



SEND provision provided at the school

Leadership and Management

In September 2017 two new roles were created at Downlands to increase the support of SEND students and to assist Mr Odlin in helping with an ever-growing need for a SEND Department. Mrs Cornish began as Lead Teacher of SEND with a teaching responsibility for Nurture English and Mr Simpson began as an Assistant Lead Teacher of SEND with a teaching responsibility for Nurture Maths. Both staff members were enrolled on the NASENC qualification with the University of Chichester with a view to completing their SENCO qualification in January 2019. Mrs Duncumb remained part of the SEND department sharing her SEND role with teaching mainstream English to help mentor and assist with some intervention programmes for SEND students. Mr Simpson as well as teaching Maths, took an additional role in specialising with our ASC students throughout the year. Both staff were promoted to SENCO and Assistant SENCO for the start of the new academic year for 2018.

Learning Support Area - New Build

In April 2018 Learning Support were able to move into the brand new building specifically designed for SEND students and staff. This consisted of a small room for the Counsellor, SEND assessment and exam assessor, the School Nurse, an office for Mrs Cornish and Mr Simpson, an office plus meeting area for Mr Odlin and a room for the Learning Mentors. Additionally the centre was built with a specific kitchen area with a height adjustable cooker for wheelchair bound students. This is also an area where some of our more vulnerable students can come at lunchtimes where they are supported by SEND staff and teaching assistants. The nurture classroom can be used as an extension to this during lunch when it can be open for homework or as an alternative quiet area. The classroom is fitted with a Smartboard and ten computers. It has been used for English and Maths nurture classes.

Quality First Teaching

It is important that we evaluate the use and need for intervention groups for our SEND pupils, however it is essential that each pupil receives differentiation within their lessons through Quality First Teaching. Through regular feedback and information as needs change, subject staff are given specific strategies that relate to individual needs. Coupled with training on emotional connection and ASC strategies, both Mrs Cornish and Mr Simpson have communicated regularly with all staff to achieve this on a more school-wide scale. Staff can access information on individuals via the SEND register and class trackers which helps staff plan, differentiate and deliver lessons to a range of ability and needs within the school. Learning Support staff have received the same training and regularly meet with the SENCO to discuss the needs and how to help staff with specific individuals.

Teaching Assistants

All Teaching Assistants continue to work across the age range and curriculum supporting pupils in class. This year there has been a significant change in staff due to promotion of Teaching Assistants in roles that are fortunately still of benefit to the SEND department. Mrs Bance has been promoted to school librarian and helps provide a safe space for many SEND students at break and other times during the day when needed, her knowledge of our students has been invaluable in promoting this area. Miss Armstrong has been promoted to a Behaviour Teaching Assistant working with Mr Barton in the Green Rooms in our Inclusion Department. Mrs Horn was promoted

to Year 7 Pastoral Support Officer and has been an excellent resource and support during transition for our new Year 7 SEND students. Mrs Linney left at Christmas for an alternative career and was replaced by Miss Hamilton. A further two teaching assistants were employed towards the end of the academic year; Miss Brading and Miss Hollingdale. The priority of support is based on students with an EHCP primarily, however it is vital that independence is promoted. Teaching Assistants are not generally advised to work with any one pupil, but using their knowledge of other students on the SEND register, they work as a satellite evaluating who and how they support students in need within the whole class environment. Teaching Assistants are required to record their support on our system to assist with evaluation of targets for students with EHCPs and to monitor progress. This tracks what support is offered to each child and the effectiveness of that support. This is discussed and evaluated at the fortnightly meetings with the SENCO if any students are becoming a concern or have improved. Each core subject has their own teaching assistant which are not part of the SEND support but do assist with exam arrangements and some aspects of differentiation in class.

This year the Teaching Assistants were a vital part of the Year 6 transition programme which helped significantly with knowing the students and helping them settle into their classes at the beginning of Year 7.

Support classes in English

Mrs Cornish taught two Year 7 classes and one Year 8 class for Nurture English. All classes were taught in the new Learning Support nurture classroom and did not exceed the limit of ten students per class. The students selected for these groups were the weakest academically in Years 7 and 8. The curriculum was based on differentiation from the mainstream English curriculum, with a focus on improving confidence, addressing individual weaknesses and increasing a love of reading. Some students in Year 7 were able to go back into the mainstream classes in Year 8 due to exceeding their target. The Year 8 class were able to transition smoothly into their Year 9 mainstream classes with a greater understanding of support needed and group dynamics.

