

HIGH CLOSE SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & FUNCTION

(Reviewed and Revised September 2009)



HIGH CLOSE SCHOOL

‘ Working together to unlock potential ’

MISSION STATEMENT

“ High Close School, inspired by the unique worth of every individual, strives to create opportunities to achieve full potential through the pursuit of excellence in both academic and social education ”

The Leadership of the school will facilitate the realisation of the school’s Mission through the following aims:

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

1. To deliver an enjoyable, stimulating and differentiated curriculum, which encourages every pupil to achieve to their highest level both academically and socially. (ECM3)
2. To provide a caring environment in which pupils feel safe and learn to make healthy choices about their style of life. (ECM1&2)
3. To develop pupils’ awareness of moral, social, cultural and spiritual values so that they can make a positive contribution to the community. (ECM4)
4. To prepare pupils to become independent, responsible citizens. (ECM5)
5. To work in partnership with parents, carers and other stakeholders to ensure pupils are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential. (ECM3)
6. To ensure a well managed school in which the school’s resource needs, and staff development needs, are met.

(ECM – Every Child Matters)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

1. What is High Close School and who does it cater for?

High Close is a non-maintained Co-educational Residential and Day Special School catering for young people who have special educational need arising from emotional and behavioural difficulties. The range of additional specific complex needs with which the school is working is broad and includes young people with ADHD,, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ODD, Attachment disorders, Speech and Language difficulties, Social Interaction difficulties (ASD and ASP) and mental health issues. The school is part of the Barnardos Organisation and is situated in the town of Wokingham, Berkshire.

The school promotes social inclusion and aims to give each young person the opportunity to develop in such a way that when they leave the school they will have the social skills to be a successful participant in society.

The DCSF approves the school to provide Residential and Day Education for a maximum of 65 pupils (male and female) in the curriculum range of 'year 6 to year 11'. In exceptional cases placements may be extended for one year post 16. All pupils should have a Statement of Special Education Needs; draft statements may be considered by negotiation regarding timetable of completion.

The school admits pupils on 39-week placements. The school closes alternate weekends. Pupils placement at weekend is negotiated with parents and the pupil concerned. It is imperative that all pupils have an alternative care base for these weekends and during holiday periods.

The pupils who are placed at High Close will have experienced significant difficulty and disadvantage in mainstream education provision mainly due to their behavioural and social problems. These difficulties may or may not also contribute to family tensions that could benefit from residential respite. Some of the pupils placed at the school may have suffered severe abusive experiences in their past. The effects of these experiences may have had serious consequences on their ability to function in an appropriate manner towards other people.

The consequences of these early experiences can be over-powering and often result in feelings of worthlessness and low self-esteem, which create a sense of failure. In many cases the young people have very poor emotional maturity and are unable to share in activities with other pupils. Many of the pupils placed at the school are desperate for reassurance but are reluctant to accept any emotional attachment.

To benefit from a placement at High Close pupils need to recognise their inappropriate behaviour and by the support given to them develop less destructive ways of expressing their feelings and gradually accept self responsibility. Pupils will be supported through

academic and social experiences which aim to help them to make informed choices and take responsibility for their actions now and in the future.

2. Meeting the Needs

- 2.1 From the time of admission to High Close School each pupil is treated as an individual who has their own specific needs. After a period of review and assessment the school prepares an Individual Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan, Individual Health Plan and an Individual Education Plan.
- 2.2 The majority of the pupils placed at the school will need considerable adult agency support.
- 2.3 There are regular reviews of a pupil's progress as required; namely; Initial Review after the first three weeks to discuss progress and concerns, Placement Meeting after the 6 weeks probationary period has been completed. Six Monthly Planning meeting, Statutory Annual Reviews and twice yearly Looked after Children Reviews (where required). These take place at the school and the appropriate individuals are invited to attend. For pupils who are causing concern additional meetings might also be convened in order that specific objectives might be reviewed or targets set.

3. Referrals and Admissions

- 3.1 Referrals are usually initiated by either the Education Department or the Social Services Department of the Local Authority seeking a placement, there is an expectation that the Local Education Authority take a lead role in the referral. The first contact can be by telephone or by the submission of documentation relating to the young person. Before a pupil can be interviewed for a place at the school the Senior Management Team need to be in receipt of relevant documentation.
- 3.2 The documentation, which the Senior Management expects to receive is:
 - a copy of the Statement of Special Education Needs
 - educational psychologist reports
 - educational levels of attainment (SATs, standardised tests)
 - most recent education report
 - unique pupil number if known
 - social history of the young person, including family composition and ethnic data
 - any relevant social service involvement
 - medical conditions and the need for any specific input
 - description of any particular behaviour patterns.

