

## Valley School Offer

This section links specifically to the schools provision for children with additional needs.

### 1. Who can access Valley?

Valley School is a special school with a specialist early years provision and is maintained by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.

It caters for primary aged pupils who have learning difficulties. Many pupils have additional complex needs including autism, physical and medical needs.

### 2. How does my child access this provision?

Admissions to Valley School for pupils with Special Educational Needs are made by the Local Authority. Pupils would all usually have an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement.

For our nursery aged children with additional needs the assessment often takes place during the nursery year.

### 3. What is the provision?

There are 9 classes in total

#### Bramhall Site

Three classes are for children who have significant communication difficulties, including those on the ASD spectrum. These classes cater for the needs of children who may show a degree of challenging behaviour. Four classes are predominantly for children with complex needs, including physical, sensory and medical needs. Within these classes, some children may also have social and communication difficulties.

Children generally spend between 2 and 3 years in each class and can move between classes as their needs emerge. These classes are organised by age.

The classes are paired for some sessions during the week to allow them to work together, for example on topic work.

#### Overdale Site

Two classes are based at our Overdale Site in Romiley. These classes meet the needs of children who have significant communication difficulties, including those on the ASD spectrum.

The children in our classes work at varying levels across our school curriculum, ranging from pre-formal to formal learners.

### 4. What are the benefits of attending Valley School?

Valley school has a maximum class size of eight children. There is a very high level of staffing. On average the staff team in each class comprises of one teacher and 4 teaching assistants. The staff are highly skilled and knowledgeable, developing expertise closely linked to the nature of the needs of the children in their classes. There is a high emphasis on Multidisciplinary working where therapists work alongside teaching assistants to deliver programmes throughout the curriculum.

Some of our staff train colleagues in other schools throughout Stockport and Greater Manchester.

The Deputy Head and Assistant Headteachers both take a lead in developing practice with pre-formal, semi-formal and formal learners.

In addition, an After School Club is offered one day a week at the Valley Bramhall Site. Valley school has had three Ofsted inspections rated Outstanding. These were in 2007, 2011 and 2016.

5. Does the school have any special facilities / resources?

The school has many special facilities. It is all on one level and fully accessible to wheelchair users. There is overhead tracking in four classes and other key areas of school. There is a dedicated physiotherapy room, hydrotherapy pool and a soft play/ ball pool at our Bramhall site and specialist multi-sensory rooms. The school has its own minibus (provided by the Variety Club of Great Britain) to allow for educational visits. This has a lift for children who travel in wheelchairs.

All classes have access to low distraction working areas. Three classes are low distraction throughout. There are three sensory areas that can also provide a safe space for children to calm if they need it.

Most classes open onto an outdoor gated area which is an extension to the classroom. In the playgrounds there are a number of fixed pieces of play equipment including a climbing frame, swings (including fully accessible swings) and slides. There is a sensory garden which provides an area for children to plant and tend.

The school is a very safe environment with coded entry and exit doors and other security features.

6. What specialist services are there in the school?

There is an extensive multi-disciplinary team working on site. This includes Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists. There is a fulltime School Nurse. The school has routine visits from our Educational Psychologist.

Peripatetic teachers visit the school on a weekly basis to work with specific groups of children including a music therapist and qualified teacher of children with multi-sensory impairment from Stockport's Sensory Support Service.

The school hosts a number of clinics; there is a regular paediatric clinic provided by Dr Zubairu, a continence clinic, orthotic and wheelchair clinics and regular visits from the dental team and orthoptist who check children's teeth and vision.

In addition to this, our parent liaison worker works closely with parents and carers to support whilst also running regular events such as coffee mornings, talks and events specially for parents.

Dinners are cooked by our school cook who caters for all special diets.

The school has strong links with Travel Coordination and provides annual training for drivers and escorts.

The school has two Team Teach Tutor to provide training around behaviour support.

7. Are there links with other schools?

We have various types of links with other schools.

