confidence and critical thinking and covering Prevent, British Values and the SMSC curriculum.

Thematic days, such as Anti-Bullying Week and Mental Health Awareness Day and cultural events such as Ramadan and Eid, are celebrated and embedded throughout the school calendar. There is an annual drop down day to celebrate and promote British Values.

## **The Induction Process**

The initial process is very much one of creating stability so students can begin to function and succeed within our setting. Where possible we link a student's curriculum with their own talents and interests to reduce the worries and concerns a young person may have about schooling and work with their strengths.

This in turn leads us to create bespoke timetables for individual students which allows them to gain qualifications in subject areas they are engaged with. In turn this equips them for Sixth Form and beyond, developing career paths alongside qualifications.

Students are supported to start their placement with us by either our:

- Induction team
- Primary or Year 5/6 team
- Sixth Form team
- HEART team

Each student is given time (usually 4 weeks) to get used to the school. It is an important time for staff to learn about the new students and for the student to learn about the school, starting to build trust with staff.

## **Key Stage 2 & 3**

We aim to ensure a smooth transition from KS2 to KS3, familiarising our students at an early stage with our school ethos. By creating a positive atmosphere and culture in which everyone in the

school community can develop and excel, we lay a foundation upon which to build their academic success. For example, to ease the transition from the primary to secondary school site, Year 7 students continue to receive the support of a full-time tutor who teaches the students a range of core subjects in one form room. Students leave this space to complete lessons in Science and the Creative Arts, to both build their independence and get them used to navigating the school site, but they still have the safety of a primary trained teacher and a secure room to have as a base.

Students thrive in a safe, secure and comfortable environment which allows them to explore their talents and achieve their aspirations.

The broad curriculum in Key Stage 2 and 3 has a particular focus on developing the skills needed to support learning in Key Stage 4, future employment and independent living. We work in partnership with families and students to enable every learner to lead a happy, healthy and fulfilling life.

Our teaching and learning support staff are experienced, providing our students with stimulating learning activities and opportunities.

## **How we meet the needs of our Students**

In KS2/3 at West Heath we follow a programme of study whereby we identify the needs of our students by:

- Ensuring that the insights of parents, children and young people inform assessment planning and decision making.
- Knowing precisely where children and young people with SEND are in their learning and development, and planning for their next steps.
- Having high aspirations and setting stretching targets for learners with SEND.
- Putting in place effective interventions individually tailored to needs.
- Tracking progress towards these goals regularly, and reviewing the appropriateness of provision and ensuring that it impacts on progress.

In KS2 and Year 7, the school day begins with sensory circuits, which provide a sequence of activities done repeatedly to provide the students with the right type of sensory input to either calm or stimulate or organise students' thought processes. This helps students to be ready to learn and helps them to form a learning mindset. In Year 8 and above, all lessons begin with a Connection over Cognition task. This is a five to ten-minute activity, which focuses on getting to know the students and forming a relationship with them. This not only promotes the 4Rs, it also helps to calm students' nervous system before the start of the lesson so they are able to access their learning.

## **Personalised Interventions**

- Learners have personalised interventions specifically formulated to take account of unique individual needs and person-centred outcomes. These sessions can be holistic, academic or fitness based, dependent on the needs of the students. For example, holistic sessions such as dog walking or a games session; academic sessions such as literacy and numeracy interventions or they can be fitness-orientated sessions such as bike riding or one-to-one swimming lessons.
- Advice from specialist services (education, social care and health) for individual pupils is implemented by the school and is monitored and reviewed.



- The school works closely with parents and the learner to agree and review interventions and support, and to regularly monitor progress.

## **Pastoral Care**

The pastoral care at West Heath is an expression of the care for the development, wellbeing and progress of students, which is our fundamental concern.

Every member of staff is involved in the pastoral care of students both inside and outside the classroom.

In order that students may widen their experience and find opportunities for social and personal development.

Lower School and KS3 provide activities designed to achieve these goals:

- The Tutor Group structure
- The RSHE programme
- Extra-curricular activities e.g., Team building days
- Careers education and guidance in Year 9
- Educational visits e.g., Theatres, Art Galleries, Museums, Places of Worship
- Sports Competitions with other schools
- Activity Days
- Residential Trips

## **Assemblies**

Assembly is usually held once a week with Lower, Middle or Upper School, as well as whole school assemblies. Assemblies provide the opportunity to strengthen the cultural and moral ethos of the school. Celebration Assemblies are held at the end of each term and Certificates are distributed for attendance, excellent behaviour, academic achievement and overall contribution to the school.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

These activities are varied and together with our wide variety of clubs (some student led) offer many opportunities for education outside the classroom both for the day and residential students.

Students are encouraged to experience new activities including sports, drama, and art.

