



# SHAPWICK SCHOOL

## AIMS & OBJECTIVES

## **1. SCHOOL ETHOS**

It is our intention that all aspects of school life provide support for all our pupils. Shapwick School offers a holistic approach to the attenuation of the effects of specific learning difficulties. This is in contrast to the reductionist approach adopted by other mainstream and independent schools, which rely upon withdrawal from the normal curriculum for literacy support in a unit, for example, or possibly adult support in some lessons. We see the effects of dyslexia as being much wider than merely helping with reading once or twice a week and feel that adolescent's generally resent being withdrawn or having 'helpers'. The 'unit approach' can easily produce a feeling of being in a minority that can play into the common intolerance of peers who regard the dyslexic as unintelligent. The very reasons that dyslexics have difficulties with the written code mean that they will have more difficulty than non-dyslexics with learning other parts of school curriculum. Yet, by definition, a dyslexic is typified by 'peaks and troughs' in their cognitive profile. They have strengths and weaknesses. Shapwick School therefore approaches the problem from the standpoint that dyslexics need help across the whole curriculum and that all staff are involved in the teaching of learning skills, together with the necessary development of study skills. The ethos is that of a specialist school, not a special school, where students with specific learning difficulties can come and function normally without being in competition with non-dyslexic peers and work in a non-threatening and non-hostile atmosphere. The need for peer group recognition is under-stated for adolescents and the coupling of long-term failure at school with non-recognition of their underlying problems is sometimes the seed for behaviour that conflicts with the family's and society's values.

## **2. SETTING THE SCENE**

Shapwick School aims to be a caring, friendly and purposeful community with a good reputation for providing an excellent education for boys and girls with specific learning difficulties. Pupils aged 8-13 years are based largely at Shapwick Prep whilst Shapwick continues their education to GCSE and beyond in liaison with Bridgwater College. The school accepts full boarders, weekly boarders and day pupils.

Shapwick Prep (formerly Edington) was founded in 1974 and Shapwick in 1981 and became a single school in 1994. The school is recognised by the DfE and is a member of the Independent Schools Association (ISA). As a specialist school, Shapwick School is a corporate member of the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and registered by the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexics (CReSTeD) as a Special Provision (SP) school. Membership of the ISA, CReSTeD and approval by the DfE depends on successful, regular inspections by their officers. The school is also inspected by Ofsted (Care), and often by twenty five LEAs (or their representatives), who place children at the school. These reports are made available to interested professionals. The school is formally approved by the DfE under section 347 (1) and (3) of the Education Act 1996, formerly

Section 189 (1) and (3) of the 1993 Education Act. This section has now disappeared from the legislation

The school is based on two sites and is managed by the Headmaster and Directors. Shapwick is a beautiful manor house dating from the seventeenth century where many alterations and improvements have been made that include a specialist English centre, three well-equipped science laboratories, a design centre, art centre, library, three computer networks including one for voice-activated technology, sports hall, games room, games fields, AstroTurf tennis court, medical rooms, The Hayloft, changing rooms and specialist classrooms including individual teaching rooms. Shapwick Prep is based in the old village of Burtle, some five miles distant. A teaching block, assessment centre and resource centre complements the more established teaching accommodation. Pupils aged between 8-13 years are based largely at Shapwick Prep site whilst older pupils are based at Shapwick. All pupils at Shapwick Prep use the Sports Hall at Shapwick and a number of staff teach at both sites.

Juniors live in Chapel Hill Farm. Senior students live in one of four boarding houses, Shapwick Manor, The Lakes, Greystone or The Old Vicarage. Dormitory furniture has been modernised to provide a good standard of living accommodation.

Plans include ongoing refurbishment of the boarding and teaching facilities will further enhance the experiences of all.

The curriculum for all students will be monitored and develop to meet the demands of an ever changing society.

