

SEN INFORMATION REPORT

Lotus School
September 2023 - 2024



Lotus
SCHOOL

Thrive and Learn



Champion
EDUCATION TRUST

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INFORMATION ABOUT LOTUS

Lotus School is an Academy Special School which is part of Champion Education Trust. Lotus caters for students aged 11 – 16 years who are in receipt of an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) regarding their identified Learning Difficulties.

Lotus caters for a wide range of different needs but the majority of students' main identified need is associated with Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH). Our students often also display a second need which is usually associated with speech, language, or communication needs (SLCN), Autistic Spectrum (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), language and cognition difficulties (SLD/MLD/GLD), Visual Impairment (VI) as well as a variety of physical or medical disabilities or conditions.

WHAT IS OUR APPROACH TO TEACHING OUR STUDENTS?

Lotus takes a personalised approach to meeting the needs of each individual learner by providing a highly differentiated package of curriculum offers and programmes of study. At Lotus we currently offer three levels of curriculum offer:

- Bespoke (connecting and responding)
- Enhanced (A Life-Skills Based curriculum)
- Universal (An adapted National Curriculum, which emphasises life need)

HOW DO WE ADAPT THE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

At Lotus we know that each one of our students is beginning their learning journey from different starting points. We recognise that our students will have somewhat spiky profiles, having skills and aptitudes in some areas and difficulties in others.

As a school, we are committed to excellence and have an ambitious vision for each and every one of our children. We know that life and learning, in general, can be very difficult for them, we endeavour at all times to present the curriculum to them in a way that they can understand and make use of, and we celebrate every small step of progress that they make. We want to empower our students to manage their own learning needs and to be able to learn as independently as possible. We know that our children progress at different rates and we therefore individualise the curriculum for each young person in order that students can realise our high expectations of them, regardless of their starting points.

Our students have full access to the National Curriculum and Religious Education, which is differentiated according to needs and abilities. Within the curriculum, we place great emphasis on social skills, communication, listening skills, choice-making and turn-taking.

HOW DO WE CONSULT PARENTS AND INVOLVE THEM IN THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION?

Lotus is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and we consider it a crucial element in a child's development process. Families are welcome to visit the school regularly, in addition to the scheduled Parent/Carer Consultation Evenings.

Parents/carers are invited to attend Transition Meetings, Annual Review EHCP Meetings and are also invited to make written contributions.

The school newsletter is published monthly to keep parents/carers up to date with what is going on in the school and give them dates that they may want to put in their diaries of upcoming events. These are also posted on our website and social media platforms.

The school has a place on its Governing Body for parent/carers representatives.

HOW DO WE CONSULT STUDENTS AND INVOLVE THEM IN THEIR EDUCATION?

The students are at the heart of the school and each aspect of Lotus reflects this. Teachers take every effort to plan activities which are meaningful and relevant for the students. Students' views are also considered through robust self-assessment procedures.

HOW DO WE ASSESS AND REVIEW STUDENTS' PROGRESS TOWARDS THEIR OUTCOMES?

The school regards formative and summative assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. We keep accurate records of pupils' achievements, ensuring that assessments are manageable and that they lead to useful information that informs parents and carers and informs teachers' future planning and target setting.

We assess pupil progress in academic terms and also against EHCP targets, set to help them to overcome the difficulties identified on the EHCPs.

We recognise that progress is not only upwards but that our children progress through widening their experiences, maintaining skills and generalising skills. We aim for our assessment to demonstrate the range of progress made both vertically and laterally.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT STUDENTS MOVING BETWEEN DIFFERENT PHASES OF EDUCATION?

The school makes detailed arrangements for supporting young people in moving on to the next stage of their education and preparing for adulthood. The Assistant Headteacher (SENDCo) will visit children in their primary phase, or other settings, during the admission process and arrange a series of transition visits to Lotus for the child to familiarise themselves with their new school.

Our Pastoral Manager works closely with all our local post 16 providers to ensure suitable placements for every student leaving us in Year 11. Clear and detailed transition plans are formed with the LEA, Lotus and post 16 providers to ensure a smooth transition into adulthood learning.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT STUDENTS PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD?

At Lotus we recognise that preparation for adulthood starts very early. We work with our students, and their families, to give them the skills to make choices for themselves. From when they join us, we encourage and support our students in becoming increasingly independent, taking part in community activities, and staying safe and healthy. Students are encouraged to engage in many practical activities within the community, are supported in choosing leisure activities, learn about healthy lifestyles, have the opportunity to explore options for their futures, and attend meaningful work experience placements within Key Stage 4.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT STUDENTS TO IMPROVE THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT?

At Lotus we have a range of specialist intervention programmes associated with emotional and social development. Our Pastoral Team support class teachers in the development of Individual Behaviour Plans.

Our Mental Health Support Team complements this with a focus on developing the mental health and emotional well-being of students.

WHAT EXPERTISE AND TRAINING DOES OUR STAFF HAVE TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS?

Lotus aims to provide staff with skills which meet the very discrete needs of all of our students, through a range of appropriate training. This training provides staff opportunities for their own professional development with regards to their knowledge of the wide variety of conditions and other relevant knowledge related to providing appropriate education and environment for children with special educational needs.

HOW WILL WE SECURE EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS?

We recognise that each child and young adult is very unique and we are committed and adept at adapting our practice to meet the specific needs of each of them. We understand that the needs of our learners are varied and complex and as such, we are always seeking the most effective ways to support and engage children and young adults whether their needs be considered moderate or severe.

HOW DO WE INVOLVE OTHER ORGANISATIONS IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS AND SUPPORTING THEIR FAMILIES?

Lotus has close links with a number of local organisations that offer support to children with special educational needs and their families. This includes a wide variety of local multi-disciplinary teams that work with a number of our families in partnership with the school.

We work closely with a range of local social care services where our students attend to ensure that approaches across settings are consistent and that there is clear communication between all agencies involved with the child.

A member of the Senior Leadership team at the school has the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (as well as our safeguarding team) and works collaboratively with the social workers within the Looked After Children and Virtual School's Teams to ensure that children, young people and their families receive appropriate and effective support.

The school's Family Support Worker provide referrals to and offer support with accessing local services such as specialist dental appointments, specialist nursing teams, counselling services, charity applications, respite activities, benefits advice and parent support groups.

We invite local services to speak at coffee mornings and to join parent workshops. This helps to ensure that local services have an understanding of the needs of our students and offers the opportunity for parents and carers to link with these organisations.

HOW DO WE EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR PROVISION?

The effectiveness of our provision is frequently evaluated not only by the Senior Leadership Team, Staff and the Governing Body but also by external auditors and consultants – please contact school and request to see our current School Evaluation and Development Plan for more information.

HOW DO WE HANDLE COMPLAINTS FROM PARENTS ABOUT PROVISION MADE AT THE SCHOOL?

All concerns or complaints about the school should be addressed in the first instance to the class teacher where possible. If this is not appropriate, then the Headteacher or any member of the Senior Leadership Team would expect to deal with this.

Where a complaint is made to the Headteacher in writing, they will respond, telling the complainant where they might find the information they need to answer their query, and of course, will meet with them to deal with their complaint. If this does not prove fruitful then complaints can be addressed to the board of governors via our complaints policy and procedure. This policy is available via our school website or by contacting the school reception for a hard copy of this document.

WHO CAN STUDENTS AND PARENTS CONTACT IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS?

- Class Teacher
- Safeguarding Team (Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes)
- Family Support Worker
- Headteacher
- Chair of Governors
- CEO Trust