**The Avenue School**

**Special Needs Academy**

**Post-16 Provision / Sixth Form**

**Mission Statement:**

*‘Prepare young people with SEN* *for a happy, fulfilling and aspirational adult life.’*

The Avenue School Sixth Form caters for post-16 students with special educational needs. Our post-16 curriculum is highly personalised to the long term outcomes of the individual, as identified in the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and through transition planning.

**Across our Sixth Form, our aims for our students are to:**

* Communicate effectively and safely at school, home, and in and with the wider world
* Become confident and emotionally resilient young adults who identify and appreciate their own strengths
* Be aware of and look after their physical and mental health and well-being
* Develop skills for supported or independent living
* Become active members in their local communities
* Participate in work-related learning and/or enterprise
* Make friends in and beyond The Avenue
* Self engage and make choices about their leisure time
* Be open to new experiences and take measured risks
* Access appropriate external accreditations / qualifications
* Value and take pride in their achievements
* Contribute to planning their own routines and futures
* Transition smoothly into their next destination

**Sixth Form Curriculum**

In our Sixth Form, we challenge the students to be the best that they can be. Our goal is for each individual to leave us with the skills and tools needed to move on to their next steps. Our curriculum focuses on 4 key areas: **Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health,** as specified in ‘The Preparation for Adulthood’ section of the EHCP.

**Employment**

Students will have a personalised timetable of work experience during their time in the Sixth Form – the direction for this is set by each student’s EHCP, transition plan and vocational profile. Placements vary widely and may include being involved in a class led business/enterprise, supported placements internally or externally or unsupported placements.

All students will work towards a blend of accreditations / qualifications whilst attending our Sixth Form. Some of these qualifications are chosen by the students themselves (‘options’) and may include BTECs, Functional Skills, ASDAN Life Skills Challenge and AQA Unit Awards. We personalise the curriculum on a yearly basis to best meet the needs of the cohort. Some students may undertake qualifications particular to a certain employment opportunity such as food hygiene.

During their time in the Sixth Form, all students take part in enterprise as we feel it provides an excellent opportunity not only for developing skills required in adult life and the work place but also for social and community inclusion. The school’s social enterprise ‘The Thoughtful Bubble Company’ offers work experience opportunities including soap making, accounting and customer service. Over the past few years, students have also run classroom businesses including a snack stall, a café, a sweet shop, a car wash service and a Christmas craft enterprise. The students can get a ‘start-up loan’ from our internal ‘HUG Enterprise’; the profit that is made can then be reinvested or spent on students’ chosen leisure activities, ie going out for a meal, going to the cinema or bowling.

As part of our school’s Careers Programme, all students have the opportunity to meet with an independent SEND careers adviser. They also undergo many visits to other education and training establishments to give them a full understanding of what opportunities are available to them. Please see our detailed Careers Programme for more information.

**Independent Living**

Our curriculum promotes independence in our students. This may include teaching students to make their own choices, developing the skills they need to live in supported living or independently later in life, group or individual travel training, cooking simple meals, looking after the home, managing their own emotions and leisure skills. Students are regularly taught out in the local community; they also attend residential experiences which enable them to practise being away from home and develop their independence.

**Community Inclusion**

We have a strong sense of community at The Avenue School and we teach our students to have the same. We access many local community facilities in Reading and wider Berkshire, including sports centres, swimming pools, restaurants, cafes, theatres, cinemas and places of natural beauty. We build relationships with local companies, especially to enhance our work placements. We teach our students to become actively involved in their communities and we regularly support charities, including a local homeless charity, through donations. We work with Reading-based sporting organisations and other schools, particularly within BASS (Berkshire Alliance of Special Schools) and WEC (The Whitley Excellence Cluster) on joint projects. We involve local groups in our cultural events and special occasions. We also believe it is important to support our students to develop their social groups so we facilitate joint projects and socials with students from other local provisions.

**Health**

We support students to be aware of and manage their own physical and mental health as independently as possible. Students learn about healthy living, are encouraged to exercise and have access to a full time Well-Being Coordinator who advises individuals and groups on strategies such as mindfulness, Aromatouch and massage. All students access Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) as well as Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), which may take the shape of formal lessons and/or more informal Social and Emotional Development sessions. Students have the opportunity to take part in sessions led by Reading Football Club and Reading Rockets. They make full use of the school’s large garden / playing field, outdoor gym and where relevant, hydrotherapy pool. They also access sporting facilities and nature walks in the local area. Sixth Formers study optional subjects, including BTEC in Active Sport and Leisure and BTEC in Home Cooking (healthy home-cooked food), which promote physical health. All sixth formers participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which promotes social interaction and team building, enables extended outdoor learning and facilitates the acquisition of new physical and practical skills.

**Sixth Form ‘Pathways’**

The school’s 3 senior pathways blend at sixth form level, leading to an inclusive sixth form experience for most students, however, some students may continue to need a smaller class and a quieter environment. Our Sixth Form students on **the Green Pathway** face the most profound and multiple barriers to learning. Where appropriate for individuals, they continue to be based in Dove and Swan Classes, in mixed KS4 and KS5 cohorts, and in socially meaningful peer groups. The students continue to access highly individualised immersive learning experiences which promote good health, facilitate engagement with the world around them and enable social inclusion. A small group of sixth formers from **the Purple Pathway** are based in Cormorant Class, on the ground floor, where they have a low arousal environment and direct outdoor access. All Sixth Form students interact regularly through inclusive experiences such as the physical challenges, skills and expedition preparation within The Duke of Edinburgh Award. They also have weekly socials which include afternoon tea and shared leisure activities.

**Assessment**

Students’ progress against their individual outcomes is recorded and assessed through:

* The use of the Interactive Learning Diary (ILD) and Silsaf tool (which measures independence against a range of life/work skills)
* Regular progress/data review with a member of the SLT
* Regular review of the transition plan by a member of the SLT and the Sixth Form Coordinator/Class teacher
* Annual review of the EHCP with the family and a multi-professional team
* Assessment against external qualifications
* Informal observation by and discussion with the school’s Careers Lead
* Attendance data, behaviour data
* SaLT, OT and physiotherapy goals where relevant

On completion of Year 14 (or after Year 12/13), students at The Avenue School Sixth Form have a number of options open to them. They may choose to follow a course at a FE college, enter employment or move into supported living within a community placement.

Maarit Eben July 2021