



The Island Project School

Independent School for
Children and Young Adults with Autism

School Prospectus



The Island Project is a registered charity; No: 1119034

Company registration No: 5924196 School Reg No: 334/6010
Registered address: Diddington Hall, Diddington Lane, Meriden CV7 7HQ
Website: www.theislandproject.co.uk

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1. Introduction

The Island Project School was established as a specialist independent school designed to provide an appropriate education for children and young adults diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC also known as ASD) and associated 'communication' and complex needs. It is founded on the principles of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) with the pupils' needs at the centre of all planning. The School can provide education for pupils from age 5 to 19 years of age.

2. School Aims

The School aims to teach pupils the knowledge and skills to build confidence and enable them to reach their full potential leading to an independent a life as possible.

The School aims to provide a safe learning environment together with a learning experience that is communication focused and offers stimulation and challenge. We have a strong focus on life and living skills, and teaching pupils' independence.

The School aims to provide a breadth of curriculum opportunities to develop the individual pupil's capabilities to the full.

The School aims to foster the ability of the individual to make relationships, to better communicate with a wide range of people and to encourage the ability to make personal choices.

The School aims to maintain and improve each pupil's physical abilities and to develop their understanding and awareness of the world around them.

3. School Ethos

The Island Project School believes that:

- All pupils should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Pupils diagnosed with autism can learn effectively if they are given appropriate structured programs, which address their deficits and build upon their strengths.
- All pupils have the right to aspire to the highest standards attainable and that their achievements should be recognised and praised.
- All pupils should be helped to take responsibility for their own lives and be enabled to live as independently as possible.
- All pupils should be encouraged to make decisions and speak for themselves through any means of communication available to them.
- All pupils, irrespective of their diagnosis, have the right to participate in the community in which they live.

School should be a rewarding place of fun and learning where building good relationships and a sense of community is fostered. School should be a place where everyone is valued and has equal worth and where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. The team at The Island Project School do not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, ethnic origin or religion.

4. Admissions Policy

To be eligible for admission to The Island Project School pupils must have:

- A primary diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition
- A statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Healthcare Plan
- An agreement from their Local Authority or other source to fund the placement. All places are Local Authority placements, The Island Project cannot offer places except in consultation with the Local Authority.
- Be of the appropriate age with the appropriate skills and behaviour profile to fill the available place.

If a child meets all the criteria and a place is available, the Education team will carry out an assessment prior to an agreement with the Local Authority. Pupils can then be admitted at any point during the academic year. An individual curriculum plan (ICP) will be drawn up during the first four weeks of attendance.

5. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The Island Project School does not have any religious affiliations and will welcome pupils of all faiths and all ethnic groups. The entry criteria reflect the School's focus and area of expertise and therefore only refer to a prospective pupil's special education needs in relation to ASD.

The School creates an environment where pupils understand right and wrong and differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The School promotes an understanding of responsibilities to others and to society.

Careful preparation, communication focus and constant appropriate reinforcement to convey these concepts are fundamental as it can be difficult for some pupils to comprehend these areas of development. The Education Team make use of a variety of media and means of communication to develop an awareness of social and cultural practices; this includes visits to, libraries, cinemas, concerts, places of worship and historical sites.

Access to the local community is a key part of preparing for adulthood.

Education must form part of the planned curriculum; a small charge may be made for larger trips. Visits to any venue will be arranged with careful preparation and detailed consultation to ensure that the pupils can access the visit in a safe and appropriate manner. It is hoped these excursions will engender a sense of pleasure for the pupils and their families in accessing community activities safely and happily. There will be an on-going effort to bring other appropriate groups and organisations into the School and to arrange joint activities wherever possible.

6. Discipline and Exclusion Policy

The Island Project School is a small school based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis and Low Arousal. The School curriculum is designed to address any challenging behaviours, which often is a key element of ASD.

The emphasis is to achieve good behaviour amongst all the pupils and develop their ability to focus on learning. Encouraging and assisting pupils to communicate with tutors and their peers is a key element in the Schools program of education. The high ratio of staff to pupils and consistent approach to behaviour is designed to ensure all members of the School are safe. A comprehensive behaviour plan for each pupil forms a working document for staff and be updated daily as appropriate, with information available to parents.

In the event of a pupil exhibiting behaviour which falls outside the behaviour plan or where there is an escalation of unusual challenging behaviour, the parents will be contacted to discuss any issues. This would be where the actions of the pupil disrupts the school, affects their education or that of the other pupils, or where the staff and pupils are placed at risk or harm. The objective will be to identify any cause for challenging behaviour to establish unidentified problem areas. As part of this review process, if only all the strategies for addressing the difficulties have been exhausted and have not led to any positive change, parents will be asked to remove the pupil. Advice and possible outreach work will be offered to parents and referral to other professionals may be recommended.

7. Educational and Welfare Provision

All staff members are trained on a wide range of issues, which arise from the diagnosis of ASD. There is continual staff development and on-going training. The School intends to keep up to date on topics which have a bearing on improving the education and well-being of pupils with autism. This involves extensive in house and external training, attendance at conferences, holding seminars, using the internet to access worldwide information and sharing our knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Supervision and assessment in the School, together with the high pupil/staff ratio, ensures that the development and progress of pupils is under constant scrutiny. Consistent daily monitoring will allow any areas of concern or problems is picked up quickly and addressed.