- We have small groups of pupils from local mainstream primaries linked with 2 classes in school and these children join us at Valley for weekly sessions.
- We have a local mainstream preschool who join one of classes twice a week for inclusive sessions.
- We identify individuals for whom a mainstream primary link would be beneficial and strive to link them with their neighbourhood primary school (usually for a half day session).
- A wide number of students from secondary schools and colleges come to Valley for work experience and placements.
- We are situated adjacent to Moss Hey Primary school, with whom we share social integration activities.

## 8. How will I know that my child is making progress?

Teachers inform parents of children's progress in a number of ways throughout the year.

- Each child has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). This is written three times a year and the targets in the plans are evaluated each term to show progress.
- Each child has an Annual Review meeting. This is a meeting between school staff and parents. The multi-disciplinary team are invited to this review. Teachers and therapists write a full report of progress a child has made over the year. Annual review targets from the previous year are evaluated and new targets are agreed.
- A Parents meeting is held during the autumn term.
- Each child has a summer report written at the end of the school year.
- At the end of each year teacher's complete a summative assessment of children's learning and this is shared with parents.

Our Deputy Headteacher, Janet Doherty is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for Early Years children.

Debbie Thompson, Headteacher is SENCO for the school.

## 9. How is my child's progress monitored and recorded?

Children's progress is continually monitored and this information is shared with parents as above. The home school diary is a further way in which class teachers will let parents know about specific steps of progress and achievement along with the on-going information about your child's day in school.

Each pupil's progress is carefully checked using the schools assessment processes and the Senior Leadership Team meet with teachers to review their children's progress and learning. Pupils are given a baseline assessment on arrival at school and their progress is monitored and tracked until they leave school.

The assessments we use in school to measure children's progress include P scales, Pre-Key Stage Standards and the Early Years Development Matters. Progress is recorded using the schools own tracking documents and a computer software package called CASPA (Comparative Analysis of Special Pupil Attainment).

## 10. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

Valley's school curriculum has the unique child at its heart. Each child at Valley has an Individual Education Plan which has a series of targets linked to the areas of our Core Curriculum: Communication, Cognition, Social and Emotional Development, Sensory and Physical and Independence and Self-Help (Lifeskills). The targets are written with input from parents and therapy colleagues and are based upon the child's strengths and areas of need.

The IEP targets are delivered through topic work in class and discrete IEP sessions. Topics are linked to our schemes of work and follow a two year rolling programme. The curriculum is matched to the learning needs of the children in school by a high emphasis on motivating, practical experiences.

## 11. What are the special approaches / strategies the school uses?

The school uses a total communication approach which includes Makaton signing, Intensive Interaction, PECS, Objects of Reference and AAC. In addition we use a number of specialist teaching approaches to maximise the children's access to the curriculum. These include; sensory integration, Personalised IEP Work

Baskets, multisensory teaching, rebound therapy and the use of low distraction environments. To facilitate children's learning we teach readiness to learn and learning to learn strategies.

12. How do you support my child's in the transition arrangement?

Parents are invited to visit and look around the school often supported by other agencies such as Portage. The parents of children who are given a place at Valley are then invited to a new parent meeting in June. The children are then invited to attend pre-admission visit(s) when they meet and spend time in the class they will be joining. Once class teams are finalised we will send you a staff list including photos to share with you child over the holiday. Families are offered a staggered start to the new school year, with everyone being in school full time by the end of the second week.

Transitions between classes are supported by; meetings between class teachers, the planned movement of familiar teaching assistants who move between classes each year and visits to their new classrooms. Transitions to other schools are supported by close liaison with the new school team, including the compilation of a comprehensive transition information file. Visit from the new school team are encouraged and staff and children would also visit the new school.

13. How does the school help me to support my child's learning?

Good communication between home and school is a crucial. We aim to respond to parent requests promptly. We want to ensure that you have the information you need about your child's learning and well-being in school. The home-school diary is often the way in which the most frequent communication takes place between home and school when we do not see parents on a daily basis. Staff are usually available to respond to telephone calls at the beginning and end of the school day and face to face meetings can be arranged as needed. The school has a texting and email link to parents/carers.

