



# Chestnut Class Prospectus



## The Autism Hub at Milwards Primary School and Nursery

Enhanced provision for pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

## **Our vision:**

*To provide a supportive, structured, aspirational mainstream learning environment for pupils with autism together as one team but with individual needs at heart.*

### Overview:

Our goal is to work with pupils with ASC to help equip them with the skills and confidence needed to access mainstream education, and to see them thrive in an inclusive, supportive learning environment.

Our enhanced provision will open at 8:30, before the rest of the school starts. This is for a variety of reasons; the pupils may need to have breakfast, settle before going to class, discuss timetable changes or simply to meet with one of the members of staff.

The 6 different areas in the hub are:

- Relax & Read zone
- Learning zone
- Group Work zone
- Break zone
- Sensory zone
- Computer zone



The individual needs of the pupils in the Hub will be prioritised. All pupils admitted to the Hub will have a timetable tailored to each individual to ensure that their social, emotional and sensory needs are met.

In consultation with parents and professionals, short-term targets will be set in order for pupils to achieve the outcomes from their EHCP.

We use the BRIDGES curriculum (<http://www.bridgessu.com/>) to enhance social understanding. The Hub will provide 'break sessions' in the setting where the pupil is supported to manage their sensory needs and areas of interest.

Pupils access mainstream curriculum alongside their peers. Mainstream teaching is personalised for all children so that access to the curriculum is possible on an individual basis.

To help Hub pupils develop social links throughout the school, the Hub will be accessible to pupils from mainstream classes - for collaborative working, for example, or to provide a quiet space for concentrated learning. Hub staff will support this access as much as possible, while prioritising the needs of hub pupils.

Milwards Staff will work closely together with each other, parents and outside professionals to share/exchange knowledge and give advice.

This will lead to an individual support plan for any pupil attending Milwards.

## ASC Hub Staff roles

Head of ASC Hub:	Manon Pinkett
ASC Hub Manager (HLTA) :	Kerensa Dance
ASC Hub Family / Home Support Worker (Art Therapy):	Karen Pudney
ASC Hub Support Worker (PE/Music):	Gary Hill
ASC Hub Support Worker (EYFS) :	Sam Cooper
ASC Hub Support Worker (Speech & Language)	Zoe Cassidy

## Introduction

Welcome to Chestnut Class!

We are the first primary ASC Hub in West Essex, 1 of the first 4 across the whole of Essex and look forward to meeting your child and helping them access mainstream education in a positive, supportive and enjoyable way.

The overall aim of the ASC provision is to impact positively upon learning outcomes for pupils. The vision is for all children and young people diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum to be healthy, happy and safe, do well in their education and be successful in their lives. This vision is derived from the vision outlined in the Essex Policy for SEN.

There is an *admissions criteria* for the Hub which can be discussed with the Local Authority team or Head of ASC Hub. Generally, the pupil must have developed speech and be able to make age-appropriate progress.

In the Hub and across the school we have staff members who are trained in: Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH), Lego Therapy, Essex Steps Training, pathological demand avoidance (PDA) , Sensory Integration, Gateway Autism Training and Relax Kids.

## Ethos

The ethos of the Hub reflects that all Milward children are part of ;a school community in which behaviour is based on mutual respect and consideration for others. We believe that all members of the school have the following basic rights:

*The right to feel happy and safe*  
*The right to be heard*  
*The right to be shown mutual respect*  
*The right to learn and teach*

In addition, we understand that children with autism have individual needs, learning styles and abilities. We adopt a flexible approach to enable them to achieve their potential whilst also helping them find strategies to access the mainstream environment.

### Parents and carers

We acknowledge the importance of, and wholeheartedly encourage a strong relationship between school and home. Research has proved that the most effective programme for children with autism is one that is consistent, bridging both home and school environments. As a result we see the teaching of each child in the Hub as a partnership between parents and our staff. Formal parent meetings will be held once per term but additional meetings can be arranged at mutual convenience. We can offer support that will help you at home as well.

### Transition to Chestnut Class

Once your child's place at Milwards has been confirmed, we will set up a detailed transition plan. Each transition plan will be specific to each child's needs.

*This is an example of what this could look like:*

→ *Home visit*

Whenever possible, two of our staff will visit your child in their home environment so they can begin to build relationships and get to know more about your child. During this visit your child will be given information about the school, their mainstream class and the Hub. This could be in photo form, videos or handouts made by the children.

→ *Tour of the school for the pupil*

This can be arranged during or after school and will be supported as necessary.

→ *One Planning Meeting*

Parents/ carers will meet with the staff from the hub and mainstream class teacher to plan the child's provision for that term.

→ *Second visit to school*

Your child can meet with their mainstream class teacher, their class members and go into their classroom.