There are also opportunities to take part in theatrical performances, visiting places of interest and trips.

Fundraising events take place throughout the year and students can stand for the Student Council and put their views forward.

## **Key Stage 4**

KS4 is an exciting time in any child's education. It marks a turning point in students' lives where they discover talents and spend their lessons developing new skills. Students choose 4 option subjects to complement their core studies English, Maths, Science, Life Skills, PE and Self Science.

These 4 courses can be selected from a range of option subjects on offer. These range from academic classroom-based subjects, for example GCSE History and Additional Science to

vocational courses such as NCFE/BTEC Hair and Beauty, Music Technology and Creative Media.

KS4 provides our learners with specialist teaching facilities and experienced staff that often have industry related backgrounds. Our onsite beauty room, professional kitchen, science labs and art studios are just a few of the fantastic learning environments open to our West Heath students.

We are able to create bespoke learning packages for our learners that will engage and inspire them.

Our KS4 students have the opportunity to gain qualifications that are essential for academic progression and are relevant to their future aspirations. We are proud of what our students achieve and of their incredible learning journey they embark on in KS4. At West Heath we promote independent learning and nurture resilient students who are ready to tackle the challenges and rigour of KS5.

## **Pastoral Support**

KS4 can be a challenging and often stressful time for students and their families. It is a time when pupils experience a transition in their academic lives but also in their personal lives. At West Heath School, we pride ourselves on the support and dedication of our form tutors. These tutors provide essential pastoral support for the students and are the bridge between home and school. Our tutors work closely with our team of therapists and teachers, as well as outside agencies to ensure that students are meeting their targets and that each pupil feels happy and supported in school.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities KS4**

Trips and visits are a vital part of the West Heath experience. They are a break from formal learning and provide our students with the necessary experiences to push themselves out of their comfort zones and in so doing, to develop greater resilience.

This is an essential way of promoting mental health with our students. Our West Heath learners find that these trips bond and secure friendships and are an important way for staff to get to know their students.

In Year 10 students partake in a residential trip to Cornwall where they try their hand at surfing, coast steering, and rock climbing. A further residential trip is offered in Yr11 and the students can participate in a range of activities, including zip lining and rock climbing.

These residential trips take place in addition to subject-led trips to art galleries, museums, boat trips, ice-skating, theme parks, ski trips and restaurants.

## **Sixth Form**

In Sixth Form we offer students the opportunity to prepare for life beyond West Heath School, whilst still being mentored and supported by internal staff. Our focus is on offsite learning and building skills of independence and social confidence.

Our predominant approach is designed to achieve inclusion and reintegration back into a mainstream college environment with support. A supported college placement in a college setting, where students are helped to access a course of their choice supported by West Heath staff or, if students are not ready for learning in the college environment.

Students based in colleges are supported by our staff in lessons where needed, as well as during social times. We have our own areas in the colleges where we provide additional learning support, including supported coursework, a bespoke life-skills programme as well as employability skills and additional literacy and numeracy support. Students are encouraged to integrate in the communal areas of the college in order to support social development. This is facilitated and supported by

West Heath staff.

All students are supported and encouraged to spend some of their week offsite, either in a work experience placement or perhaps building confidence towards accessing college full time by spending small amounts of time in the setting. This could include single day visits to work in the college library or just to visit for lunch and a tour.

We believe that students' experiences at college really broaden their aspirations and open doors to new and exciting career opportunities.

Ultimately, we are always striving for Sixth Form students to learn to cope with Further Education in a mainstream setting.

This is to help prepare students for moving on for life after West Heath School and achieving aspirations.

Sixth Form is a healthy balance between academic achievement and students learning to become independent by developing vital life skills such as personal organisation, self-transportation and budget management.

If, however, as is the case for some of our learners, they are not ready to access college provision, then West Heath Schools offers an onsite Laser curriculum.

This course is ideal for students who would benefit from a practical, individualised, coursework-based curriculum. Laser Learning boosts knowledge, skills, and confidence of learners and assessment teams, but the teacher can bespoke the topics around student interest. This not only enables students to receive an academic qualification, it also gives them an additional year at West Heath to build their confidence and social and emotional skills before going to college. This provision acts as a safety net to ensure that all students have a safe place if they are not ready either academically or socially or emotionally to progress to the next stage of their education.

## **Therapy Department**

Therapy at West Heath plays a major part in the social, emotional, mental health, behavioural and physical wellbeing of our students. Between them, the young people who attend West Heath experience a wide variety of challenges that may have impacted negatively on their capacity to engage with education. In order to give them the best chance of being happy and successful in life, we - provide a range of therapeutic support, both within and outside the classroom.

