

St Gregory CEVC Primary School

Specialist Unit Inclusion Policy

This policy is being written to reflect the increasing complexity of needs of pupils in Apple Class and to act as a reference point for staff across the school, including at the induction of new staff.

Overview

The Specialist Unit at St Gregory CEVC Primary School, known as Apple Class, comprises an EYFS / Key Stage 1 class (Little Apples) and a Key Stage 2 class (Big Apples). There are twenty children in SU with two teachers and seven Specialist Unit Learning Support Assistants. Although there should be 10 children in each of the classes, the flexibility is there for one class to be larger than the other depending on the specific needs of individual children.

A support staff perspective of working in the Specialist Unit:

Working in Apple Class is a rewarding role, knowing that with enthusiasm, energy and commitment we are making a positive difference to young children's lives.

The role of a learning support assistant is particularly challenging as working with children with additional needs requires lots of patience, understanding and 'thinking in the moment'. There are times when a child is doing something that is not appropriate or being asked of them which requires us to think quick and act fast to keep the child safe.

Within our role we also engage in planning activities create and adapt play spaces and create sensory resources which are suited to the individual needs of our children.

Key adults are vital to our children, attachments with our children is an essential part of our job, we need to know and understand our children as this enables our children to feel safe, secure and have a sense of belonging. When working with pre verbal children we use Makaton, PECs and communication boards therefore always being organised, in the right place at the right time can be exhausting but knowing you are 'the child's voice', outweighs this as you never want to let children down.

In Apple class our role entails us to have positivity, creativity, a nurturing personality and resilience to develop a child's learning. This gives enormous joy and satisfaction that we are making a difference and always remembering every day is a new day and no day is ever the same.

The Curriculum

Pupils in Apple Class follow a bespoke curriculum tailored to their individual needs. Each week has a particular focus to the learning, such as a story, season, sound or topic. Where appropriate, children are taught phonics using Twinkl Phonics, the school's chosen scheme, and also follow a version of the school's Talk For Writing approach for KS1 mainstream pupils for story writing. Older pupils may be able to be taught as a class for short periods of time and complete work independently, but the majority of pupils in Apple Class work individually or in small groups on short, focussed activities with additional adult support.

Teaching Staff

The two teachers in the SU have the same entitlements regarding PPA and subject leader release time as mainstream staff.

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SU teachers are part of the whole school teaching staff and are expected to take on responsibilities such as subject leadership or pupil responsibility groups across the mainstream school setting as appropriate.

SU teachers attend EYFS/KS1 team meetings. Where a staff meeting is not relevant to the SU, teaching staff from the SU do not have to attend.

Support Staff

Support staff in Apple Class are specifically employed as Specialist Unit Learning Support Assistants. They are on the same pay scale as mainstream LSAs and are part of the same Performance Management procedure as mainstream LSAs.

All SU LSAs have a key group of pupils for whom they update learning journeys, write in home-school books and attend annual reviews, which they are paid overtime for attending.

It is the school's preference that all SU LSAs are full time as this provides the children with the most consistency in their learning. However, staff are still able to job share where it is agreed by the headteacher.

Where SU LSAs accompany children on the Year 6 residential they are able to claim overtime (all additional hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.) or one day's time in lieu.

SU LSAs are invited to attend training for all Suffolk school with a Specialist Unit. This is typically on the first PD Day of the Spring Term and they are paid overtime for their attendance.

Breaktimes And Lunchtimes

Children in the SU have a morning break and afternoon break. These are both covered by staff from the SU, who are not included in the rota for mainstream pupils.

Morning break will either be at 10:15 a.m. for just Apple Class or at 10:30 a.m. with the rest of the school, depending on the cohort of children in Apple Class and whether they would be overwhelmed by other children or not.

Afternoon break will either be at 2:00 p.m. for just Apple Class or at 2:15 p.m. with EYFS and KS1, depending on the cohort of children in Apple Class and whether they would be overwhelmed by other children or not.