Parents have access to appropriate staff members and to information about their child. Parents are asked to contribute to regular discussions concerning their child. It is essential that parents are closely involved in their child's programme and they contribute information from home to assist in target setting.

Staff members are appropriately first aid trained and there is a designated medical/sick room. Parents must provide contact details for emergencies and will be alerted immediately if a member of staff has any concerns about a pupil's health. Parents will be asked to provide the School with medical history for each child and keep the School informed of any concerns they have about their child's health or well-being.

8. Language and Communication

The School's pupil group are those children with a diagnosis of autism, this means all pupils require support in Communication. All staff will be required to undertake Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) training and attend regular monitoring sessions, alongside a range of SALT led strategies and training. Improving language and communication will be a major focus of the school. It is recognised that the pupils within the School will have a range of language and communication ability. In accordance with the individual education plans there will

be careful assessment and the development of communication strategies for each individual pupil.

High staff ratios mean that in 1:1 sessions new communication strategies can be implemented and new vocabulary can be introduced. In group work the differentiation of topics will include the pupils' communication on an individual basis.

Post 16 provision across school has an emphasis on functional life and living skills, but also offers opportunities for pupils to attain accreditation or qualifications on an individualised basis.

The School aims to support all pupils for whom English is not their primary language. We will, where appropriate, support any pupil with their needs around the use of a second language.

9. Education Policy

The Island Project School core curriculum offer is Maths, English, PHSE and EHCP targets.

The School employs a range of teaching strategies, ABA, PECS and as appropriate speech and language therapy, sensory diets, occupational therapy etc. Full use is made of any appropriate interventions or techniques, to help individual pupils to communicate effectively, acquire knowledge, develop skills and access the curriculum. The key stages the pupils can access may not correlate with the pupils' age and they may have differing levels of ability within their profile across different subjects. The individual curriculum planning will reflect this. Each curriculum plan will be defined by the school education therapy team, with opportunities for input from the parents.

The staffing ratio of 1:1 and the space provided by the School building allows for the construction of highly specific programs of work to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. The aim is to build on the strengths of each individual pupil and addresses their deficits in the most effective manner. This continual monitoring enables parents to receive regular feedback on the pupil's progress and receive advice on maintaining consistency between school and home.

The core teaching method on a 1:1 ratio is designed to ensure that the pupils are working effectively and retaining the knowledge they acquire, in addition increasing the opportunities for working in pairs and small groups. Activities are appropriately differentiated and specifically aimed at developing social interaction and the ability to cooperate with peers. The emphasis in activities is to develop each pupil's ability to acquire information in a group situation and respond accordingly. These opportunities are used to deliver aspects of the curriculum such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside general topic work in a way that is meaningful to children with social and communication disorders.

Every effort is made to extend the pupils knowledge and understanding of the world in a way that is comprehensible to them. This is to be achieved by modifying the subject matter embodied in the National Curriculum and applying the various teaching strategies, which are proven to motivate and stimulate pupils with autism.

Use is to be made of IT to assist teaching and learning. Much of teaching materials is made 'in house' and is differentiated to the specific needs of individual pupils. A full range of creative subjects are available across topic sessions.

The School building has been chosen to provide good space and facilities for physical activities both indoors and outside. The location in the Heart of England is central to the geographical area, with excellent communication links. The convenient access to the local facilities and

countryside, offers scope for outdoor work as well as access to a local and supportive community.

10 Pupil Premium

For individual pupils who should attract pupil premium payments, the nature of the small provision allows for individual planning across pupils specific needs. A statement and further information can be found on the website.

13. Access to information

Copies of all the Schools policy documents and supporting information will be available on the website or to parents on request. A list of key policies is given below.

Parents will be invited to view all information held on their child at any time. Arrangements should be made with the School Manager to access this information.

Access to documents can also be obtained from the school website www.theislandproject.co.uk

14. Operation Encompass

The School participates in Operation Encompass which is a project run jointly between schools in the West Midlands, and West Midlands Police

Under the terms of Operation Encompass, West Midlands Police will report to schools, prior to 10am on the next school day, when a child or young person has been exposed to, or involved in, any domestic incident

Operation Encompass will ensure that a member of the School staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to receive the information and liaise with the police. The information is supplied in confidence and enables the School to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children or their families, who have been involved in, or exposed to, a domestic incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils and we believe this will be extremely beneficial for those involved. The Key Adult for the purposes of Operation Encompass, is the School Principal.

15. Policy Documents

All of our current Policies and Procedures can be found on the School Website www.theislandproject.co.uk.

Contact Us

Carole Howe	SLT – Project Director	c.howe@ipschool.co.uk
Sarah Gallagher	SLT - School Principal	s.gallagher@ipschool.co.uk
Nicole Sheehan	SLT – Welfare and H&S Director	n.sheehan@ipschool.co.uk
Melanie Collett	SLT – Education Director	m.collett@ipschool.co.uk
General enquiries		admin@ipschool.co.uk

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The Island Project School
Diddington Hall
Diddington Lane
Meriden
CV7 7HQ

Telephone: 01675 442588
Website: www.theislandproject.co.uk

Charity Number: 119034
DofE School Number: 334/6010
Company Number: 5924196