Although not officially designated as a "therapeutic school", our whole approach is underpinned by a 'soft' therapeutic approach which permeates everything from our curriculum to our behaviour management. Whilst many of our students have a specified therapeutic requirement on their Education, Health and Care Plans, most of our students will access our therapeutic department at some time or other during their time with us, whether it be for in-depth counselling, a safe place to off-load, a need to learn to control their anger, help with social skills, difficulties with sensory issues, or just to learn some relaxation techniques before exams. Although numbers obviously vary from year to year, currently over 70% of our students are receiving direct therapeutic support of one kind or another, and a large percentage are receiving more than one. All students also have access to a variety of therapeutic tools in lessons, such as wobble stools, fidget toys, slanted writing slopes and dyslexia friendly fonts on handouts, as well as coloured overlays to help them focus in lessons.

We have well-resourced OT and Play-Therapy rooms, in addition to individual rooms for all therapists to see students.

Therapies available to students include:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
- Mood Management Counselling
- Counselling
- Play Therapy
- Integrative Child Psychotherapy
- Holistic Massage Therapy

Our School Nurse is also part of the Therapy department and all teaching staff receive specialist training run by the therapy team to ensure that this training is shared by the whole school community.

## Therapy Department Management

The overall management of the therapy department is the responsibility of Dr. Iva Roberts, (Clinical Psychologist). Dr. Roberts leads and co-ordinates the work of the therapists supporting and guiding the work of its' component parts to ensure a consistently high quality, specialist therapeutic service.

By acting as a liaison between therapists, SMT, other members of staff, and external agencies (e.g., CAMHS, Local Authorities) Dr. Roberts ensures that therapeutic insights can be more widely understood and applied consistently for the benefit of the individual student.

As well as ongoing informal meetings, the multi-disciplinary therapy team meet formally every week to discuss concerns, provide feedback, and share information on individual student's therapeutic needs.

All referrals for therapy are channelled through Dr. Roberts who will then allocate the student to the most appropriate therapist depending on their needs and availability of therapists. However, therapists reserve the right to make a clinical judgement as to whether a student is capable of engaging in therapy at any time; they also reserve the right to terminate therapy when they feel appropriate. Whilst therapists will endeavour to see a student soon after referral, there may be a waiting list at times; because of this, it should be noted that therapists cannot keep slots open if the student consistently refuses to engage, although every effort will be made to engage with the young person. Therapy is not open-ended, and provision and progress are reviewed at the end of each term.

It should also be noted that our therapists are not registered with the Adoption Support Agency and will therefore not undertake specific adoption counselling.

## Confidentiality

In line with all counselling/therapy provision, a confidentiality statement applies which students are made aware of, before commencing their sessions. This states that whilst counselling/therapy is a confidential process, and therefore parents/carers cannot be told specific details of sessions, there are certain limitations:

1. If a student tells a therapist, or a therapist becomes aware that the student is involved in or planning to commit a crime then the therapist has a duty to inform the relevant authorities

2. Therapists may provide information to certain people and professionals involved with the student regarding attendance
3. If a therapist is worried about a student's safety or the safety of others, then he/she will share this information with the relevant people. Normal safeguarding procedures will be followed if the student is in immediate danger of self-harm/suicidal ideation
4. The therapy staff work as a team. Therapists may consult with other members of the team to provide the best possible care. These consultations are for professional and training purposes.

HEART, our Health, Education, Assessment and Revitalising Therapy department, was redefined in September 2016 in a response to meet an ever-increasing need from Local Authorities to find school placements for youngsters with mental health difficulties.

It now comprises 35 of our most susceptible students, who for one reason or another, there is a greater need for particularly close monitoring and supervision, where extensive access to our therapeutic services may be required, or where a great deal of additional managerial input is required

HEART is run as a "therapeutic school within a school". All staff working in HEART have a NVQ Level 3 in Mental Health and are extremely experienced in working with young people with significant mental health difficulties, some of whom will join us directly from hospital. Whilst our students have every opportunity to achieve academic qualifications, and we get excellent results each year, we recognise that the young person's mental health is our first priority and focus on that until the student is well enough to engage with their education.

At present we offer our HEART students the following:

- Access to a designated suite of rooms that allows them to study in areas where they can feel secure and relaxed. In addition, there are facilities for times when they can access learning in a traditional sense, times when perhaps what is needed is simply somewhere quiet, comfortable, and secure.
- All provision is overseen by the Head of HEART and Therapy, who is a qualified Clinical Psychologist, and who leads communication with other professionals both within and outside of school.
- A Keyworker (please note this is not a 1:1) who is given dedicated time to ensure close and effective liaison between all those involved in the student's care and support, and whose primary task is to become a trusted and secure attachment figure for them. This person is carefully chosen based on the student's personality and interests to ensure that the student's wellbeing remains the top priority. Regular timetabled keyworker sessions provide an opportunity to discuss progress, feelings, or concerns as well as a chance to review targets that underpin the EHCP.
- A HEART Pastoral Manager who, supported by the Assistant HEART Manager, is responsible for the day-to-day operations and smooth running of the department.
- Prompt access to specific therapeutic support as and when necessary (this includes CBT, Psychotherapy, Counselling, Occupational Therapy, Play therapy, Speech & Language therapy, and Holistic Massage therapy).
- All annual reviews, professionals' meetings etc. are attended and chaired by the Head of HEART and Therapy and the young person's Keyworker where possible.