Support classes in Maths

Mr Simpson taught two Year 7 classes and two Year 8 classes for Nurture Mathematics, which is now one Year 7 Nurture Mathematics class and two Year 8 Nurture Mathematics classes in class sizes of 4-12. Lessons are taught both within the Learning Suite and the Maths Department to ensure integration. Schemes of work are differentiated and adapted to the needs of the learners to ensure they are working at an appropriate level. The aim is to fill in any gaps in learning and ensure that they are prepared with the basic skills in order to develop and close the gap with their peers so that learners can work towards their GCSE examinations.

Specialised support for Specific Learning Difficulties

Apart from support in class Specific Learning Difficulties continues to be an area which needs more development. Mrs Duncumb took a Year 8 class of students who missed the threshold for Nurture English in some extra literacy sessions. These students were taken out of classes on a rotational basis. Mrs Duncumb also worked 1:1 with some individuals who needed further support. Mrs Duncumb visited some primary schools with a view to investigating a computer programme to help with dyslexia intervention specifically, however due to funding and teaching hours reduction this project is still to be completed.

Foundation Learning in KS4

Pupils are invited to study on the Foundation Learning pathway as one of their options at the end of Year 8. This invitation is based on progress data and target grades at GCSE. Foundation Learning replaces a Humanities option at GCSE and a Modern Foreign Language at GCSE. In its

place, learners study Home Cooking VCert, Health and Fitness, VCert Level 1 and Forest Schools. Foundation Learning aims to develop self-esteem, confidence and independent skills that will contribute to learners growing into adulthood. Both Home Cooking and Health and Fitness are studied at Level 1 Vocational Certificate Level. We are investigating introducing the John Muir Award within the Forest Schools programme of study but this is yet to be finalised.

Learning Support Department Lunch Club

This provision has been very successful this year, particularly looking after some of our more socially vulnerable pupils. It supports Years 7-9 and is supervised by SEND staff and teaching assistants. It is a calm, nurturing atmosphere providing a safe space for these students to attend on a regular basis.

Learning Support Homework Club

Mrs Cornish ran a weekly homework club exclusively for SEND students. Whilst it was specifically supervised on a Monday, it also led to students using it at lunchtime to complete homework during the rest of the week and ask for help if they were unsure of an homework tasks. Pupils were referred to this by staff, parents and Teaching Assistants if it was seen that homework was becoming an issue in class particularly with those who lacked organisational skills

Learning Mentor Support

Pupils that fall behind their expected progress were assigned to their respective Learning Mentor; Years 7-9 Mrs Rutter, Year 10 Mrs Turner and Year 11 Mrs Walker. In these targeted sessions Learning Mentors work 1:1 with pupils to improve pieces of work that students have found difficult. This year the Learning Mentors joined the Learning Support Department in their new classroom, Learning Mentors also pick up some SEND students that are below target and need extra assistance.

Pastoral Support

Each year group has a Pastoral Support Officer that have a non- teaching role. They are seen as the first point of contact for parents/carers and pupils if they have a concern. The Pastoral Support Officers (year group responsibility current for 2018-2019), consists of Mrs Horn - Year 7, Mrs Burnside - Year 8, Mrs Duala - Year 9, Mrs Ridley - Year 10, and Mrs Hudson - Year 11. Each Pastoral Support Officer works alongside the SEND staff very closely as they attend Annual Review, PEP, TAF and parental meetings regularly. In addition to the team this year was Mrs Cobb whose work with our Pupil Premium students has been a vital part to our school community.

Behaviour Inclusion Support

Any pupils that have behavioural or social/emotional issues are supported in the 'Green Rooms', this consists of a teaching space for small groups and an inclusion area with specific Inclusion Support Officers, Miss Mitchell and Mrs Norman. Mr Barton and Miss Armstrong teach specific supported subject learning for these students.

Emotional Support

Every week we have been supported by a counsellor who works for one day a week with pupils who are referred by Mr Odlin and the Pastoral Support Officers. Additionally when requested we have had support from CAMHS Mental Health Nurses who have come into school for further experienced advice.

