

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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## CONTENTS:

- How does the school know if my child needs extra help?
- Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns about my child?
- How will I know how you are supporting my child?
- If my child has medical needs how will they be supported?
- Have any staff received specialist training for children with needs?
- How are the schools resources allocated?
- How is the school accessible for children with additional needs?
- How will my child be included in activities at school, after school clubs and on school trips?
- How will the school prepare my child when joining the school or when transferring to a new school?
- My child needs help with transport to school. How can you help?
- How will you help me to support my child's learning?
- What specialist services and expertise are available or accessed by the school?
- Where can further information on services available be found?



## OVERVIEW OF OUR SCHOOLS

Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden are mainstream primary schools, working in the Viridis Federation of schools with a shared Governing body. We cater for children aged 3 to 11 years old with a combined roll of 1390 pupils. Though each school has its own identity and community, staff at our schools share experience and expertise to further benefit our pupils.

At Viridis Schools we believe that every child can make progress and achieve and that it is our job to make sure this happens. We ensure that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all of our pupils.

Within the Federation, 21% of children are on the SEND register. The number of children who are in receipt of an EHCP are: Orchard 15, Southwold 10 and Hoxton Garden 17.

We ensure appropriate provision is made for pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, this includes pupils with all levels of special educational needs and our pupils with English as an additional language whilst ensuring the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils are adequately assessed and addressed.

Personalised (or IEP) targets are set and reviewed 3 times a year in discussion with parents.

## HOW DOES THE SCHOOL KNOW IF MY CHILD NEEDS EXTRA HELP?

Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden have rigorous systems in place for identifying pupils who may have additional needs. Our class teachers and support staff are trained to identify specific needs; these pupils are referred to our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) on each school site. We believe that early intervention is always in the best interest of the child. The SENCO will complete an initial assessment of your child in order to identify barriers to learning and the area in which your child is struggling. Each year, we hold two pupil progress review meetings where we look at each pupil's progress and progress of groups of children. There are times when additional children or groups are identified as underperforming so strategies are discussed and put in place and this/these pupils are monitored regularly. If a child has indicators of a specific need then the school will seek advice from relevant professionals, e.g. Educational Psychologist, Speech Therapist or specialist provision available both within the local authority and beyond the local authority that would support an identified need.

## WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT MY CHILD?

Your child's class teacher should always be your first point of contact. Your child's teacher should be able to answer most of your questions, however, if there are things they are unable to answer then they will talk to the relevant members of staff and get back to you.

If you need to talk to a member of staff about a more specific special need and support on offer for your child then our school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is available to meet with you and go through any issues or concerns you may have. This person is also available to support you in structuring your child's learning at home.

Our schools also have Learning Mentors who are available to talk through any issues or concerns you may have. They are at the main gate every morning so can be approached directly. Alternatively, the school office will be able to make appointments for you to meet either the SENCO or the Learning Mentor at a convenient time for both parties.

## HOW WILL I KNOW YOU ARE SUPPORTING MY CHILD?

All pupils who attend Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden will work with their class teacher and a teaching assistant on a daily basis. Additional adults will be placed in classes and provide additional support for pupils who need it. We hold termly parents meetings for all pupils. This is an opportunity for you to meet your child's class teacher and discuss their progress. We also send out termly reports so that you are able to monitor your child's progress.

The Inclusion team will also have regular meetings with you if your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Language Support Plan (LSP) or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Updates on any of these documents will follow on from a pupil progress meeting. The Inclusion team will talk you through how your child is doing and what further steps need to be taken in order to support your child to achieve further. For children with EHC Plans there will also be an annual review of the plan which you will be invited to.

Your child is at the centre of all that we do, so where possible your child will also be made aware of their targets and learning goals, they will also have time to talk about their progress and where they feel they will need extra help.

“ Their curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. ”  
 Orchard Ofsted Report 2021



## IF MY CHILD HAS MEDICAL NEEDS HOW WILL THEY BE SUPPORTED?

Each school has a school nurse who is available for support and advice and the school is able to make reasonable adjustments for medical needs.

