

## **St. John's Special School & College Specialist Environment & Local Offer November 2017**

### **Rationale**

St. John's School provides a specialist environment to secure the effective teaching and learning of all our pupils regardless of challenge. Teaching is here understood as defined and described in the 'St. John's Specialist Teacher Standards' guidance.

### **The specialist setting will include:**

- Access to staff trained in agreed specialist strategies and interventions (refer appendix 1)
- Access to staff/pupil ratio required to deliver specialist strategies and interventions (refer appendix 2)
- Physical layout arranged to avoid unnecessary movement and disruption
- Seating arranged to account for the nature of the activity, pupil need and movement around the class area
- Clear rules and cues concerning movement around class areas and the wider school environment
- Clear rules concerning acceptable levels of noise within class and the wider school environment
- Clear rules and boundaries concerning acceptable social behaviour
- Structured daily and weekly timetable to ensure stability, predictability and balance of learning opportunities
- Resources for activities readily available to minimise disruption
- Access to ICT and specialist teaching and learning facilities
- Access to community facilities and other educational settings as appropriate

**The specialist environment with regard to pupils presenting PMLD/MSI will include:**

- Cues of appropriate types to enable pupils to anticipate future events/activities
- Appropriate and flexible lighting for general and specific task or activity
- Classroom acoustically treated and auditory information conveyed in accordance with pupil need
- Surfaces e.g. walls, table-tops, symbols etc. to be non-reflective
- Access to communication aids and specialist resources as required
- Appropriate specialist equipment to meet the physical needs of pupils
- Landmarks and labels for pupil orientation
- Sufficient space to maintain a consistent layout to the classroom including furniture arrangement
- Sufficient space to ensure individual work areas/work stations
- Sufficient space to allow ambulant and non-ambulant pupils to work safely alongside each other
- Carpeted and non-carpeted areas to accommodate a range of activities
- Appropriate access to adapted toilet and changing facilities
- All areas clean and uncluttered
- All areas draught free and temperature controlled

**The specialist environment with regard to pupils with ASC or social communication difficulties will include:**

- Individualised visual timetables/schedules utilising text, photos, symbols or objects
- Individualised work areas
- Sufficient space to allow clearly defined areas for specific activities e.g. choice, snack, group work etc.
- Visually uncluttered classroom and restricted exposure to verbal, auditory and visual stimulus;
- Access to communication aids and specialist teaching resources as required

**At St. John's pupils will learn to:**

- Enjoy and actively engage in the social process of learning
- Positively respond to and interact with others in school
- Sustain attention and extend concentration during lessons
- Use and generalise functional skills, knowledge and understanding in an increasing range of environments
- Make choices and take increasing responsibility for own behaviour
- Regard oneself as an effective learner
- Reflect on own achievements and participate when possible in setting new and challenging learning targets

**At St. John's teachers will:**

- Utilise a carefully selected set of specialist teaching strategies and interventions
- Extend the communicative competence of all pupils in class
- Ensure pupils engage in individual, group and whole class activities

- Enhance pupil self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem
- Increase pupil awareness of and respect for others
- Use a range of assessment tools to inform effective planning
- Use a range of assessment tools to report on pupil progress
- Share planning of teaching and learning with all relevant staff
- Function effectively as part of a cohesive multi-professional team
- Lead and monitor the work of classroom support staff
- Liaise effectively with parents/carers and families

#### **Multi-professional partnership:**

St. John's operates as a multi-agency organisation. A range of professionals such as nurses, therapists, specialist teachers are involved in and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Multi- professional assessment meetings take place throughout the year and are aimed at ensuring a collaborative approach towards meeting the needs of our pupils with the most complex and challenging needs.

#### **Improving practice and provision:**

The monitoring of teaching and learning is essential in supporting all pupils to maximise their achievement and progress. Monitoring will be accompanied by coaching and in-class support provided by senior teachers and therapist.

Other aspects of monitoring will include the following:

- Classroom observation and feedback from in-house specialists and external professionals
- Teacher appraisal and career enhancing professional development
- Ongoing scrutiny of pupils IEPs by senior staff
- Ongoing scrutiny of pupils work by senior staff
- Ongoing evaluation of pupil performance related data

## Appendix 1

Specialist teaching strategies and interventions include:

- Behavioural strategies
- Intensive Interaction
- Picture exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Rebound Therapy
- Sensory Circuits
- Sherborne Developmental Movement
- Sign Supported English (SSE)
- Social Stories
- Structured Teaching
- Tactile Approach to Communication (Tactpac)

Refer to the 'St. John's Pedagogy Paper 2: Practice' for a detailed description of all the specialist teaching strategies and interventions used in school as well as related training standards and resource requirements.

## Appendix 2

The staffing ratio required to effectively deliver specialist strategies i.e. at the appropriate level of intensity and duration in relation to an individual pupil is assessed as follows:

Band 3- Intermittent/regular	1:2
Band 4- Intermittent/frequent	1:1
Band 5- Continual/regular use of RPI	2:1
Band 6- Continual/frequent use of RPI	3:1

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