Following consideration by the Senior Management Team, Teachers and Unit Managers, and if it is felt that the school can meet the young person's needs, the school will contact the Local Authority and the parents/carer to arrange a short visit to the school.

- 3.3 During the school visit there will be a chance for the visitors to meet the senior staff, to look around the school and to ask questions. There is no formal interview but the school staff will be looking carefully at the young person who has been referred to see if they meet the school's admission criteria. The school then takes as to whether or not a placement can be offered and the Authority will be informed of the decision. A start date for the six week probationary period will be negotiated with parents/carers and Local Authority.
- 3.4 An Induction Programme to familiarise each young person with the premises, the location, and the routines of the school, is commenced upon arrival. The programme is monitored by staff and the progress made is evaluated at three weeks (mid-way review) and at the six week review, where if the probationary period has been successful, the placement offer will be confirmed..
- 3.5 In exceptional circumstances an extension to the probationary period can be negotiated, after which a decision as to the continuance of the placement will be considered.
- 3.6 Throughout this process the emphasis is on the particular needs of the pupil and how the school can provide an education and care regime, which will enable him or her to overcome the experiences, which have necessitated them being placed at the school.

4. The Environment

The school is located in the Berkshire town of Wokingham and sits in 7 acres of grounds from which direct access to many places of interest is available.

The school buildings provide excellent educational accommodation resources for both Key Stage 2 and senior school pupils. The school also provides excellent residential accommodation in four purpose built units which safely cater for mixed gender groups.

5. Care Regime

An Individual Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan together with an Individual Health Plan is prepared for each pupil. Half Term Reports are prepared addressing the Every Child Matters five outcomes and targets are reviewed and set looking at behaviour and social

development which are linked to the statement objectives. The keyworkers are responsible for its implementation.

Night cover is provided within the units by residential social work staff with a senior member of staff providing additional support. CCTV is installed to cover bedroom corridor areas of the residential units and the school employs waking night staff to monitor the cameras.

The unit manager is responsible for the arrangement of all out of school hours activities, which may be on or off campus.

6. Behaviour Management

Positive Behaviour Management operates within the 24-hour curriculum and is designed to encourage pupils to achieve an acceptable level of behaviour and self responsibility throughout the day.

The pupils who are placed at High Close School often exhibit dysfunctional behaviour, which at times result in outbursts, which necessitate some measure of physical intervention. To ensure that such intervention is consistently applied all staff are trained in the principles and practises of Team Teach, which prescribes holds, that are in keeping with the guidelines issued under the Childrens Act (1989) and DCSF guidelines on Restrictive Physical Intervention. Heavy emphasis is placed on early intervention, personal responsibility and de-escalation within the Team Teach system.

Reports of all incidents of physical intervention are documented and when appropriate parents/carers and the Placing Authority are informed.

7. Education

The first task is to assist the pupils' to access learning and motivate them in the classroom situation. To achieve this class groups are kept to maximum of 8 pupils. Two staff work with a group where possible and teaching tasks are moderated according to identified individual needs on the child's Statement of Special Educational Need.

The school aims to create an environment where each pupil has the opportunity to achieve in their Education as far as their abilities will allow.

The National Curriculum is followed and differentiated to meet the needs of the individual pupils. This ensures that they are not placed at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers in Mainstream schools.

Pupils are entered for specific external examinations where appropriate and this may include GCSE, Entry Level, ASDAN and access to a range of vocational qualifications.

Importance is placed upon Personal Social and Health education throughout the school and at Key Stage 4 there is a robust programme of Careers education, links with local colleges and Work Experience.

The school operates on the normal three-term system and provides 25 hours of education over a five-day week.

