

**The Cherwell School**  
**SEND Governors report – November 2020**



## **Introduction**

This report outlines the main outcomes for the Inclusion team for the academic year 2019-20, together with our current priorities and development areas.

Our AHT (Inclusion)/SENCO, Martha Hawes, has been in role since January 2016. She has undertaken her national award in SEN coordination (NASENCO) training at Brookes University and is fully qualified. The new Deputy SENCO role for September 2019 has been developing, and Jane Kavanagh is undertaking her SENCO training this academic year, strengthening capacity within the team. Our Inclusion Base Lead Teacher retired at the end of the summer term in 2020, although she has returned in an interim capacity to oversee the work of the Base while we plan a reorganisation and recruit a replacement.

The organisational structure of the team is shown in Appendix 2.

The school closure during the pandemic had a significant impact on the work of the SEN team, as it did for the whole school. Two main roles were assigned to teaching assistants and the wider Inclusion team during this time: in-school support for vulnerable students and those with EHCPs (and others invited in for reasons of family need or mental health), and keyworker support remotely for students isolating at home. The in-school group grew over the period of the lockdown, as increasing numbers of students returned to school. The remote team were trained to support students using the Google classrooms and made regular calls to their appointed students and parents, recording the contacts on a spreadsheet for monitoring by the year teams. Annual reviews were conducted remotely, with new systems needing to be developed to accomplish this. We have had positive feedback from parents about the support that was offered during this difficult period.

The interruption to the school year meant that interventions were not completed. Students on the Read, Write Inc Freshstart reading intervention were supported remotely and with paper printouts sent home, but their progress was necessarily curtailed. They have been reassessed in year 8 and the programme continued where phonics is still not secure. A similar approach is being taken to the maths intervention groups. The 7 Stars group were supported remotely by the 7 Stars teachers and by TAs, if they were not attending school.

The AHT (Inclusion) continued to work with AHTs for Curriculum and for Teaching and Learning to develop systems for monitoring more closely those students not achieving expected levels. Adjustment groups were set up within each faculty at the start of the year to provide regular discussion opportunities (timetabled in staff meetings and collaborative time) about how to support students by making small adjustments to classroom approaches and resources. This system has been reintroduced in the new school year in 2020 and will continue to be a focus of staff development time.

A focus on training in understanding autistic spectrum conditions included a training session for SLT from our Communication and Interaction advisory teacher Nicky Ashby, followed by a whole-staff training in January 2020 (Inset) and a follow-up slot in a subsequent staff meeting. Further slots planned over the year were not able to be delivered due to the closure. Nicky also delivered a session for deputy year leaders and colleagues from the Inclusion team on creating and implementing 'social stories' for students with poor social understanding. As new initiative was introduced to begin the move towards Cherwell becoming more 'autism-friendly' – a group of staff volunteered to be part of a new Autism-Friendly school development group, focussing on certain areas of autism with a view to developing expertise and sharing this with colleagues across the school. This is being relaunched in Nov 2020.

The awarding of centre-assessed grades for GCSEs meant that our students on the SEN register were able to benefit from grades their teachers felt were appropriate, leading to the excellent outcomes we expected for this cohort (see below).

We have worked hard to ensure colleagues in the team felt safe and well supported on their return to work. A health and safety protocol specifically for TAs has been developed and shared with all staff, and time given to training to support its implementation in our Inset at the start of the year. In addition to the whole-school hygiene regime, TAs have been issued with additional equipment such as laser pens, visors and mini whiteboards to aid their ability to support students from a safe distance.

Our specific areas of focus for the year ahead are: to continue to embed and develop safe and effective ways of working for TAs during the pandemic; to develop the work of the Inclusion Base and other interventions to ensure support provided is appropriate and impactful (this includes the recruitment and induction of the new Lead Teacher with a wider remit to reorganise and develop our intervention strategies); to continue to develop the autism-friendly school initiative through the work of the focus group. In addition, we have applied to be part of a national pilot being run as part of a research project by the Education Endowment Fund into developing whole-school SEND provision.

### **Current SEND profile of the school**

The numbers of students with an EHCP has risen from 76 to 80 this year, with the numbers at 'school support' level rising from 187 to 204 (see table 1 below). We continue to use the Oxfordshire moderation guidelines to identify students who need to be on the SEN register and those who are making sufficient progress to come off it. The level of complexity of special educational need seems to be rising, particularly in the area of social, emotional and mental health issues, and it is partly this that is guiding plans for the reorganisation of the Base provision.

