

Most Inclusive Practice Across a School

Penwortham Primary School

What the Judges Said

A school, who the judges felt made a real effort to be inclusive for all types of need, not just focussing on those with the largest or most complex needs.

Context

Penwortham SEND vision statement:

Community: Everyone is included.

Unity: United by our school's values.

Opportunity: Aim for happiness and success.

Penwortham Primary School is bigger than average – 3 form entry mainstream primary school. It is situated in South West London. There are 647 pupils on roll; 33% are EAL learners and 39 different languages are spoken. 18% of children are entitled to Pupil Premium funding. Currently there are 17 pupils with EHCPs and there are 79 pupils on the SEN register for SEN support. The most significant need is speech, language and communication (8%) followed by ASD (1.5%), SEMH (1.4%) and specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) (1.2%). Ofsted judged the school as good in November 2017.

In 2017 the new SEND team structure was introduced. SEND team consist of:

Head of inclusion – Deputy Head, SENCo, Class teacher, SEN administrator. The SEND team is actively supported by: Headteacher and Governing Body (SEND Governor).

Penwortham operates over 3 sides – all are easily accessible for children with disabilities (e.g. Ramps, lift). Each floor has accessible toilet. One classroom is fitted with a professional soundfield system that is beneficial for children with Hearing Impairment.

Penwortham's efforts to be an Inclusive School have been recognised widely.

Penwortham has recently achieved the following, hugely respected awards:

- IQM Centre of Excellence
- Right Respecting School – Gold Award
- The National Quality Mark for Coaching in Education – Silver

Entry

How do you go above and beyond the expectations?

Introduction

“Penwortham Primary is clearly an inclusive school and this is felt as soon as you walk through the doors of the buildingThey care about children, they care about getting it right for individuals, they care about being adaptable, flexible and they care about offering bespoke solutions to children and families – but they frame that flexibility within a clearly defined philosophy, belief and set of principles, every student is at the centre of what they do”- IQM assessment, February 2020.

Penwortham aims to enable pupils to achieve their full potential in a caring and stimulating environment. “The school’s overall positive ethos provides a nurturing environment for pupils with SEND. The high expectations of behaviour of all pupils support those with SEND to maintain high standards of behaviour” – Link Inspection, February 2019

“You have made sure that Penwortham Primary School is a safe and welcoming place where pupils are happy and enjoy learning. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the initiatives and activities available to them. They are able to talk about the school’s values and how they influence everything. Pupils believe that staff expect them to work hard and do their best. They say that teachers encourage them to ‘have a go’ but help them when work is really difficult.” – OFSTED 2017

The recent IQM assessment highlighted the following strengths:

- All staff, parents and Governors are committed to inclusive practices. Inclusion was evident and prominent in the classroom and student’s work.
- Rapid response from the inclusion team for training and in class support has contributed to the positive approach being “bought into” by all staff.
- Inclusion is woven into the very fabric and essence of the school – there are pupil profiles for vulnerable children, promoted schools’ values and excellent systems of communication.
- Child centred approach to all areas of school life ensure that all are included and feel part of the school community.
- The inclusion team have a clear vision for the school and their ambition will keep this on track.
- Strong senior leadership team who work very well together. The SLT play to their strengths and support one another.
- Genuine sense of warmth and welcome emanates throughout the school. This has

been fostered by all partners – staff, parents, governors, pupils and community. (IQM report 2020).

Learning environment

The learning environment at Penwortham is fully inclusive and welcoming for all learners. The classes are colourful and purposeful – there is evidence of inclusive practices in each class including visuals to support the children. The learning is accessible for all. There are plenty of spaces to ensure the children have a variety of spaces to access their learning and interventions.

The school has a pottery room and kiln, which is used to ensure the children are provided with yet another learning opportunity that would otherwise not be available to them.