- Access to a fully flexible curriculum which is designed specifically to meet individual needs and interests. This is overseen by the HEART Curriculum Manager, supported by the designated HEART teachers.

In addition to the core subjects and options (which are taught by curriculum teachers usually in HEART), all HEART students can develop a range of life skills.

Our older students have a choice of transferring to our 6th Form if they are ready to attend college; alternatively, we offer BTECs (Levels 2 and 3) in Art/Textiles, Creative Media and ICT on-site.

## **Induction**

In their initial assessment period students are placed in Induction with the primary focus in the beginning being to establish the trusting relationships upon which future success will be built. As the young person feels increasingly secure, they are then supported in making the transition to the main school.

Both during this initial phase, and indeed throughout a young person's time with us, considerable effort is put into working with families and other professionals to ensure provision is co-ordinated and, as far as possible, consistently applied across contexts. Sometimes this may involve simply sharing strategies with others, while occasionally it may involve engaging parents or carers in direct therapeutic work.

The Induction Team will also offer both formal and informal assessments for all new students to ensure they are placed into the most appropriate classes, with specialist teachers who can best meet their particular needs.

## **Residential Provision**

The Residential provision is fully connected to the school's Vision, Mission and Values.

## **Our Purpose**

Our purpose is to support students to make progress with their learning in its widest sense, including academic, personal and social learning. We particularly focus on enabling students to develop their skills for life and independent living skills. The residential experience and environment play an important role with our students learning and development. Being part of a multi-disciplinary team (internal and external), is a pivotal part of how we work and the success we experience with our students

We do not have one theoretical way of working. Instead, we have an eclectic approach which draws on different theoretical models, as we recognise our students' uniqueness and difference. The residential team have ongoing input from our therapists, which informs the approach we take with individual students. What is common, however, is our determination to work with and recognise our students' strengths, alongside challenging and being clear about what behaviours will get in the way of their learning and success in and out of school. This means we are clear about what is acceptable and what is not and have clear boundaries for our students, with clear consequences. That said, we always try and work in a restorative way with our students by promoting positive behaviour/consequences to support the student learning and finding different ways to behave in any given situation. Residential staff are part of a wider multi-disciplinary team that agree strategies and approaches for each student.

We also work hard to create an environment that is nurturing, stimulating and enjoyable for our students. We are aware of the importance of ensuring our students feel safe and have a positive environment to live in, as this is essential for our students to progress and achieve.

## **Promoting British Values**

We encourage our students to understand fundamental British Values. These skills and attitudes will allow them to participate and contribute positively in their communities outside of our boarding environment.

At Residential boarding, values of tolerance and respect permeate all areas of the boarding life. This creates a climate within which our boarding students feel safe and secure and therefore allows them to learn and develop. Boarding students' voice plays an integral part in driving the residential provision forward.

### **We teach boarding students about democracy through:**

- Being involved in democratic processes e.g. weekly house meetings, voting at boarding students council meetings, rewards and incentives
- Asking boarding students to Check in/ check out – discussing issues and forming opinions

### **We Teach Boarding Students About Rule of Law through:**

- School behaviour policy
- Reflecting on behaviour and what lessons are learned after behaviour incidents
- Our Residential Manager delivering anti-crime, anti-gangs, anti-knives, consequences of a criminal record, anti-bullying and sexual harassment talks as extra-curricular activity and boarders' twilight beyond the school day.
- Visits from Kent Police Youth Engagement Officers
- Arranging for magistrates to come in to talk to our boarders as extra-curricular activity beyond the school day

### **We Teach Boarding Students About Individual Liberty through:**

- Understanding responsibility in school in terms of behaviour and learning attitudes
- Our school values of Respect, Responsibility, Relationships and Resilience
- Community links – residential home, school nurse, sexual health clinic nurse
- Restorative practise
- Challenging stereotyping and bias
- Anti-bullying

### **We Teach Boarding Students About Mutual Respect through:**

- Positive relationships are encouraged and modelled
- Anti-bullying
- Consistent key working sessions
- Weekly House Meetings and Boarding Student Council Meeting
- Trips – wider community
- Visitors (e.g., sexual health clinic, Kent Police Youth Engagement Officers, Standard 3 Visitor)
- Check-in, check-out

### **We Teach Boarding Students About Tolerance through:**

- Our boarding students having respect and tolerance for different people and cultures in the residential provision
- When boarding students have disagreements, we encourage them to naturally work through them instead of giving automatic punitive sanctions or instead of fighting and moving on to different friend groups; they learn to resolve disputes and work toward sustaining long-term, positive relationships. This means clique behaviours do not thrive in our boarding provision.
- We want our boarders to be responsible for themselves and their possessions as well as developing character traits like self-reliance and independence.