As a percentage, approximately 19% of students between years 7 and 11 are on the SEN register. This compares with a national average of 12.1% (published by the DfE in Jan 2020<sup>1</sup>). For higher level needs only (EHCP), there are 5.2% of students in the school in comparison with

3.3% nationally. This is partially accounted for by our Bases, which support exclusively students with EHCPs (the figure in the mainstream part of the school only is 3.8%).

<b>EDUCATION, HEALTH &amp; CARE PLAN</b>	<b>YR7</b>	<b>YR8</b>	<b>YR 9</b>	<b>YR10</b>	<b>YR 11</b>	<b>YR 12</b>	<b>YR 13</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL EHCP TOTAL</b>
<b>MAINSTREAM</b>	7	9	6	16	12	4	0	<b>54</b>
<b>CIRB</b>	4	3	3	5	3	1	2	<b>21</b>
<b>HIRB</b>	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	<b>5</b>
<b>TOTAL BY YEAR</b>	11	12	10	25	15	5	2	<b>80</b>

<b>SCHOOL SUPPORT (K) - TOTAL BY YEAR</b>	<b>YR7</b>	<b>YR8</b>	<b>YR 9</b>	<b>YR 10</b>	<b>YR 11</b>	<b>YR 12</b>	<b>YR 13</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL K TOTAL</b>
<b>MAINSTREAM</b>	40	36	36	37	42	6	7	<b>204</b>

<b>TOTAL SEN 284</b>
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Table 1: Data for the school cohort 2020-21

## Outcomes 2017-18

### Key stage 4

Table 2 below shows an analysis of GCSE results for our year 11 2020 cohort. These are based on the centre-assessed grades (CAGs) that schools were asked to award due to the cancellation of exams this year. The grades were subjected to a rigorous checking process before being submitted and we feel are a good indication of the eventual results that would have been awarded to students had they sat the exams. The key indicator is the Progress 8, which measures the students' progress in their best 8 subjects.

The highlighted results show that our overall figure for the year 11 cohort was **+1.08**. This means that on average, the GCSE grades attained by students at The Cherwell School were 1.08 of a grade higher than would be expected from their key stage 2 results, in comparison with the national average. For students in 'school support' (SEN K) category, the Progress 8 score was **+0.43** (20 students). Our equivalent result for SEN K in 2018 was **-0.22**, so this year's result is very pleasing in comparison. Considerable work in monitoring and supporting these students was done by the new Deputy SENCO in the early part of the school year. Needless to say, however, it was a very unusual year, and we continue to reflect on and refine our approaches to supporting students with special educational needs through their GCSE exams.

The figure for SEN E (including Progress 8 of **+0.37**) is pleasing and we again had a relatively large cohort (15 students) with EHCPs in year 11.

Group		Progress 8
All students		1.08
Males		0.64
Females		1.61
Pupil premium		0.69
FSM		0.59
Prior attainment	High	1.17
	Middle	1.09
	Low	0.69
Disadvantaged		0

SEN E		0.37
SEN K		0.43
EAL		1.45

Table 2 GCSE results 2020

Of the students on the SEN register finishing year 11 in the summer of 2020, seven went on to join Cherwell sixth form, 19 went to one of the further education colleges in the area, one went to another training provider, two were employed, and two were not in employment, education or training (NEET). These two students have been offered advice and guidance from our careers counsellor to support their move back into education, and are being supported further by the Oxfordshire EET team.

### **Key Stage 3**

The focus on vulnerable learners in key stage 3 has been continued in 2019/20, with a whole-school approach to training staff on how to adjust their teaching to support students who struggle with their learning. Using a faculty approach, teachers were placed into small groups to focus regularly on particular students in their teaching groups; this enabled them to develop and trial new approaches to supporting these students through small but significant adjustments in their teaching methods. Regular review slots were calendared in to the faculty meetings timetables. This approach has continued this academic year, with the adjustment groups being re-established and initial discussions already having taken place.

Faculty leaders continue to monitor individual student performance in key stage 3, and progress towards targets are discussed during SEN review meetings with parents.