The school's staff is constantly working on improving outcomes and quality of education for the most vulnerable children. Last year the SEND children were involved in creating sensory wall. Following on this project, the school have recently installed a professional sensory room. This was funded through the staff fundraising; 5 members of the staff completed a running event and managed to fundraise over £5000! "This is yet another noticeable recognition of the staff's commitment to giving the children the best resources and learning environment possible."(IQM report 2020)

The school's inclusive approach is immediately noticeable in the learning environment through their use of Communicate in Print, to ensure all aspects of the school is visual including their rights respecting school information and their school ethos.

Early identification

Early identification of additional needs is a high priority for us so that support can be provided at an early stage. We know that recognising difficulties quickly will enable us to put the right interventions to support children and their families so that any issues can be tackled quickly. If interventions are ineffective, we refer the children for external assessments such as: Educational Psychology, Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy,

Physio Therapy and CAMHS.

"The encouragement to refer pupils where there are concerns is resulting in more referrals being made, which is positive in that this is flagging up at an early stage

that a teacher or a parent has a concern about the progress of a child.” (Link Inspection report, 2019)

Outcomes for SEND children

Our all staff put the children in the heart of everything they do. We use a Person-Centred Approach and active support. We ALL work as a TEAM to help our SEND children to achieve their full potential. Our staff is caring, knowledgeable, dedicated and passionate about supporting children with special needs.

SEND children are included in all curriculum activities and are offered additional, personally tailored activities and are given opportunities to attend events such as: trips to the places of their interests. This worked particularly well for children who lacked of motivation to come to school or to learn.

We all consistently use visual resources such as visual timetables and communicating cards and we can see that this practice benefited not only children with a diagnosis of Autism but all of our pupils.

Every child with SEND has personal ‘One-page profile’. It is a document that captures all the important information about a person on a single sheet of paper. It often reveals information that may not be gathered in more formal ways. It also helps people in the child or young person’s life to either get to know them quickly, or ensure that they are providing consistent support in the way that the person wants.

Example

All our children with EHCPs have access to their child friendly IEP and outcomes:

Example

Here at Penwortham, we make sure SEND children have a say in key decision making for example we invite them to attend Teaching assistants/ LSAs interviews. Their role is to ask potential candidates questions and their views are taken into account when final decision is being made.

“I really enjoyed joining the SENCO and the Deputy Headteacher in interviewing new teaching assistants. It was a great experience, it made me feel really proud and important”. (Boy, Year 5).

“I was delighted when my son had the opportunity to participate in an interview panel. He really enjoyed the process and talked about it a lot afterwards. I think this is a great way of involving SEN children into the school community and in the decision-making process for choosing new staff. I am sure that this has helped to

develop my son's confidence and feel a part of the school community". (Year 3 Parent)

We want our SEN children to be heard and visible during the key meetings such as Annual Reviews and SEN Plan Reviews. We have embedded a practice of video-recording children's views and opinions about their progress and next steps related to their education and well-being. The video is then presented at the beginning of the review so all attending adults can hear what the young person has to say. This practice was praised during our recent Link Inspection- "This is an excellent initiative".

"I have seen interview videos of my daughter in the setting during her annual EHCP meeting and she is present during the review meetings throughout the year" (Year 1 Parent)

We believe that in order to help our SEND children to achieve their full potential we need to work in close cooperation with parents and external professionals.

Cooperation with Parents

All staff at Penwortham Primary value the role that parents play in the education of their children and are committed to working in partnership with them to ensure best possible outcomes for all pupils.

We have an "Open Door Policy", parents are always welcome to contact the SENCO and other members of SEND team. We aim to offer them support and guidance as soon as possible. We provide a wide range of communication opportunities to keep parents involved and engaged. These methods include parental consultation evenings, email, Twitter and an effective and up to date website.

At the beginning of the academic year we invite our parents to meet with the SENCO and a TA who supports the child. 100% parents told us that this practice is such a great way of getting know the support staff who play a very important role in child's education.

We actively support parents in accessing additional help through the Local offer. We help parents to apply for Wandsworth's WAND Card. The card can be used by families to get extra support when they are out and about without having to explain their child's disabilities every time.