We would initially meet with you and gather as much information as possible; we would liaise with medical professionals who are working with your child in order to follow directions and advice. If staff members require additional training in order to support your child, where possible, we would try to accommodate this request e.g. epi-pen training, diabetes training, etc.

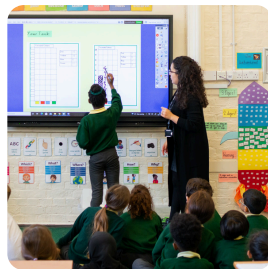
We have an 'administration of medicines' policy and we are able to administer certain prescribed medicines.



“ Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and want them to realise their full potential. All staff work together to support pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Staff know their pupils very well and so match their needs with the right support so that they achieve as well as others. ”

Hoxton Garden Ofsted Report 2019

## HAVE ANY STAFF RECEIVED SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?



We offer a comprehensive training programme for all staff members. Children who have mild/moderate learning difficulties are very well supported in class by teachers and teaching assistants.

If we have children who have other difficulties and/or disabilities then we always look for additional training opportunities for the staff members working with the child/group of children.

We currently have a dedicated number of support staff who have been trained to support and deliver specific speech and language group activities. Our Learning Mentors are trained to deliver social skills groups.

## HOW ARE THE SCHOOLS' RESOURCES ALLOCATED?



At Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden there is a commitment to monitor every child's progress and direct resources according to the level of support. If your child has an Education Health Care Plan, you will be invited in to discuss provision and see for yourself what the school has on offer for your child.

The provision for your child will be based on the recommendations outlined in the Plan. The school will use the pool of specialists outlined on the back of this leaflet. The school will also consider provisions beyond the Local Authority and take feasibility into consideration. Your input and support is valuable to us and you will be a key partner throughout the Plan implementation.

“ Leaders and teachers know how to make sure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can enjoy learning. Teachers expect as much of these pupils as others and adapt lessons to make sure they achieve well. ”

Southwold Ofsted Report 2019

## HOW IS THE SCHOOL ACCESSIBLE FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS?

Orchard and Southwold are both fortunate enough to have a lift, which is in use for children and adults who need to use it for access to each floor. Unfortunately Hoxton Garden does not have this facility. We have a sloping entrance to the office in all three schools and access to playgrounds are on one level. Where possible the school has taken parents with pushchairs and wheelchairs into consideration.

All three schools have washrooms/toilets available for wheelchair use and personal care. Orchard has a hoist facility. We also have shower facilities in our Early Years provision at Orchard and Southwold and this is available to pupils and staff if needed.



## HOW WILL MY CHILD BE INCLUDED IN ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL, AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS AND ON SCHOOL TRIPS?

Where possible we will make every attempt to ensure that every child has access to everything that is on offer. However, there are times when certain events and activities may not be suited to individual pupils. The school will always carry out a risk assessment of an activity or a class trip which is in addition to everyday classroom activities. Based on the outcome of the risk assessment and the best interests of your child, a decision will be made. This will be with parent consultation and will result in a number of available options. If an additional adult is required, the school will provide this, in certain instances, it may be that we require parental support on trips. If a child's behaviour or need is a cause for concern and safety is an issue, it may be decided that it is not in your child's interest to attend a trip or workshop. The school has to take into consideration the education and the safety of all the other pupils and staff as we have a duty of care to everyone not just pupils with identified needs. The same risk assessment will apply to afterschool provision and other extended day activities. Where it is safe and possible the school will do its best to accommodate and support parents.

“ Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits, clubs and activities, which have been thoughtfully planned. Pupils learn to realise how culture can enrich their lives. Their talents are celebrated and developed. Leaders make sure these excellent opportunities are available to everyone. ”

Southwold Ofsted Report 2019

## HOW WILL THE SCHOOL PREPARE MY CHILD WHEN JOINING THE SCHOOL OR WHEN TRANSFERRING TO A NEW SCHOOL?

We have many robust transition systems in place.

If your child is joining us from another nursery and coming into Reception, the minimum transition will include a telephone conversation with the previous nursery to gather information about how your child is doing. There will always be induction meetings and opportunities for you to visit the school with your child prior to starting school.