### **3. SCHOOL COMPLEMENT**

As at September 2011, there are 154 pupils, comprising 24 girl boarders, 73 boy boarders, 17 day girls and 40 day boys together with 36 teaching staff. (19 full time and 17 part time)

### **4. MISSION STATEMENT**

*The purpose of our school is to create a safe educational environment, which overcomes the problems of dyslexia as a barrier to successful learning, so giving each student the confidence to realise his/her potential. In this context we aim to produce socially aware, socially acceptable and responsible young men and women who are fully prepared for further education courses or employment.*

### **5. AIMS OF THE SCHOOL**

The central aim of the school is to educate those boys and girls of at least average potential whose educational development has been impeded by their problems with reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic or organisation. We aim to lead them to personal and academic confidence and success. A whole-school philosophy ensures an empathetic and purposeful learning environment for boys and girls with dyslexia or specific learning difficulties. The school aims ensure that all students have full access to the National Curriculum and cross-curricular

Careers Guidance. They are prepared for assessment at KS4 currently GCSE, and a wide range of Post-16 qualifications which enables students to achieve the qualifications and support needed for their chosen further education courses, higher education and careers. We enjoy very close links with the Somerset Connexions Service who visit the school and work with years 9, 10, 11 and 6<sup>th</sup> form.

The boarding environment aims to provide a structured and supportive framework for the social and emotional development of the students.

## **5.1 Academic**

We aim to:

- a. Enable our students to enjoy a happy and fulfilling education where their educational attainments and social development are no longer impaired by their specific learning difficulties.
- b. To provide our students with access to the wider curriculum by providing specialist support in small groups, and individually where appropriate, so that poor literacy, numeracy, organisational and information processing skills are not a barrier to the successful acquisition and expression of knowledge and understanding.
- c. To allow students to learn through structured teaching schemes employing multisensory teaching methods allowing for adequate over-learning.
- d. To make maximum demands on their strengths through appropriate curricular differentiation, staffing and resources whilst attenuating the confidence-sapping effects of their specific learning difficulties.
- e. To develop lively and enquiring minds with the ability to question and argue rationally and to approach the solution of problems in an imaginative and methodical way.
- f. To acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to adult life and employment in a fast-changing world.
- g. To acquire an understanding of social, economic, political, scientific and technological issues, and the interdependence of individuals, communities and nations.
- h. To ensure a sense a personal responsibility for environmental issues on a local and global scale.
- i. To ensure movement from year group to year group is continuous and progressive.

## **5.2 Objectives**

We aim:

- a. To give all students access to a broad and balanced curriculum which covers the following areas of experience: Linguistic, Mathematical, Scientific, Technological, Aesthetic and Creative, Social and Political, Spiritual and Ethical and Physical.
- b. To provide the necessary Special Needs support to enable this.
- c. To ensure the school's organisational structure and teaching is free of gender and racial bias.

- d. To ensure all departmental Schemes of Work contain active teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate to all abilities of students.
- e. To ensure all departments make use of the Library, Information Retrieval Strategies and Information Technology in their Schemes of Work.
- f. To establish in departmental Schemes of Work and through general collaboration, the following cross-curricular themes: Economic and Industrial Understanding, Careers Educational and Guidance, Health Education, Citizenship, Environmental Education, European Awareness, Personal and Social Education, Information Technology and Equal Opportunities.
- g. To monitor and report regularly on the academic and social progress of each student.
- h. To give each student the information and skills necessary for making subject and careers choices.
- i. To provide Careers' Education as part of the curriculum throughout the school.
- j. To provide an opportunity for Work Experience to students in the 6<sup>th</sup> form
- k. To build links between School and Industry.
- l. To review regularly Schemes of work in order to ensure that all students are being stretched.
- m. To review examination results annually and act to make improvements where necessary.
- n. To give all students Physical Education and PCHSE as part of a Compulsory Curriculum throughout the school, in Years 4-11
- o. To utilise opportunities to promote health in all subjects, where possible.
- p. To offer healthy food in the school.