We hold regular – termly coffee mornings for parents of SEND children. We invite professional speakers such as: representatives from our Borough, Speech and language therapists, Place 2 Be councillors etc.

“Coffee mornings have been helpful in giving useful information to parents and also enabling parents of SEN children to meet each other and feel less isolated” (Year 2 Parent.)

To offer even more targeted and effective support for the most vulnerable families we organise half termly home visits – the SENCo with ELSA mentor visit parents to share resources and help them to implement appropriate strategies to support issues like: behaviour, sleeping, eating, routines, attention and listening.

“I feel that this is a very good initiative and we get a lot from this support. I have three children with special needs and the visits helped our family to deal with challenging behaviours and our daughter finally goes to bed without any problems. We are very thankful and lucky as not many schools go that far”.(Year 1 Parent)

Here at Penwortham we understand the importance on transitions. All children with SEN are provided with a transition booklet at the end of each academic year, we start transition process to secondary school as early as in Year 5. We organise secondary transfer workshop for parents of pupils with EHCPs and we visit potential schools with the parents.

Work that all staff of Penwortham has been praised by parents, here are some comments they have made about us:

“ I am incredibly thankful for such a hard work and dedication of the SENCo and her team. The process of getting an EHCP for my son was very smooth and quick. I felt supported all the way.” (Year 1 parent)

“I am greatly pleased with the level of support we have received by the friendly staff at Penwortham and their Senco department. My daughter has an excellent caring, hardworking support worker and a very organised, diligent and efficient Senco. My daughter has had a stroke at birth so she has a variety of complex medical needs and several doctors and professionals working with her. The school has played a huge extremely efficient role in helping to liaise and coordinate with all of my daughter’s professionals. They involve me in decisions and discuss changes with me and update me regularly. Also they advise me regarding referrals and listen to my suggestions regarding any additional requirements or external referrals, tools or therapy required. The school has successfully incorporated the doctors strategies and suggestions and has gone out of their way to perform several adaptations in order to help improve my daughter’s condition. As well as helping her to keep up

with her peers and to achieve the targets set by the various professions involved. I also feel that my daughter's views are taken into account and she even feels valued at school which she loves. I have seen interview videos of her in the setting during her annual EHCP meetings and she is present during the review meetings throughout the year.

Lastly in addition to all this, the school has even taken into account the welfare of Sen parents and has kindly set up a successful termly SEN coffee morning. From which an active WhatsApp group has been created with the aim of offering support and advice and becoming a platform and parent voice. There have been various meetups, friendships have been formed and parents have gained a wider support network". (Year 2 parent)

"I feel that my views have been heard and responded to when expressing concerns about my son. For example, in year one, he had to share a playground with year two children, which was a big change for him, as in reception the children had their own playground. My son is not steady on his feet, and was getting knocked over a lot, so the teacher spoke to senior management and they agreed to change the playtimes for the year 1 children so that they were not out in the playground with the year 2 children. This helped a lot to make my son feel more confident in the playground. Now he is in year 2 and much more relaxed to play in the ground. I feel that the school is a safe environment for my son, and that he is cared for and happy there, despite his additional needs" (Year 3 Parent)

Cooperation with External Professionals

We are very proud of the strong relationship we have built with external professionals. This enabled us to offer training provided by them to staff and parents. We receive weekly visits from the following external professionals: Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapist, Dyslexia Teacher, Advisory Service for Autistic children, Education Psychologist.

"The external agencies who met with me over the two days, spoke with pride and admiration for the school as they have all been part of the journey to ensure this school has inclusion and well-being at the centre of everything they do.

While talking to the leadership team, it was clear that there is a focus on community for Penwortham Primary and it drives everything they do on a daily basis for the students and families. The school seeks opportunities to involve the parents and professionals to break down barriers and ensure they feel as involved in school life as their children" IQM report 2020.

Interventions

We offer a range of different interventions to support 4 broad areas of SEN needs.