In some instances, the class teacher and the SENCO will visit your child in their Early Years setting and invite members of the Early Years setting to come over and visit the school with your child. We believe in making transitions run as smoothly as possible and understand that change can be challenging for some children.

Staff are always available to talk to you about any concerns or issues you may have. If your child is moving onto secondary school, we work very closely with the Local Authority and we will provide secondary transfer information from the end of Year 5. We have a Secondary Transition Lead in post, who will liaise with parents and secondary schools throughout the process.

If your child has additional needs then the SENCO will also join the process. We will set up transition meetings for you and your child in advance of your child moving on. If your child has been working with Unlocking Potential then they will also liaise with the Secondary school to ensure information is forwarded and there is a smooth handover for your child.

“ There is a strong sense of belonging in this school. Pupils told me that adults in the school look after them very well and they feel that the school is a very safe place for them. ”

Hoxton Garden Ofsted Report 2019



## HOW WILL YOU HELP ME TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

We are proud of our parental training and support packages. We hold regular parent coffee mornings and workshops which cover a range of practical training sessions that will help you to further support your child at home. We also run regular classes where outside professionals come in and work with groups of parents to develop a variety of skills including behaviour management and routines at home.

We are able to provide support for parents with English as a second language, frequently using translators as appropriate.

All our senior leaders actively seek workshops and training offered locally and advertise these on our noticeboards. If we feel a parent may need help in any way, we look at what is available and encourage participation. We want and encourage you to be empowered and confident. We understand and realise that sometimes life is challenging and there are times that parents also need support. Our Unlocking Potential and WAMHS support go beyond for your children, they are available to support you through difficult times, we have counselling and therapy sessions available for parents in need.

## MY CHILD NEEDS HELP WITH TRANSPORT TO SCHOOL. HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Although we are unable to offer support with transport, our Inclusion Team is able to direct you to the Local Authority Inclusion Team and/or Children's Social Care who may be able to assist you.

## WHAT SPECIALIST SERVICES AND EXPERTISE ARE AVAILABLE OR ACCESSED BY THE SCHOOL?

We have access to and can buy into all the provision on offer by the Local Authority, these include the Educational Psychology Service, Specialist Teacher provision (e.g. Autism, vision, hearing and other disabilities), Speech and Language Therapy Service, School Nurse Service, Dental Service, Hackney Ark (medical advice and assessments) and Child And Adolescent Mental Health Services to name but a few. Other external partners from whom we buy services are:

- Unlocking Potential therapeutic services have therapy rooms and a base on each site, which means we have access to a range of therapists including, art therapists, play therapists, drama therapists and bereavement counselling. Unlocking Potential always seek to provide the school with the level of therapeutic support it needs. There are times when children can have individual mentors and group support where and when it is needed.
- Speech & Language Therapists based at Homerton Hospital.
- Occupational Therapists based at Homerton Hospital.
- Young Hackney, who are able to provide our pupils with support and mentoring beyond the school day.
- Our schools run a homework club for children who need additional support. The schools also run a number of afterschool classes for children who have been identified for rapid catch up and, with parental agreement, there are booster classes set up for numeracy and literacy.

## WHERE CAN FURTHER INFORMATION ON SERVICES AVAILABLE BE FOUND?

At Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden there is a commitment to monitor every child's progress and direct resources according to the level of support required by individual and groups of children. If your child has an Education Health Care Plan, you will be invited to discuss provision and see for yourself what the school has on offer for your child. The provision for your child will be based on the recommendations outlined in the Plan. The school will also consider provisions beyond the local authority and take feasibility into consideration. Your input and support are valuable to us and you will be consulted throughout the Plan being implemented.

Hackney Education also has a webpage that outlines the support they offer at:

[www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk](http://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk)

We will always make every effort to direct you to the other organisations and services available to you. If we get new information we will always display this on our parent notice boards, we will text you and send you leaflets with information.

We believe that the best provision for our children will come with quality provision and a fantastic working relationship with parents.

