

Most Inclusive Practice Across a School

Lyndhurst First School



What the Judges Said

What strikes us is that this school is constantly looking to improve at everything it already does. There were parts that suffered due to lack of data, but a thorough submission showing the engagement with school, pupils and families.

Context

“This is a very inclusive school. Staff know the children and families well and have an inclusive approach.

It does all that it can to develop children’s academic and social education.” WSCC Inclusion Review Feb 2018.

We are an inclusive 4 form entry urban coastal school in an area of deprivation (lowest 10%) with an SSC for children who have a diagnosis of ASD. The aim of the SSC is to enable children to explore their potential without limits, in a caring and empathetic environment.

The children are from a wide surrounding area and work with dedicated staff with a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of social communication conditions/ASD. The children that attend the SSC are not able to cope with the full time social demands of mainstream schooling, so their learning expectations are met in Bumble Bee class.

Ofsted said of Lyndhurst (Feb 2018):

“You are supported by hardworking, caring staff and active, knowledgeable, governors. You are all highly reflective, know your pupils individually and are constantly looking to improve learning for the children. You are committed to fostering a love of learning in your pupils through a creative and practical curriculum. Your pupils enjoy learning and find school fun. They are proud to be part of your school.”

Children enter school from a variety of settings (approx. 24) and there is a 3 year trend of a low EYFS baseline – 2017 – 98% working BELOW for Prime and 100% BELOW in Specific. Yet learners attain above National for Y1 Phonics and above National for end of Year 2 ARE.

In mainstream, we have 16%+SEND, EAL 30%+, 20%+ PP and we work in partnership with Children’s Services or Early Help with 60 families. We have high levels of mobility because of families living in temporary housing, EAL families and those staying in the Woman’s Refuge. Parent/carers choose Lyndhurst because of its inclusive culture embedded in an ethos of our school values – ‘We Can, Respect and Learning For Ourselves’. We are also a Level 1 Rights Respecting School.

We have an inclusive ethos and corporate responsibility for all our learners – we are highly inclusive and all adults take responsibility for all children. SEND children are included in all curriculum activities and are supported to access extra-curricular activities i.e. a Bocca team events, reading with a sports coach, attending a week-end residential at Lodge Hill. All SEND and PP children are identified on all planning by name.

Their progress is tracked very carefully and appropriate interventions put in place to make good progress. Inclusive practice includes receiving extra beach and Forest school sessions so that these groups of children become the leaders and experts, building self-esteem and confidence. Children from the SSC are included in all school events and are encouraged to participate alongside their peers. Integration into mainstream learning ensures that there is a good level of understanding and respect for all.

Our staff believe that all children can achieve. Our after school clubs and Breakfast club are inclusive. Equal opportunities for all children is promoted through our creative and inspiring curriculum, including our Beach School and Forest School curriculum. One SEND child said after returning from a week-end residential at Lodge Hill run by staff volunteers

“I think that Lodge Hill was the best thing. I liked the camp fire and den building. I got more confident sleeping away from home.”

Entry

Our School Community are winners because ‘above and beyond’ is our ‘every day’!

The staff work as a team to support all children. They have high aspirations for all learners and we all have a Growth Mindset – the ‘not yet’ attitude. Children with SEND are supported by all staff, very able and trained SEND Teaching Assistants and an extremely professional SENDCo/Inclusion Leader. The Vulnerable children are also supported by our Pupil Premium funding – we are the South East Champions for Pupil Premium 2017.(Dfe)

2 years ago we took the decision to appoint a full time Family Engagement Support Officer – FESO (now trained to L2) who supports any family who is in need. She also works with children in groups that promote positive mental health. The school’s two Learning Mentors, Family Engagement Support Worker and externally funded Play therapist work closely with children and have a profound effect on the whole school by enhancing inclusion. All staff provide care and support for children experiencing emotional difficulties such as, bereavement and attachment difficulties. The FESO has had some of our case studies published in a book. Parent/carers have found the support we offer invaluable.

We have excellent transitions both from pre-school to next placements. Children with SEND are taken by the SENDCo and SEN team for extra visits before they transition. They have their own transition book with photos of key people and places so that they become confident in knowing what to expect. Children attend regular talking groups so that they can share their worries and fears.

These are addressed through contact with key staff. Communication with parent/carers is paramount. Children in the SSC have daily diaries and phone calls. Parent/carers are invited to come into school each half term to look at their child’s books and comment on how well they are doing. We have an open door policy where parent/carers come into school each morning and the SLT chat/greet parents on each playground every morning. Our FESO (Kim) meets and greets each morning – giving out free fruit and vegetables. She also organises food parcels and hampers at times of need. Kim also supports families through their diagnosis and in agency/professionals meetings.

Children who have undiagnosed SEND are supported by Kim and the SENDCo – working with the children and parent/carers in putting strategies and routines into place. Together the SENDCo and Kim ensure that children are supported holistically. Kim runs meditation, yoga and time to talk (mental health) sessions for children. One supported parent recently commented “All I can say is I’m glad my children were allocated this school as they have flourished. The communication between the teachers and parents is next to nothing!”

Early Identification – at Lyndhurst we have strong early identification processes. All new children are quickly assessed and a form is completed ‘Early Identification Form’. This is completed by the class teacher and parent/carers and then passed to the SENDCo, EAL leader and Pupil Premium Leader. These leaders then meet with the parent/carers and observe and work with the child. They set up interventions or support and any issues or concerns are quickly addressed.

A Provision Map for the child is started. This is reviewed by the Deputy Head Teacher each half term’s data capture. Information about children is triangulated and provision and practice adapted. ILPs are monitored in the same way by the SENDCo.

In our commitment to all children achieving well academically, socially and emotionally, all staff have received training on dyslexia, sensory difficulties, de-escalation, ASD, working with families with mental health issues. Our school organised locality mental health training for staff and parents last year. Adults working within the SSC and mainstream school have attended the Autism Aware course. All staff working with children with specific needs attend regular training i.e. supporting children with Downs Syndrome or learning Braille to support sight impaired children. Lyndhurst has a centred approach towards parent partnership e.g. the SENDCo arranges training for parents/carers and staff to attend SEND training sessions together e.g. Early Bird (ASD course). There is large emphasis on co-production with parents/carers and teacher’s meeting regularly to discuss each SEND child’s outcomes, which are recorded and monitored in their Individual Learning Plans. We continually refine practice and provision and last year have included attendance information on ILPs so that parents know that good attendance is important and that SEND attendance is one of our focus improvement targets. Impact has been that SEND attendance is improving term on term – up 1% last half term and in one year group up by 1.25%.

Provision and practice is adapted regularly and an individualised curriculum is put into place. We adapt learning topics so that all children can access learning by knowing their interests. We have improved reading skills by adapting practices such as SEND boy readers reading with the football coaches, the Reading with Dogs

programme, setting up writing intervention clubs ie in the Forest areas and through a school ethos which believes that everyone is responsible for everyone being the best they can be. We also proactively link skills to everyday life and aspirations ie Engineer week. All children had the opportunity to link DT, Science, Art and Maths to real life skills and famous, inspiring people.

“Your training for staff and additional support for pupils has resulted in improvement in the standard of reading for all pupils. It has made the most difference to disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are now making accelerated progress and are catching up with other pupils.” (Ofsted 2018)