8. Staff

- 8.1 Pupil's placed at High Close School generally display serious behaviour problems, it is therefore necessary to have a high staff : pupil ratio. These staff are allocated within the various departments i.e. teaching, social work, night, administration and ancillary.
- 8.2 There is a full programme of in-service and external staff training according to the requirements of the individual disciplines.
- 8.3 The teaching staff compliment has 15 qualified Teachers, 3 unqualified Teachers, 1 Technician and 11 Learning Support Assistants (All with a level 3 qualification).
- 8.4 The care staff have 32 staff in the Residential Social Work Department and 3 in the Field Social Work Department. All Residential Project Work (RPW) staff have or are in the process of completing NVQ Level 3 in Health & Social Care or NVQ Level 4 Care.
- 8.5 Administration and Ancillary staff support the education and care staff in the smooth running of the school.
- 8.6 All staff employed are checked through references and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance is required of all staff prior to them taking up a position working at High Close School.
- 8.7 Staff training is an ongoing exercise and opportunities are made available for staff to take courses both in-house and via external courses and conferences. Specialist training is offered in specific cases if a need arises.

9. Child Protection

- 9.1 The school has a designated Child Protection Officer – Head of Care, Mr Andy Fisk, who is responsible for addressing any issue which may in any way relate to child protection.
- 9.2 The Head of Care liaises with Wokingham Social Services and the young person's placing authority if and when appropriate. All procedures follow local authority

guidelines on Child Protection in Residential Schools (Children Act 1989) and Barnardo's Safeguarding and Protecting Children booklet. Ofsted Social Care will also be notified of any child protection issue.

- 9.3 The parents/carers of any child involved in a child protection issue will be notified of all developments by the school, if appropriate, or their placing authority.
- 9.4 Independent visitors have free and regular access to the school and report to the Assistant Director of Children's Services and Barnardo's Council. Each visitor has responsibility to visit one residential unit every month. They provide an independent person for pupils to speak to and Barnardo's LEASE region has its own Children's Rights Officer who is also available to pupils.

10. Anti-Bullying

- 10.1 High Close School strives to create an environment where young people can be supported in addressing their educational, emotional, spiritual and social needs and strive towards their full potential. All forms of bullying interfere with achieving this aim. Therefore, such behaviour will not be ignored. The staff team will be proactive in their use of the strategies and systems in place to address bullying at all levels while providing opportunities for change for those who are bullying and those who are bullied.
- 10.2 Bullying happens when one person exerts some form of power, in a negative and /or oppressive way, over another person. Bullying is an abuse of power and High Close School has a robust and clear policy to deal with this under a 'Level System' and a 'Central Bullying Record', which records all forms of bullying. The school has introduced an anti-bullying charter, which all pupils sign.

11. Complaints

- 11.1 Complaints can arise in three ways, from a young person/parent/carer, from a member of staff or from an outside agency.
- 11.2 The emphasis at the first stage of a complaint is on problem solving by project staff and their managers. The aim is to address concerns and solve problems at the earliest stage. It is however, important to respect the rights of pupils to have their complaint investigated further if they are not satisfied with local attempts to resolve the problem. In this situation the complaint will be processed through Barnardo's Service User Complaint Procedure. They may also make a complaint to the Local Authority or Ofsted Social Care.
- 11.3 Where a complaint is received from a member of staff this is referred to a senior manager and attempts are made to resolve this at a local level. If the member of

staff is not satisfied with any resolution the complaint will be processed through Barnardo's Grievance Procedure.

- 11.4 If the complaint emanates from an outside agency it would be handled by one of the Senior Management Team in the hope that it would be resolved by discussion between the parties. Again, if the issue is not resolved at a local level it will be referred to a more senior regional manager.

12. Health

- 12.1 The school require all boarding pupils to enrol with a local medical practice. Appointments are made with the local practice when required. The local practice that caters for High Close pupils has allocated a particular doctor to deal with our pupils and this assists in ensuring they are given the best service
- 12.2 On admission parents/carers are required to complete a Medical Consent Form authorising the school to deal with any medical concerns, though those giving consent are kept informed of any action taken by the school.
- 12.3 Whenever necessary, arrangements are made for consultations and treatment by dentists and opticians. Annual check-ups are the norm but appointments may be more frequent if required.
- 12.4 In line with current practice smoking by pupils is not allowed at all in High Close School. Similarly, alcohol and drugs are forbidden. Education programmes to assist pupils give up smoking are in place and advice may be sought from the school GP in order to assist this process.

13. Inspections

- 13.1 The school is subject to inspections by Ofsted, The Health and Safety Authority, the Fire Service and the Environmental Health Officers. High Close also receives approval visits from all its user authorities.
- 13.2 Legally issued reports are available from the school on request.

14. Review

To be reviewed March 1st 2010 by School Governors.

Approved by Governor:.....

Date:.....