Physical Support

The school has ramps and a number of entrances enabling wheelchair access to all departments. With the arrival of our new modern Modern Foreign Languages/Computer and Music Block, a new lift grants access to all areas of different floors within the school. There are many disabled toilets in the school now which are easily accessible from most departments. The Food Tech rooms are the only rooms that are not currently accessible, however the adapted kitchen in the Learning Support Area is set up for this purpose, with a height adjustable cooking station.

Any disabled students that have applied to Downlands have been invited into the school on an individual basis to tour the site to actively prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than others and ensure all facilities are fit for purpose.

Our school first aid trained specialist Miss Prior, who is also our receptionist, looks after all pupils who require medical attention. Care plans, medication and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans in the event of a fire are all attended to by Miss Prior.

Identification and Assessment of Pupils with SEND

Transition planning before a pupil joins Downlands - Primary Liaison

This year was a particularly successful transition programme organised by Mrs Cornish and Mrs Simpson which was fed-back by primary SENCOs to be reassuring for students and parents alike. Mrs Cornish and Mr Simpson visited all primary SENCOs and in some instances met the Year 6 SEND students in their schools. Information was shared on SEND students and during Annual Reviews in the last term of Year 6 for all students with EHCPs. Mr Simpson visited any ASC students in their primary schools to plan for the change of placement and identify a key adult who could help them when they arrived.

Primary SENCOs also identified students with additional needs that they felt would benefit from more taster visits than the one day that all Year 6 were due to attend. Mrs Cornish organised 3 additional visits which gave all SEND students the opportunity to visit the school at different times of the day to experience the full day and movement of children around the school. Each session was structured to experience vital parts of the Downlands routine to help ease any anxieties or fears. It was helpful for students to get to know others outside of their own schools, work with the Teaching Assistants and meet key staff before they arrived in September. All staff were trained on the new SEND arrivals and the SEND information was sent out to teaching and support staff, as well as updated on the SEND register.

Identification of Additional Needs for pupils in Downlands

All SEND pupils with an EHCP are assessed as part of the Annual Review process by our assessor Mrs Rance. Year 7 students completed a Cognitive Abilities Test when they arrived in September. This information as well as teacher feedback resulted in selection for nurture groups and an update of strategies for learning on the SEND register. In Year 9 pupils sat an online spelling and reading test which identify pupils who are eligible for access arrangements for their GCSE exams. Mrs Rance looked at communication difficulties when she identified students from this assessment, however does not test for dyslexia. Many parents have had this assessment done privately to ensure an exact result.

Any outside agency reports or findings are summarised and sent out to relevant staff, then a copy kept on our system should further evidence be required.

Consulting with Parents and Carers

Alongside the Pastoral Support Officer, the SENCO and Assistant SENCO attend Parents Evenings and meet with parents/carers regularly on an informal basis as required. A specific SEND

coffee morning is provided in the first term to ensure any parents/carers of additional needs students are happy and reassured with all that is planned at Downlands for their child. As well as Annual Review meetings with students who have EHCPs, SEND parents/carers are welcomed to keep communication about their child regular through contact with their Pastoral Support Officer and SENCO respectively.

Using Specialised Services

The SENCO has regular contact with many outside agencies and County Support workers through phone calls, emails and professional meetings. Using the Local Offer and all of West Sussex specific SEND professionals this is a connection we aim to keep as a high priority to support parents/carers, staff and students.

Transition on from Downlands

From Year 10 onwards it is imperative that any Post 16 provision is aware of specific needs and support needed for all our SEND students moving on. This is to ensure that EHCP targets and Access Arrangements are carried on with the student. Mrs Cutress, our career advisor meets all pupils who are on the SEND register and attends any Annual Review Meetings in Year 10 and 11 to ensure the transition is smooth wherever they attend. Mrs Cutress is a key professional who works with the SENCO to make sure applications, concessions, interviews, taster days and transport are all successful.

Contacts

For further information on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities please contact:

Mrs Vicky Cornish SENCO email: vcornish@downlands.org

Mr Alex Simpson Assistant SENCO email : asimpson@downlands.org

The SEND Governor is Mrs Clare Brittain, who in addition to the Headteacher, can be contacted if parents and carers wish to take matters further.

To access West Sussex County Council Local Offer for SEND information and services go to: www.westsussex.local-offer.org