

'The Helm' SEND Provision at Walter Halls

At Walter Halls Primary and Nursery School, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils receive an inclusive, ambitious and appropriately adapted education. For the vast majority of pupils with SEND, high-quality teaching, adaptive classroom practice, targeted interventions and a supportive learning environment provide the "additional to and different from" provision required for them to make good progress.

However, we recognise that a small number of pupils have needs that are significantly more complex and may require a more specialist environment for some or all parts of the school day. For these pupils, accessing a busy mainstream classroom full time may present barriers to learning, communication, emotional regulation and wellbeing.

The Helm has been developed to provide a nurturing, highly structured and communication-focused learning environment for pupils whose needs cannot consistently be met within a typical classroom setting alone. Whilst Walter Halls prioritises inclusion within mainstream classrooms wherever possible, we recognise that some pupils may, at times, benefit from a quieter and more specialised provision in order to access learning successfully and develop the skills needed for increasing independence and participation within the wider school community.

The Helm offers:

- Smaller pupil numbers
- Higher adult-to-pupil ratios
- A highly structured and predictable environment
- Support for communication and interaction needs
- Sensory-informed practice
- Adapted teaching approaches
- Individualised learning and regulation support

Ensuring responsible inclusion:

Pupils accessing The Helm remain an integral part of their mainstream class and wider school community. All pupils continue to be on roll within their year group class and remain under the care and responsibility of their class teacher, alongside the SENDCo and Helm staff. Effective collaboration between all staff is central to ensuring consistency, inclusion and successful outcomes for pupils.

Provision within The Helm is flexible and personalised. Pupils may access their mainstream classroom for specific lessons, social times, assemblies, enrichment opportunities or wider school activities, depending on their individual strengths and needs. Opportunities for inclusion are carefully planned and regularly reviewed to ensure pupils maintain a strong sense of belonging within their peer group and the wider school community.

The long-term aim for all pupils accessing The Helm is to develop the communication, regulation, independence and learning skills required to enable increasing participation within mainstream education wherever appropriate.

Placement within The Helm:

Placement within The Helm is considered on an individual basis through a holistic assessment of need, in partnership with families and, where appropriate, external professionals. Decisions are informed by the graduated approach and a review of the provision already implemented within the mainstream classroom.

Pupils accessing The Helm may:

- Be currently pre-verbal or have communication and interaction skills significantly below age-related expectations
- Be working substantially below age-related expectations academically
- Present with behaviours which may pose a risk to their own safety or the safety of others
- Have significant sensory processing needs which cannot consistently be met within a mainstream classroom environment
- Require a highly structured and low-arousal learning environment
- Be in receipt of High-Level Needs funding or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Have significant involvement from specialist external services

Placement is reviewed regularly to ensure provision remains appropriate and responsive to the pupil's changing needs.

Curriculum and Approach:

The curriculum within The Helm is designed to meet pupils' individual developmental, communication, sensory and learning needs. There is a strong focus on:

- Communication and interaction
- Emotional regulation
- Sensory development
- Early reading, writing and mathematics
- Gross and fine motor development
- Independence and life skills
- Learning through play and exploration

Teaching is highly personalised and informed by ongoing assessment. Progress is measured using the Walter Halls Pre-Key Stage Standards and Walter Halls EYFS SEND Standards, alongside individual EHCP outcomes and personalised targets.

Planning is responsive to pupils' individual next steps, with regular reviews involving families, class teachers, Helm staff and the SENDCo. As with all pupils with SEND, termly review meetings are held to evaluate progress and agree future outcomes and provision.

Daily Structure:

The Helm follows a consistent daily structure to support pupils' communication, emotional regulation and readiness for learning. The day includes:

- Structured group sessions
- Communication-focused activities
- Early mathematics and phonics learning
- Sensory circuits and movement breaks
- Outdoor learning opportunities
- Play-based and experiential learning
- Life skills activities
- Curriculum enrichment sessions

A predictable routine, visual supports and sensory-informed approaches are embedded throughout the day to reduce anxiety, develop independence and support engagement in learning.

A Typical Day.

The start and end of school days are typically – but not always – adjusted by 5-10 minutes to allow for a less-crowded environment.

8:50	Settling activities within the Helm
9:00	<u>Morning group</u> Singing and welcome Use of communication emotion board to share how children are feeling. Review visual timetable, days of the week, weather. Bucket time – level 1 **
9:45	Maths focus learning
10:05	Movement break, sensory circuit and busy time (learning through play)
10:30	Communication café – toast club
10:50	Outside provision
11:00	Phonics, pre phonics skills, bucket time, mark making/writing and communication session
11:45	Sensory circuits Life skills - lunch prep,
12:00	Lunch time Outside – Helm version of OPAL play
1.10	Afternoon group Afternoon welcome and singing, bucket time – grouped for Level 1 and Level 2 **
1:30	Sensory session and busy time (learning through play)
2.00	<u>Focus KUW work</u> Monday – Science and PHSE Tuesday – Art and Music Wednesday – Geography/History Thursday – Computing and RE Friday – Cooking and DT
3.00	End of the day routines
3:10	Home time

** "Bucket time" refers to **Stage 1 of the Attention Autism approach**, an evidence-based intervention created by speech and therapist Gina Davies. It is designed to capture a child's attention, build focus, and develop shared communication through highly engaging, visually stimulating.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance:

The planned provision in The Helm is overseen and managed by our SENDCO, who is a fully qualified and experienced teacher and senior leader. Provision and resourcing is supported by a HLTA (Higher-level teaching assistant) with links made with class teachers in every year group. A small team of TA's help to deliver this provision with this oversight in place on a weekly basis.

The quality of this provision is monitored half-termly by SENDCO and other senior leaders. Staff training time is allocated across each term to ensure high standards of provision are maintained. Senior leaders work closely with a network of schools and external bodies to continually review and develop this provision, in an evidence-informed way.

Rationale written by: Brit Goldsmith, SENDCO

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Reviewed annually.