Your child's IEP's include a section on 'Things to try at home' and we work closely with you when setting targets in Annual Review meetings and IEP's to include learning that you feel is important for your child. The school has a supportive Governing Body made up of parent and staff representatives, Local Authority members, community and associate Governors. Together they have a wealth of experience and are committed to engaging parents in their children's education.

Parent/carers support group meetings organised by our Family Liaison Worker Jennie Everhard, offer opportunities for parent to come together and to have access to speakers and training. Social and fund-raising events organised by Friends of Valley are a regular feature in the school calendar.

14. How will you keep my child safe?

There are many safety features at Valley. First and foremost the high level of staff is crucial to keeping children safe. All staff are trained in child protection, moving and handling and Team Teach training. All staff and regular visitors to school are DBS checked. Only staff employed by Valley school are left in supervision of children. We have a number of staff who are first aid trained including paediatric first aiders.

Team Teach is Stockport's approved approach to supporting children with challenging behaviour. This includes, as a last resort, physical interventions to keep children safe. Our physical environment is secured with key pads to all external doors and there is a requirement for all visitors to the school to sign in at the office and wear a badge around school. Most interior doors have high level handles to prevent children from leaving the classroom without adult supervision.

All off-site visits, including our annual residential visit, are fully risk assessed.

The school has a comprehensive Safeguarding policy. This is available on request.

15. How do you support children with additional medical needs?

We have a full-time school nurse on site at Bramhall and access to the school nursing team at Overdale. If a child has a medical need then a detailed Care Plan is compiled by the nurse and parents/carers. These are discussed with all staff involved with the pupil. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are trained by the nursing team to administer regular medication, including tube feeding. At any one time there may be a few children who have additional nurse carer support to facilitate them being in school. We have a number of staff who are first aid trained including paediatric first aiders.

16. What opportunities are there outside the classroom?

Learning out of school is an important part of our curriculum. We offer two regular off-site PE opportunities; horse riding at Newbarn Stables and swimming at Hazel Grove pool.

We make use of community facilities to enrich our children's experiences, e.g. live music events at the Bridgewater Hall, ten pin bowling, wheelchair ice skating and cycling at Wythenshawe Wheelers. We are involved in the Greater Manchester special schools network of summer and winter games.

Each year our Year 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential holiday to an outdoor pursuits centre, Bendrigg Lodge in Cumbria. Children experience a wide range of activities including: canoeing, caving climbing and abseiling.

Learning also takes place throughout the year in our sensory garden and adjoining woodland area.

17. How are Governors involved and what are their responsibilities?

Valley school benefits from a highly experienced and supportive Governing Body whose members hold a great deal of expertise and knowledge about the school.

Governors have a responsibility to make sure that the school's decisions are in pupil's best interests and to promote high standards of educational achievement. The Governing Body monitors and evaluates the work on school improvement issues. All Governors share a joint responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Governing Body agrees priorities for spending with the overall aim that children will receive the support they need in order to make progress.

18. How will my child's voice be heard?

Staff are skilled at interpreting children's responses and reading their behaviour. We use objects of reference and symbols to help children make choices and express themselves. You can support us in giving your child a voice by actively using the home-school book to let us know what your child has done at the weekend and in holidays. At the end of each day each class has an activity called 'reflection time'. This is one way in which children are given the opportunity to celebrate something positive about their day.

Children are helped to contribute to their Annual Review.

19. What are the arrangements are there if a parent has any complaints?

Complaints about how the Governing Body or the Local Authority carry out their responsibilities should be discussed with the Headteacher in the first instance. Where a complaint relates specifically to the actions / inactions of the Headteacher the complaint should be directed in the first instance, via the school, to the Chair of the Governing Body. Further details can be found within the Complaints Policy on our school website.

20. Who can I contact for further information?

We welcome visits to the school. These can be arranged through the Headteacher, Debbie Thompson. Please contact the school office on 0161 439 7343.

Valley School is one of a number of special schools in the Stockport Borough. [Link to local offer](#)