Penwortham is particularly proud of introducing in 2018 two therapies:

1. Reading with the therapy dog – small group weekly reading sessions.

“I am now happy in school because I like reading with Percy” (Boy, Year 6)

“One thing that has had a huge positive influence on my son is the ability to spend time with Percy, the therapy dog. This has had a big positive impact on his mood and motivation to come into school”. – (Y6 Parent)

Reading with the therapy dog intervention helped children with SEN to develop their confidence and in some cases helped to overcome the school refusal.

2. Speech and Language Interventions – we have two teaching assistants, who under the supervision of the visiting speech therapists deliver SALT sessions.

This approach and interventions are highly effective, 76% of pupils met their targets and many being close to achieving all or most.

Well-being of our pupils

Rights Respecting report found that – “The school has a very strong focus on children’s social and emotional wellbeing. They are a Place2Be school, they invest in Emotional Literacy Support with a Happy Place where children can go and talk; and are working towards a Nurture Award. Classrooms have wellbeing areas where children can go if they want a quiet time. Children proudly showed all these areas during the learning walk. The school holds the Healthy School award. Children identified their school lunches as healthy. PE and a wide range of extracurricular clubs ensure children develop healthy lifestyles.

It is evident from talking to all staff that the well-being of the children is at the forefront of what they staff do daily. Their aim is to ensure that all aspects of school life are child centred and they have achieved this. During my learning walk, the motivation and positive relationships between the children and teaching staff was clear to see and when I spoke to the students, they were proud to be members of their school.

Monday mornings focus on the well-being of children and staff via their singing assembly to ensure they return to the class ready for learning. In addition to this, the children have opportunities to manage their own emotional well-being via ELSA or

Place2Be counselling, which offers a self-referral process for the children. They excitedly explained about lunch club as well as the benches in the playground for when you are feeling lonely. There is always someone to come and keep them company or talk to them.

From speaking to the leadership team, it was clear that they had been on quite a journey and their strength as a team has driven the “positive” feel that is felt throughout the school. All members of staff had a clear understanding of the school’s ethos and vision for all their children.”

We actively support and promote children’s well – being by working closely with Place 2 Be – a children’s mental health charity providing school-based support and in – depth training programmes to improve the emotional wellbeing of pupils and their families.

Penwortham offers also a professional ELSA Support (Emotional Literacy Support Assistance). We have three, fully qualified ELSA mentors who work with our most vulnerable children.

Place2Be provides a block of time to work with pupils with SEND to prepare them for transition to secondary school. The lead ELSA and learning mentor are placed in Year 6 and carry out more intensive support and work on transition with SEND pupils after SATs. Local services such as Garratt Park are also used to provide support for transition and help to prepare pupils for their next stage of learning.

Penwortham promotes wellbeing and provides a caring and safe environment for pupils with SEND. There is, for example, a lunch time club, ‘Happy Place’, for those who find it difficult to be outside or get anxious. Learning mentors and other support is available to help promote pupils personal and social development.

The school is participating in the National Nurturing Schools Programme – this is a two-year programme focused on embedding a nurturing culture throughout their school, and includes enhancing teaching and learning by focusing on emotional needs and development in a whole-school environment. The programme assesses schools against six key principles and one of the principles is based on transition. Hence, being part of the programme is further enhancing the move from primary to secondary school. “The work on the National Nurturing Schools Programme also helps to demonstrate the school’s very positive approach to pupils’ personal and social development and well-being”. – (Link Inspection, 2019)

The school has been nominated by Place2Be for the School's Well-being Award and has been shortlisted which is a significant achievement. It has yet to hear whether the final outcomes of the nominations. Nonetheless, being nominated is already a very positive endorsement of the school's support for pupils with SEND.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare for pupils with SEND are being judged outstanding (Recent Link inspection) because of the high level of care and support for personal development. Our positive ethos provides a nurturing environment for pupils with SEND. The high expectations of behaviour of all pupils' support those with SEND to maintain high standards of behaviour.