### **5.3 Pastoral**

We aim:

- a. To provide a holistic approach as the remedy to poor self-image and consequent behavioural adaptations by ensuring each student's achievements bring appropriate rewards through praise and reporting.
- b. To provide an efficient and clear system of reporting that encourages parental contact and support.
- c. To use the procedures enacted in the 1981 Education Act, the 1989 Children's Act, the 1993 Education Act, e.g. Annual Reviews/Transition Plans and the 1996 Education Act, as well as the document Every Child Matters.
- d. To counteract poor self-esteem and learned helplessness through the provision of quantised and recognised success.
- e. To develop self-awareness through an appropriate range of social relationships with peers and adults, and the self-confidence to take advantage of opportunities to develop their talents and personalities in order to live as independent and self-motivated members of their community.

- f. To develop the necessary skills to work in collaboration with others; to be sensitive to their needs; and to have the confidence to form stable personal relationships.
- g. To acquire a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs so as to be able to work towards and contribute to a just and caring society and be able to respect and tolerate other races, religions and ways of life.
- h. To promote their own good health and physical development.
- i. To create an atmosphere in the school within which prejudice and stereotyping in all its forms can be recognised, challenged and eliminated.
- j. To provide electrical monitoring devices in the form of auditory intruder alarms, fire alarms and security cameras to safeguard the welfare and well being of students where deemed appropriate.

#### **5.4 Ethos/Pastoral Objectives**

We aim:

- a. To raise moral and spiritual issues in Assemblies, Tutorial Time and RE as well as in Curriculum areas, where appropriate.
- b. To recognise and praise positive achievement and behaviour in all areas of students' lives.
- c. To give students opportunities to take responsibility and to serve others (e.g. in the School Council, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, as Prefects, as Mentors), and Outdoor Pursuits.
- d. To provide support, a sympathetic ear and encouragement for all students through an active pastoral system.
- e. To ensure staff work together to promote good standards of behaviour.
- f. To provide and resource a programme of extra-curricular activities.
- g. To establish an agreement between school and home which covers expectations and responsibilities which both can fulfil.

#### **5.5 Staff Pastoral Aims**

We aim to:

- a. Develop a well-motivated, skilled and committed workforce.
- b. Foster good working relationships within which all staff are seen to be valued members of the school community.
- c. Foster a working partnership between Directors and staff, parents and staff.

#### **5.6 Staff Pastoral Objectives**

We aim:

- a. To achieve good working conditions and facilities for all members of staff.
- b. To give all staff the regular opportunity to review their work with a senior colleague and plan future development.
- c. To give all staff opportunities for helping form school policy, and communicating views to senior colleagues.
- d. To give all staff the encouragement, as well as opportunities, to enjoy the staff's social activities.

## **5.7 Aims for Facilities and Resources**

We aim to:

- a. Value and look after the school's buildings, grounds, facilities and resources and to use them in the most effective way possible.
- b. Develop the facilities and resources in a way that will enhance the education and opportunities for the students and staff.

## **5.8 Objectives for Facilities and Resources**

We aim:

- a. To ensure our buildings are well maintained and decorated.
- b. To ensure our beautiful grounds are appreciated, well maintained and made attractive to all users through the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers and by the provision of seating etc.
- c. To keep the school litter free and unaffected by vandalism and sloppiness.
- d. To develop an effective conservation policy.
- e. To implement the Whole School Policy on display which will make the inside of the building a more attractive and more exciting educational environment.
- f. To develop a policy for budget and Resource Management.

## **5.9 Aims for the Shapwick Education**

We aim to:

- a. Help ensure that the School works as a team.
- b. Help ensure a continuous progression of education experience.

## **5.10 Objectives for the Shapwick Education**

We aim:

- a. To hold regular Liaison Meetings within the School at which the key issues will be curriculum continuity and student progression.
- b. To share INSET where appropriate.
- c. To transfer detailed records from Shapwick Prep to Shapwick Senior.
- d. To provide full information and counselling on Further Education possibilities.

Signed:

Annual review of document due on or before: 01/09/12