- As our boarding students share personal stories, cultural insights, and new experiences with each other, they learn to see beyond categories of difference. They learn that their personal character is as meaningful as their background – a deeply important lesson we hope they can take with them after they leave West Heath for years to come.

## **The Boarding Experience**

Residential students stay weekdays in term time for four nights a week (Monday to Thursday) and return home Friday afternoon. The boarding houses are open for students at 3.30pm.

The residential provision allows our students the opportunity to spend quality time with different individuals of a similar age from all walks of life and with a range of experienced adult role models.

They are encouraged to learn from one another, developing their understanding of the impact and consequences of their behaviour on others.

Please see the 'Welcome to Boarding' booklet which describes the residential experience.

## **Student Involvement**

Students are actively encouraged to play a significant part in the planning and running of their boarding house in which they live, taking responsibility for each other's welfare and their environment. This may include developing independent living skills i.e., cleaning their bedrooms, menu planning, budgeting, shopping and cooking. Importantly, students are able to learn how to spend their time productively and responsibly beyond the school day. There is a small boarding student council who meet 6 times per year to discuss current live issues that are important to the boarding community. Their meeting minutes is then shared and channeled to the bigger Student Services Council meeting in the wider school community.

## **Activities**

There are a range of activities for our boarding students to engage in, both on and off the school site every evening. Students are encouraged to undertake activities as part of a group or individually. The boarders have access to the school facilities during the evening including the school gym, swimming pool and tennis courts; there is also a purpose-built Youth Club which has a pool table, PCs, cinema screen, TV and games consoles.

The intention is to ensure that our students remain fit and active so that they can learn as well as possible during the school day. There are both formal and informal activities that our boarding students can join in beyond the school day.

At least once a week, each "house" of boarding students can enjoy a special activity offsite. Off-site activities vary but may include go-karting, tobogganing, cinema, theatre, seaside, indoor trampoline parks, clubs/classes (e.g. scouts, cadets, dance, ceramics etc.). We have also hosted "Graffiti" workshops and bush craft workshops on-site. We are really proud of our residential provision and students who are fortunate enough to access it, really enjoy it and progress very well.

Students are given a £20.00 allowance for activities each week. Students choose which activity they would like to do at their weekly house meeting.

Alongside leisure activities, teaching staff offer after school study sessions for residential students such as music club, cooking club etc.



## Local Community

On a broader level, the local community has a wide range of excellent facilities which students can access beyond the school day such as the local gym, cinema, theatre, leisure centre etc. Students who board with us will have more opportunities to pursue informal, formal and structured leisure or hobby activities and generally have more fun. We encourage the students to take part and involve themselves in offsite opportunities. We would encourage them to utilise and learn new skills by watching and involving themselves with community activities.

## Care Planning

Every boarding student has a care plan, which is written in partnership with the student, professionals involved and parents. The care plans are live documents, reviewed and updated when and if needs change and reviewed in line with all students annual EHCP reviews.

## Staffing

There is a commitment to providing quality training and staff support, appropriate to the needs of both staff and students. Training needs are assessed and suitable courses or in-house training is available. The aim is to keep staff up-to-date with current practice and to help individual enthusiasm for the work to be maintained.

**Principal** - The Principal carries overall responsibility for residential, whilst delegating management to the Head of Care and Safeguarding.

**Head of Care & Safeguarding** – This member of staff is responsible for all aspects of pastoral care, including:

1. Establishment of boarding policy and management principles
2. Promoting and sustaining boarding within the school and beyond
3. Progressing staff training and evaluation
4. Promotion of boarding and the recruitment of students and staff
5. Oversight of the safety, welfare, health and progress of all boarders
6. Liaison with parents, schools and agencies
7. Implementation of policies in force and legal requirements
8. Keeping all records and maintaining administrative systems

## The Care Management Team

The Care Management Team meets formally once per term in order to ensure appropriate monitoring and supervision of the boarding provision. The team consists of the following staff:

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### **The Care Management Team**

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Head of Care and Safeguarding  
Principal  
Deputy Principal  
Lead Trustee  
Head of Finance  
Residential Manager  
X2 Deputy Residential Care Managers

The team ensures effective management of boarding and organisation between the day school, boarding and other parts of the school administration.