Transitions

Preparation for their next steps in education is very thorough. Transition has a high priority for the school. The school arranges several visits to a secondary setting and before pupils go up. Pupils also have visits to the secondary school they will be transitioning to. The SENCOs from these schools are involved in the annual reviews in Year 6 and this is followed up with hand-over meetings where the pupils' needs are discussed in detail.

The school is now starting transition work earlier, i.e. in Year 5, so that there is even better preparation for pupils' next stage of education.

Training opportunities for staff so they can support the children even better Penwortham provides a good range of training for staff. CPD needs are identified firstly through the needs of pupils with SEND and ensuring that staff have the expertise to support these needs effectively; pupil progress meetings are also used to identify the individual CPD needs of staff. The training is very specific where there are specific, identified needs i.e. a teacher getting training on selective mutism following a recent diagnosis of a pupil in their class. Training covered includes: sensory needs; supporting child with Downs Syndrome; speech, language and communication needs; ASD with Garratt Park Advisory Service for Autistic children.

Training and briefing are also in-built into the school's work. For example, teachers have 1:1 session with the speech, language and communication specialist to get a briefing on any pupils with SEN in their classes who are receiving specialist support from the therapist. They are given advice on how to continue support in class. The training and support provided is being used actively by staff to improve their effectiveness with pupils with SEND and in ensuring that they are using appropriate strategies and methods.

Wider support

Penwortham Primary school support not only the local community but also often take part in fundraising/raising awareness events for example – “Walk for Autism” national campaign and raised incredible £182. The money will help to pay for equipment, training and support that people with Autism need.

How is your work innovative?

We strongly believe that our passion for inclusion and hard work makes a significant and positive difference to our most vulnerable pupils and their families.

Reason for entering the SEND Award 2020

We are extremely proud of the provision we provide for our SEN children and support we offer to their families. We are very pleased to see that children with special needs are thriving in our setting. “This is a very caring, nurturing school and my son is very happy there”. (year 2 Parent).

Last year we have been nominated for SEND National Award in category on most inclusive practice across the school. Although we did not win, we were praised and given a very positive and encouraging feedback from the judges:” The judges felt you had made a fantastic start and would like to encourage you to enter next year with data evidence over a longer period of time.”

Winning this prestigious SEND Award 2020 would reassure us that we serving our SEND children and their families well and that we make a positive difference to their lives. It would also inspire us to do much more – above and beyond, so the most vulnerable pupils, despite their additional needs can achieve their full potential and become happy, independent and confident young people.

How is this work sustained over at least two years?

The school’s data shows that pupils are making good progress in meeting their short-term and individual targets.

The data for individual pupils with EHCPs indicates that they are meeting their targets well.

The sustained impact of all above is clearly visible in pupils’ outcomes.

Results for three consecutive years have been very positive.

We measure progress in relation to pupils’ personal, social and communication skills, and their wider development by setting targets for these and assessing how well pupils are achieving against them. Specific interventions are also assessed by

checking where pupils are when they start and then comparing the end points with the baseline assessment.

“The outcomes clearly indicate that the funded support for SEND is having a positive impact on removing any differences in progress and attainment. The small step targets provide a good indicator of progress for pupils with more complex needs who are unlikely to reach nationally expected or age-related standards (....)–The outcomes for pupils with SEND are good because of the positive results of pupils in national tests and assessments and also because of the good progress pupils make in relation to small step targets they are set”. (Link Inspection Report, 2019).

The use of data at Penwortham is used to direct the interventions and support that the children access. The importance of quality first teaching is felt as you walk around Penwortham Primary, as there are minimal interventions in place as children can access learning via their inclusive classroom.

“It was clear from the tracking that the SEN children are making gradual progress and comparing the previous data shows that the steps and changes she has implemented in her role over the last 18 months has ensured all children with additional needs is able to succeed at school” IQM report 2020.

We regularly receive positive feedback from our pupils gathered through pupil voice. It indicates that they are happy at school and enjoy their learning. Pupils make friends at school and know who to go to should they have concerns or need help, including with their work.