

OUR SEND OFFER

Introduction

Applefields School is the City of York local authority's maintained day special school for secondary aged students, aged from 11 - 19 years, with a wide range of special educational needs. We support children with moderate, severe and profound learning difficulties and a significant number of children with complex autism as an additional need.

As a regional resource, students attend Applefields School from the City of York and the surrounding areas of North Yorkshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire. The majority of students travel to and from school in transport provided by the local authority. At the beginning of the current school year there are 151 pupils on roll, aged 11-16. Three classes of pupils are based full time in our Satellite provision at Manor Church of England Academy. In September 2018 we established a unique partnership with Askham Bryan College that caters for young adults with complex needs aged 19-25. In September 2019 we are aiming to open a further satellite class in another York secondary school.

Applefields School was opened in September 2004 and the school occupies a large, modern building which in part is based on one of the previous special schools which was substantially extended and refurbished. As pupil numbers have grown the school was extended again in 2012. The accommodation includes 19 classrooms, specialist resources for pupils with profound and complex needs, specialist teaching rooms for Science and Food Technology, a Hydrotherapy Pool, Library & IT room, 2 halls, a large multi-sensory environment and facilities for Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy. We are developing the use of iPads and specialist access devices. We have 4 school minibuses, 3 of which have been provided by the Variety Club and are wheelchair accessible.

School Organisation

The school is organised into 3 Key Stage departments - Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9), Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11) and Post 16 (Years 12 - 14). The provision for students with complex needs on the Autistic spectrum and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties are organised into separate classes across the age range. Satellite provision for 3 groups is based at Manor CE Academy on the west side of York. The pupils that attend the Satellite provision are based full time at this secondary school and have individual mainstream inclusion programmes.

Our classes are organised along the primary model - with students either grouped according to need or age being taught largely by one teacher and several teaching assistants for the majority of the week. There are many opportunities for working with other students either in PE, pathway programmes or on theme days. Our curriculum is evolving and we will have one that is focussed on providing bespoke offers for our 'formal' 'semi-formal' and 'informal' learners. The curriculum will be matched to need, aspiration and aspiration - and be very much rooted in a young persons Education, Health and Care Plan. Assessment will also reflect the curriculum, and this means that we are significantly changing our approach to education and support for these young people. Work, work experience and volunteering are part of appropriate offers, as well as preparing young people for an appropriately matched and engaging adulthood whatever their needs and aspirations. A current focus is on Wellbeing,

with a dedicated team being organised to ensure that pupils are well enough to learn at times of particular crisis or need.

Staff

Our students are supported by a dedicated multi professional staff team of over 130 people. The current staffing establishment is 20 teachers including a senior team of a Headteacher and 2 Assistant Headteachers. One Assistant Headteacher is responsible for Key Stages 3 & 4, the other for Post 16 provision. There are 5 TLR posts in the staffing structure. These posts are leadership roles for the provision for students with autism, those with profound and complex needs, Work Related Learning, the Satellite provision, the provision of SEN advice and support to staff in mainstream schools and wellbeing.

Excellent on site medical and therapeutic support is provided by the local NHS Health Trust. A number of our students have complex health needs and we have the support of a full time nursing team. Our students' therapeutic needs are met by a part time Physiotherapist, a part time Physiotherapy Assistant and part time Speech and Language Therapist. Regular Paediatric Consultant clinics are held on site. The local authority provides Educational Psychology support and peripatetic support for students with sensory impairments and autism as an additional need.

The team of children's Social Workers, Adulthood team and specialist Careers Advisors are an integral part of our provision to support post 16 students as they plan and prepare for the move to post school provision.

Teaching Assistants are assigned to classes as pupil needs dictate and without them we would not be able to offer the bespoke curricular and opportunities our pupils thrive on

Curriculum

Students access a broad and relevant curriculum which in Key Stages 3 & 4 includes the subjects of the National Curriculum differentiated in the context of the students' special educational needs. A particular emphasis is placed on the development of students' skills in Communication, Literacy and Numeracy with a focus on the development of students' personal and social independence skills, health and well-being and the use of Information Technology. Applefields School is part of a local sports partnership working alongside other special schools across the North Yorkshire region.

Those students who experience the most significant communication difficulties are supported through a variety of augmentative communication systems including Makaton, British Sign Language, PECS and the use of electronic communication aids. The development of students' communication skills is co-ordinated by the Speech and Language Therapist and the teacher with responsibility for Communication and Literacy and students work in timetabled small Communication groups regularly during the week. The school is developing the use of iPads to support students' communication skills and general access to the curriculum.

All students continue to attend school for post 16 provision with the overwhelming majority of students attending until the end of Year 14. The aim of Post 16 curriculum is to prepare students for leaving school and life as a young adult. Students are supported with the continuing development of their communication skills, functional Literacy and Numeracy skills, practical independence skills as well as the opportunity to take part in learning away from the school in the local community. These opportunities may include work related learning, work experience, independent travel training.

We believe that it is important that all of our students have the opportunity to have their learning appropriately accredited where appropriate and where it can lead to progress towards their future adult lives.

A small number of students are involved in part time inclusion placements in their local mainstream secondary school. These placements enable students to have the opportunity to spend part of the week working alongside mainstream students in different areas of the curriculum.

On leaving Applefields School, students may transfer to a variety of local and regional post school provisions. Some young people may attend a regional specialist college if their needs are not able to be met locally, here they may continue with the development of life skills and undertake vocational training. Some students choose to transfer to one of the local further educational colleges in York to follow specialist vocational training courses. Other students may transfer to adult services provision provided by the student's home local authority. Students and their parents or carers are supported in making these decisions by the Adulthood Team and Specialist Careers Advisors who work are based on the school site and work closely with students, their families and school staff. All of our students transfer to continuing education, employment or training.

Parents

We work closely with our parents and carers. Some of students live a considerable distance from school and it can be challenging for some parents to travel to school for meetings. However, parents provide excellent support and visit school regularly, whether this to attend their child's review meeting or one of our regular social or informal meetings. School has become active on social media and through regular newsletters so that parents have more information than at previous times.

Our current 2018 parent questionnaire shows a high level of support for the work of the school.

Admissions

Admissions to Applefields School are controlled by the City of York local authority. Children usually start school at the beginning of the school year in September. However, it may be possible for children to transfer to Applefields School during the year depending upon individual circumstances and the availability of places.