Beyond the school day, we aim to achieve a ratio of one adult to every four students and our support workers (Care Staff) work to a regular weekly rota to ensure that our boarders know who is on duty and when.

The Care Team is made up of Support Workers, Waking Night Workers, Senior Support Workers, 2 Deputy Residential Care Managers, the Residential Manager, who are accountable to the Head of Care and Safeguarding.

All members of the care team have a recognised Childcare qualification at the minimum of Level 3 (NVQ/Diploma) or are working toward it. There is currently a Head of Care and Safeguarding and Residential Manager in situ. The Head of Care and Safeguarding and the Residential Manager are qualified to a Level 6-degrees in BSc (Hons) Social Work and BA (Hons) in Health and Social Care respectively.

The Care Team work from the end of the school day until night-time, when students are cared for by waking night staff. We place great importance on communication and time for staff to meet and share information about individual students is built into the daily roster. This ensures our students experience a consistency of approach throughout their time in our school. Similarly, great emphasis is also placed on good communication with parents and carers. As such, we ensure that staff contact parents and carers regularly.

### **Waking Night Staff**

Students in each boarding house are cared for by waking night staff (WNS) when they are asleep. WNS arrive for duty half an hour before care staff finish their work so that important information can be shared about individual students. The WNS subsequently, care for our students at night, assist them to get up in the morning to have breakfast. They administer medication where appropriate and see them into school for the start of the school day.

### **Other Staff Onsite**

Additionally, and in order to keep students and staff safe, the duty caretaking team are available each evening for facilities or maintenance issues.

## **On-Call Arrangements**

The Head of Care and Safeguarding and the Residential Manager are always on-call with the school Principal, as the escalation senior member of staff should frontline staff doing waking nights require assistance or advice from 23.30 hours onwards.

### **Arrangements to Cover Staff Absence**

If cover is necessary, the Residential Manager will, in the case of waking, night staff negotiate additional cover and will:

- Call other part time waking night staff to cover waking night absence
- Arrange for care staff to stay over night
- Arrange for a WNS to float between houses if appropriate, following a risk assessment

In the case of care staff absence:

- Cover absence with existing care staff
- Arrange for existing day support staff to work additional hours
- Ask existing class support staff to cover
- Close a home living area and relocate students as a last resort

## **Key Working**

Each student has a member of the team dedicated to them called a "Keyworker". This is a similar role to that of a mentor. This person has been specifically chosen to take responsibility for ensuring that the individual's wellbeing remains a top priority within our community. The students are welcome to ask to change their Keyworker at any time if they feel there is another trusted person with whom they feel relaxed and comfortable with. Keyworking is the opportunity to discuss progress, feelings or concerns and a chance to review achievable targets to work towards that underpin their EHCP, LAC and personal development targets which are incorporated in their care plan. Individual student target scores are used to produce charts/graphs that reflect progress. The progress made is reviewed by both the student, keyworkers and Care Managers.

Keyworking plays a full and active part in our philosophy of care Keyworker represent a consistent and stable influence in the life of individual students and ensure that they experience good quality care whilst living with us. A Keyworker may not always work where their key student resides.

In the main support workers based in each residential house will undertake key working tasks and activities.

### **Responsibilities of Keyworkers**

- Welcoming each newcomer to our school and ensuring that each young person is inducted properly into the boarding community. As we develop, Keyworkers will be appointed in advance of the student joining us and may be involved in making preparatory home visits.
- Ensuring that every student knows what to do in the event of a fire alarm alert
- Working individually with each of our students to ensure that the care plan is up to date and reviewed regularly
- Supporting the achievement of the educational, emotional and social targets within each relevant student's EHCP and LAC Care Plan

- Liaising with the respective student Staff Tutor to ensure EHCP, PEP and LAC Care Plan targets are part of individual education plans and accurate for the Key Student. This will include a regular review of progress the student is making in meeting their individual weekly set targets or challenges
- Being the first point of contact for enquiries about individual students
- Liaising with parents, carers and other relevant professionals
- Supporting young people in individualising their bedrooms and ensuring each newcomer has a welcome pack
- Ensuring individual young people celebrate their birthdays and other dates of significance to them
- Ensuring that an accurate and comprehensive record is maintained about the experience of individual young people within our boarding community
- Providing reports for meetings and reviews
- Ensuring that all documentation is completed and up to date
- Planning and maintaining a comprehensive record, including the use of photographs and other materials, of each young person's time spent living in our community
- Where relevant, helping each young person compile a book of their life history which is both meaningful to them and reinforces their sense of identity and self-worth
- Spending regular, quality and personal time with each key student
- Ensuring that each young person living in our school has fun and can look back on their time with us with pleasure and pride
- Most importantly, being a supporter and advocate for young people

## **New Arrivals**

Before a boarding student starts school, a member of the Care Team will usually carry out a home visit. This is an opportunity for the young person and his/her family to ask any questions they have about boarding and the school in general. It is also a good opportunity for the young person to meet a member of the Care Team and will help with care planning, along with reducing any anxieties about living away from home.