→ *An individual timetable is produced.*

### Assessment

Before a child attends Milwards they will be informally assessed so that we know their strengths and difficulties and we can devise an individual programme for them. Areas we look at: communication, behaviour, sensory response, emotional response, independent life skills, independent learning, attention, play skills and transitional response.

## Structure of the school day

8:30	Autism Hub opens
8:50	Registration
10:30 - 10:45	Assembly
10:10 - 10:25	KS1 break
10:45 - 11:00	KS2 break
12:00	KS1 lunchtime
12:20	KS2 lunchtime
1:15	End of lunchtime
3:15	School ends



The Hub will be open during break and lunch times for Hub pupils to socialise with other pupils, or for individual play or quiet time, depending on your child's needs. This is supervised by Hub staff.

## The curriculum

Wherever possible, pupils in will be included in their mainstream class lessons and activities. If a child is finding a subject or activity challenging, we will investigate why and staff from the Hub will provide support either by using structured teaching approaches, adapting the task or by providing a more suitable area within the classroom to work. If the pupil is still unsettled, the activity would be moved to the Hub where staff will teach them. Following this, we would formulate a plan to either slowly reintegrate your child back into that subject/activity or decide whether the activity would be best delivered within the hub.

As well as the core National Curriculum, pupils in the Hub will get access, where appropriate to:

- Forest Schools
- Gym Trail
- Relaxation sessions
- Sensory Time
- Lego Therapy
- Counseling
- Social Understanding curriculum



The educational visits in mainstream will be accessible for the Hub pupils.

## Teaching Approaches used

In the Hub and throughout the school, various approaches will be used to make the mainstream environment more accessible to children with an ASC. These include: PECS, TEACCH, Social Stories, Visual Timetables, Sensory aids.

A decision to use a particular approach or combination of approaches is based on the individual needs of each pupil and is intended to further the holistic development of the child.

## Home - School Communication

At the end of each day staff in the Hub will communicate with the parents/carers how their child's day has gone. This will be done in a variety of ways:

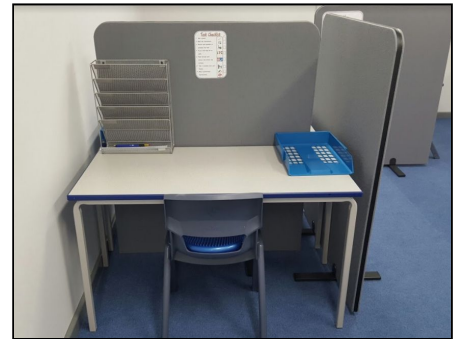
- Home- school communication book, Record of Achievement
- Email to parents/carers
- Verbal feedback at pick up

This can then be used to initiate conversations with your child, reflecting on their day.

## Resources

Within the Hub pupils will have access to:

- iPads and computers
- Sensory Room
- Individual workstations
- Break room
- Direct access to the playground/outside area for movement breaks



## Challenging behaviour

We acknowledge that children with ASC can sometimes exhibit challenging behaviours. Each child in Chestnut class will have their own consistent management plan which will detail how to recognise when a child is getting agitated and put strategies into place to try to prevent the behaviour escalating. All staff are trained in how to approach challenging behaviour and we will do so calmly and with empathy. We see such behaviour as a form of communication and after an incident a detailed behaviour analysis will take place to try to identify why the challenging behaviour may have occurred, and how we could stop this from escalating in future. At an appropriate time, we will discuss the behaviour with the child and provide strategies to identify how they were feeling and give alternative ways of reacting to the situation.

## Flexibility of thought

Children with autism can often find change and transition very difficult and unsettling. We aim to support children through these changes. Teachers devise strategies to help children develop coping strategies. We initially aim to keep the children in a structured routine with a clear schedule and changes are introduced gradually and children are warned about changes visually as well as verbally.

## Social Understanding

We recognise that children with autism can have significant difficulties with social understanding. The aim is to enable children to develop social skills through the PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum within the mainstream and through drills and interventions (eg 'Social Stories' and 'Comic Strip Conversations' - copyright Gray).

We also appreciate the social skills should be taught throughout the day in 'real life' situations. The aim is to enable children to generalise these skills across the school day and into other settings, through close collaboration with home.

## Links with other agencies

When appropriate, and in discussion with parents/carers, we have access to Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Play Therapists and a counselling service. The Hub brings in experts in other fields to complement and enhance the provision.

## Contact details

If you require any further details, you may contact us:

Reception:

[manon.pinkett@milwards.essex.sch.uk](mailto:manon.pinkett@milwards.essex.sch.uk)

[maryguy.evans@henrymoore.essex.sch.uk](mailto:maryguy.evans@henrymoore.essex.sch.uk)

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Head of ASC Hub

Executive Headteacher/CEO

Harlow Inspirational Learning Trust

“If a child  
can't learn  
the way we teach,  
maybe we  
should  
teach the  
way they learn.”

~ Ignacio Estrada