Apple Class have lunchtime from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and are the first class in the dinner hall along with Cherry Class.

A team of five Specialist Unit MDSAs have responsibility for the children in Apple Class when they are in the dinner hall and on the playground.

Due to the dietary requirements of some pupils, reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the dinner menu on occasions. Some pupils may choose to sit away from others.

Assessment

All children in Apple Class are assessed termly using the Thrive approach. In some cases, individual pupils may take the Reception Baseline Assessment or the Year 1 and Year 2 Phonics assessment, but this is not a common occurrence.

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The end of year report format for Apple Class is different to that of mainstream pupils. It contains written comments by the class teacher on personal development and areas of learning, including next steps for the following year, but does not include any grades or data.

Pupil Joining Mainstream Classes

Where appropriate, pupils from the SU may join their mainstream year group for foundation subjects such as Art or PE.

All pupil responsibility groups must have SU pupils in them.

Where appropriate, SU pupils will be selected to represent the school in mainstream sporting events. SU pupils are also eligible to be members of Senior and Junior choirs and take part in concerts such as the Year 3 And 4 Talent Show and the Midwinter Concert.

Where mainstream classes are invited to special events, such as performances at local secondary schools, SU pupils from those year groups should be invited too.

Year 6 SU pupils should be invited to join all Year 6 activities, including (but not limited to) the Year 6 residential, Bikeability, the trip to Harry Potter, Crucial Crew, talks from PCSO Skeggs, the Year 6 play, the Year 6 sleepover and the Year 6 party.

Mainstream Pupils Joining Apple Class

Historically, mainstream pupils have been able to spend time in the SU as part of an intervention. However, given the more complex needs of the children, this is not a facility that the SU is currently able to offer.

Collective Worship

It is not appropriate for all SU pupils to join whole-school collective worship. Those that remain in class will engage with the theme of that day's worship where appropriate.

Year 6 children in the SU sit on chairs in assembly with the Year 6 mainstream pupils.

Children from the SU who are unable to access collective worship but who have received certificates will come to assembly just to receive their certificate.

Mainstream classes have a class assembly where their parents and carers are invited and they showcase what they have learned. Apple Class do not have a class assembly but they do perform their own Nativity at Christmas to invited guests and also host termly open afternoons for parents and carers to come and spend time in the SU.

Whole School Events

Apple Class take part in every whole-school event, such as World Book Day or various charity fundraising days.

When there are whole-school events that require classes to book slots or take turns, such as school photos or a visiting book shop, Apple Class are given the first choice of when to attend. In the majority of instances, this will be the first available session.

Communication With Parents

As many children are driven to school by taxi, opportunities for face to face contact with parents are limited. Communication with parents is via a home-school book, which is written in each day by a

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pupil's key worker with the expectation that it is read and a response is made by parents. There is also a class email address – apple@st-gregory.suffolk.sch.uk – from which copies of letters that have also been distributed via ParentMail are sent as well the dinner menu and reminders of key events such as swimming or non-uniform days.

Apple Class does not have a parents' evening when the mainstream classes do. There are regular open afternoons throughout the year and parents also attend annual reviews.

Parking

Parents who drive their children to school and have a disabled badge may park in the disabled car parking spaces in the school car park. Some parents who do not have disabled badges may need to park in these spaces if it is unsafe for the children to walk to school and cross roads.

Swimming

Children in Apple Class have two terms of swimming at the Kingfisher swimming pool in the Autumn and Spring. The children walk to and from the swimming pool. There are three swimming instructors hired for this and Apple staff accompany the children into the pool.

Forest School

Children in Apple Class attend Forest School in the Summer Term. This is to avoid clashes with swimming in the Autumn and Spring.

Fire / Lockdown Drills

Due to the distress that it can cause pupils, staff in the Specialist Unit are told of fire / lockdown drills in advance.