



**Blatchington
Mill School**

Involvement, Achievement & Care

FAQs - Care

Some of the questions that we did not have time to answer on the night of our Live Q&A are below. Many are verbatim from the student/parent/carer who sent them in. Others are a combination of maybe a couple of very similar questions.

If you have anything else that you would like to know about our school, to help you make your secondary school choice, please email admissions@blatchingtonmill.org.uk with the subject line "2021 INTAKE"

Starting a new/big school will come with additional worries. How does the school manage this?

Are there wellbeing groups at the school?

We know starting at a new school is both exciting and daunting! We have a full transition programme that includes meeting students in the primary schools, speaking to primary teachers and introductory sessions in the final term of year 6 - we get started early. When students arrive they have their own Y7 induction day and induction process that takes them through everything they need to know about Blatch and, crucially, who to go to if they are worried about anything. This is continued with their own bespoke form time activities throughout the year. There are wellbeing groups and spaces in school and these get started into the first term but perhaps the most important wellbeing group is their form group. It is through form time we help students develop friendships, impress upon them the need to always be kind and teach them how to be resilient. We take this seriously so all of our staff are alert to where students may need a boost and in every lesson we look to give pupils the feedback and challenge that make them feel purposeful and enjoy their learning.

How do you encourage children who may need additional support to speak up or come forward?

We want pupils to feel confident to come forward but we know that is often easier said than done. We take the approach of making sure our expert staff are always on the lookout for students who may have additional needs in the classroom. Our teachers will ensure that when a student needs additional support in their subject they will get it, through the teaching, resourcing and feedback in a lesson. We also take a systematic approach to this in assessment, identifying in every subject those pupils who may be struggling and adapting teaching and support accordingly. We call this process *Review and Planning* and it involves using what we know about a student's baseline ability and comparing to how well they are doing in each subject at the time. We also have specialist teams in SEND but also the Year Office who are approachable and welcoming, always making clear to students what they can do if they feel overwhelmed. We make sure each child's form tutor is well versed in knowing how to check in with each child in their tutees, who they see every day. The form tutor is a key person your child will build a relationship with and someone they can call on should they feel like they need more help to speak to other staff and help them work through any worries they may have.

How do you raise awareness of cyber bullying?

This is an important question. We take a firm stance against bullying - all types of bullying are unacceptable in our community and thankfully are rare. In order to address any incidents, we do set firm consequences but we also embark on restorative work and education for those involved so that victims know what to do to seek help and those engaged in bullying behaviours are educated so

they understand the impact of their actions and stop. In terms of cyber bullying, we address this topic in assemblies and form time as part of our efforts to raise awareness of all types of bullying, what they look like and how to tackle them. This includes how peers can support and report incidents and how to empower victims. In our curriculum we also cover the topic in PHSE and in Computing from both angles - the human side but also the more technical side so students understand the issues that come with social media use, misuse of technology and the internet in general. It is a comprehensive approach to an important issue.

What applications do you have to support children with disabilities?

We are always prepared to consider any software that is appropriate and recommended for our SEND students. Where we can implement their use and it fits with our plans for SEND students we will and we welcome suggestions from families, external agencies and/or subject leaders.

To illustrate this, we do have a number of students who use Docs Plus and are in the process of finding a way for this software to be accessed when using their chrome book. In addition to this we make use of features of our school wide Google platform to enable students to convert speech to text / text to speech. Training and instruction information is also provided to students to make sure they can access this facility to enhance their school experience.

Read Write was also trialled during lockdown and we are considering offering this software more widely in the future. Equally, Reading Pens are used widely across the school, particularly during exams/assessments, where they are an agreed access arrangement. In short, we are often looking to innovate and be evidence informed in SEND.

How are children with learning challenges taught within the school? My son has dyslexia and would like to know what support he will receive within the classroom.

Quality Teaching is at the heart of our SEND provision. All students with a diagnosis of dyslexia who are on the Inclusion Register have a personalised Pupil Profile, access to assistive technology and relevant access arrangements in line with JCQ. The Pupil Profile provides a summary of SpLDs and recommended teaching strategies and are circulated to subject teachers and pastoral leads termly, helping them to have useful strategies at their disposal and plan and adapt resources for lessons. In addition students with SpLDs receive additional tracking and monitoring in order to assess whether further intervention or signposting is required. If so, students are typically referred to the BHISS LSS (Literacy Support Service) and or invited to one of our evidence based interventions, such as Reciprocal Reading, Word Blaze and/or SNIP.

We have a dedicated member of staff who oversees K (SEND) students working under the direction of the SENCo. Together they ensure the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (graduated approach) process is carried out in a timely fashion and all information is uploaded to a SEND Summary. This document provides a useful snapshot and enables us to transfer students to SEND Support Plans and or make EHCP applications and NHS/BHISS referrals if required.

We share strategies for supporting SEND students with teachers and teachers use these to plan accordingly for the students within their class.