All our boarding students are given a copy of our "Welcome to Boarding" booklet as part of their pack. Newly arrived students are also told about the work of our boarding student council and how they might contribute to it, how to raise concern and other relevant information such as use of CCTV in communal areas, activities, food etc.

## **Meetings**

### **Team Meetings**

The Residential Care Manager and the Deputy Residential Care Managers meet with the care team on a monthly basis. This includes both night and day teams. The Care Management Team (Head of Care and the Residential Manager meet at least weekly. Weekly Planning Meetings are also held to recognise and celebrate achievements, positive behaviours and successes. The

Residential Manager also meets with Deputy Residential Care Manager regularly.

## **House Meetings**

Each boarding house has a weekly meeting which involves boarders and staff. The purpose of these meetings is to plan the forthcoming week's menus, arrange for the food shopping and cooking, plan forthcoming activities and trips out and deal with any other aspect of boarding life that needs to be discussed or resolved. At these meetings we also review how well the previous week has been and whether anything needs to be changed.

## **Boarding Student Council Meeting**

We also have a Boarding Student Council which meets at least half termly. These meetings ensure that our students can actively contribute to the management and running of our boarding community and school.

## **Supervision Meetings**

All staff at every level within the care team are regularly supervised within their respective roles (see Residential Policy – The Supervision of Care Staff).

## **Student Review Meetings**

Care staff attend annual reviews, LAC meetings, PEP meetings, professionals' meetings, Child in Need, Early intervention meetings as required.

## **Facilities in Boarding**

### **Own room**

All our boarders have their own room, their own key to their room and where appropriate, can be issued with a key to the front door of their boarding house.

Boarders can also decorate their rooms to suit their own tastes and can keep items of value safely in their rooms. Students can go to their room if they want to have time on their own.

### **Youth Club**

There is a Youth Club where students can gather and generally socialise as well as watch Netflix, films and use the virtual reality and computer games, as well as play pool and use the suite of computers.

## **CCTV**

After a period of consultation in 2016 with our residential boarding students, residential boarding staffs, parents and our Boarding Student Council took the decision to implement CCTV in residential in 2016, to add a layer of safeguarding for students.

## **Impact on Privacy Rationale and Considerations**

With consideration to privacy issues, the CCTVs are not fitted in staff offices, kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms and toilets. The CCTV does not intrude unreasonably on our student's privacy because:

- The CCTV in residential is non-audio (does not record sound) and motion sensor. It does not record all the time 24 hours and only record when there is motion of any movement. If there is no movement, it does not record. This means that from the hours of 09.00 hours to 13.00 hours it is not recording and from the hours of 23.30 – 07.30 hours (when residential students are sleeping and settled in their individual rooms, it only records when there is movement of waking night staff in the corridors and lounges of the residential houses or a student waking up to leave their rooms)
- The CCTV in residential corridors and lounges are non-monitored with no screen (no-one can see it)
- The recordings can only be assessed by the Care Management Team, Senior Management Team and Police but, only if the incident is deemed important and serious enough for the CCTV to be reviewed
- Any request to review the CCTV in residential is also recorded. The requirement is that 2 senior leaders of staff can authorise the review of the recorded CCTV
- The CCTV equipment is in a locked room in school where all entries are recorded. All staff are prevented from the server room where the CCTV can be viewed from
- Any motion-detected CCTV recordings deletes and wipes off after 28 days

## **Safeguarding and Diversity**

### **Safeguarding**

Our school has a full and detailed Safeguarding Policy covering different aspects relating to how we promote welfare and safeguard. The Health and Safety Policy outlines our response to promoting and meeting the health needs of our students in our school.

### **Students Who Go Missing**

There is a separate Students Who Go Missing Procedure which outlines what we do to safeguard students who are missing.

### **Searching, Screening and Confiscation**

We work hard to ensure students' rights to privacy are promoted and protected. However, there may be occasions when room searches, personal searches and active screening is necessary in the best interests of students and staff. The school and residential provision comply with the DfE guidance on searching and screening (Searching Screening and Confiscation – advice for Head Teachers, school staff and governing bodies – July 2022).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1091132/Searching\\_Screening\\_and\\_Confiscation\\_guidance\\_July\\_2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf)

### **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

We believe in mutual respect and clarity of expectations. We give our students a clear understanding of what is expected of them and the consequences of not meeting those expectations. Please see the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy for full details.

## **Complaints, Concerns, Suggestions and Compliments**

We work hard to ensure students and their families are happy with the service we provide. Equally we work hard to resolve any complaints that arise and learn from any mistakes made. See the Complaints, Concerns, Suggestions and Compliments Policy for full details on the school website.

### **Monitoring by an Independent Visitor and Standard 3 Visitor**

An independent Standard 3 visitor makes unannounced visits to the residential environment 6 times a year and is available to meet with the students individually, if requested. The visitor's reports are made available to boarding students and staff.

### **Monitoring by an Independent Person**

As described within the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools NMS 17.2., the 'Independent Person' is a person other than a parent, outside the staff and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. We have two 'Independent Person' in situ to enhance, promote and safeguard the welfare of boarding students. The boarding students know them and know how to contact them. They are accessible at all reasonable times, visits the residential provision regularly (at least monthly), and knows the children and young people.

In addition, the designated Trustee responsible for our residential provision visits termly.

### **Diversity**

We value diversity and promote equality of opportunity. Students' diversity is considered on an individual basis and we use the differences in our student and staff groups as an opportunity for enrichment and learning.

## **Promoting the health of our students**

### **Curriculum**

Additionally, health promotion is covered in school assemblies and throughout the curriculum. Sex education is covered in Biology lessons and PSHE. Students learn the biological facts, the nature and dangers of sexually transmitted diseases and about contraception. They also learn about parenthood and the importance of stable committed family relationships.

Boarding students can access drop in/group sessions with a local sexual health practitioner who run sessions on site. This is a confidential service and gives boarders the opportunity to sensitive information in a format that they can understand and dispel any myths they may have.

### **First Aid & Accidents**

Our school also has procedures to ensure that the provisions made for health care, first aid and accidents are in accordance with those required by legislation and to ensure the health, welfare and safety of our students, staff and other persons on our school site. All residential care staff are trained First Aiders. Some of the residential care staff are also Mental Health First Aid trained.

## **Illness**

Parents/carers and students are informed that anyone who is unwell should not attend school. Furthermore, anyone who has been in contact with an infectious disease should notify the school as soon as possible.

If a boarding student becomes unwell at school, they can rest in their room until they have recovered or until home-school transport can be arranged. More serious illnesses or infectious illness will either be dealt with by requesting parents or carers to collect the student or by taking the student to the nearest Accident and Emergency department.

Typically, a student will stay in their room if they are unwell or need treatment. A dynamic risk assessment will be made if there are infection control concerns, in reference to providing a separate bathroom and toilet for the sick student to use. Where possible the School Nurse will be consulted if she is on duty.

First Aid facilities are provided throughout the school and conform to current regulations. First Aid is administered by trained staff who possess a current First Aid at Work certificate and who can be immediately available throughout the 24-hour day.

## **Medication**

The school follows a clearly set out Administration of Medication Policy. Please see this policy for details of our Administration of Medication Procedures and Practice.

## **Smoking**

We are a non-smoking site. Students are encouraged not to smoke and to access support relating to quitting smoking. The school link with the NHS smoking cessation service to support students who want to give up smoking.

## **Therapeutic Support**

A range of therapies are available at school. Please see:

<http://www.westheathschool.com/therapy>

## **Access to Healthcare Professionals**

Students can access health care advice and treatment from local A&E hospitals in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells Hospital. If a student requires support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service or Adult Mental Health services, the school support with these referrals. We also support students to get advice and treatment at our local sexual health clinic if needed.

## **Fire Precautions**

### **Detectors & Alarms**

Our residential provision at the Colt Village has a range of smoke and heat detectors and fire alarm activation points situated in all areas throughout including the boarding youth club. This system, if activated, automatically triggers an alarm in our local fire station and an appliance is automatically and immediately dispatched to our school.



## **Testing & Drills**

Our fire alarm system is tested weekly by the estate maintenance team, using a different call point each time. Additionally, the residential care team also carry out fire drills on a regular basis, at least termly and at different times during the day and night. In particular, they are practised with new students and staff working in our boarding house so that all feel comfortable with the arrangements in the event of an emergency.

The residential care team record all their false alarms, drills and practices properly on the residential behaviour watch system.

## **Prevention**

As a general principle, we aim to instill a sense of responsibility and awareness of fire hazards in our students as part of their maturation and personal development. Good housekeeping is important. Rubbish is kept to a minimum and cleared away regularly.

We try to ensure that all areas are left tidy at the end of each day and flammable liquids etc. are always stored securely and kept away from potential sources of ignition. Fire doors are kept closed and stairways and other fire exits are kept clear from obstruction.

## **Contact with Home**

### **Partnership with Parents**

It is essential to the success of our students, both emotionally and academically, that home and school pull in the same direction.

The experts on our students are their parents or carers.

Parents or carers are the people who make the life-long difference to the student and we are here to support and help them.