### **Behaviour, exclusions, attendance and alternative provision**

Cumulative attendance data for the year 2019/20 shows students with SEND at 92.0% compared with a whole-school percentage of 94.9%. This compares with a national average attendance of 93.5% for students with SEND and 94.5% for those with no SEND for 2018-19 (the last year for which data is available)<sup>2</sup>. This is a disappointing figure, as attendance for both SEND and non-SEND students continues to be a focus for the school.

Eighteen of the 25 fixed term exclusions in 2019/20 were students with SEND (72%). Although a low number overall, this percentage is considerably higher than those of recent years (when it was approx 40%) and reflects some significantly challenging behaviours we were encountering in the early part of the academic year. The exclusion rate for the school is 1.25% compared with 5.36% nationally, and for students with SEN it is 6.2% compared with 16% nationally<sup>3</sup>.

There were no permanent exclusions of student with SEND in 2019-20.

All students, other than those mentioned below, follow a full timetable with a small number of exceptions:

- Some students in years 8 and 9 do not study French as a second language but are taught additional English to supplement the English curriculum and vocabulary teaching. There are approximately 20 students in each year following this route.
- Approximately 12 students in years 10 and 11 choose only 3 options and had an additional 'study support' option instead of the fourth.

A small number of students with SEN accessed alternative provision in 2019/20. One student attended a 1:1 bespoke provision at Hill End initially for 3 days per week. Following a successful application for an EHCP, this student was subsequently awarded funding by the local authority to pay for a full time higher level TA, enabling him to remain in school and access individual provision on site. Four students (two in mainstream and two in the CIRB) accessed the Animal Care course at Abingdon & Witney college on one day per week, in order to enhance their curriculum. One student in year 8 attended the On Course intervention at Meadowbrook and has subsequently had a successful reintegration back into school. One student was a non-attender and had a placement at Wheatley Park school, as well as support from the One-Eighty intervention. We successfully applied for an EHCP for this student and she has subsequently been given a place at a special school appropriate for her needs.

## **Accessibility**

The school's Accessibility Plan was reviewed in the summer of 2019. The Plan was written in 2016-17, in consultation with teachers, parents, the SEN governor and school premises staff. The Accessibility Group met in January 2020 to review progress with our new Premises Manager, Hazel Moss, who will take forward various aspects.

One student with a significant physical disability joined the school in year 7 in 2019 and modifications have been made in consultation with the LA SENSS physical disability advisor. In particular, a new disabled toilet has been adapted on south site, with funding from the local authority. New markings on external and internal steps and staircases have been added to improve visibility around the site. We have one student who has had a significant deterioration in her eyesight over the last academic year, and we are working with the visual impairment advisory teacher from the local authority and the NHs visual impairment team to make appropriate adjustments, including the use of technology to improve her access.

There was no inspection of exam access arrangements by JCQ in the summer of 2020, as the exams were cancelled. There was a remote inspection in October 2020 for the resit exam season, and we were passed as meeting the requirements of the JCQ for our access arrangements.

## **Team reports**

### **Literacy Intervention**

We continued to use the Read Write Inc FreshStart (RWFS) reading recovery programme for students whose phonic decoding skills were not secure. Students in Year 7 were selected for assessment for suitability based on their KS2 SATS reading scores, early screening using a computer-based program called 'Lucid', 1:1 assessment using the YARC assessment tool, and literacy concerns raised by primary school colleagues. Colleagues delivering the intervention receive training every year, and a wider group of colleagues in the English faculty have been also trained as they use some of the techniques and strategies to support students with weak reading in English intervention lessons.

Using the Read Write Fresh Start Assessment, Year 7 students with a KS2 SATS standardised score of less than 100 suggesting delayed literacy (reading ages < 10 years on entry) were assessed. 46 students were assessed with 11 starting RWFS, all of whom were in 7 Stars. Students starting on the higher modules made significant progress within the RWFS assessment criteria and were able to return to the English curriculum within the first term. Students starting on module 1 were interrupted in their progress at module 12, due to the school closure. Data shows that they had already made progress in word recognition and reading speed over the time since September. Support was given remotely during the lockdown on appropriate units of the course, and these students have been reassessed at the start of the 2020/21 academic year and are continuing with the intervention this year.

Students who exceed the criteria for RWFS can still have difficulties with reading comprehension, and work is being done with the English faculty to provide support for these weak readers in year 7. This is being achieved through an intervention in registration time which pre-teaches vocabulary and concepts from the English curriculum, boosting students' capacity to engage with the content of the lessons.

All Year 7 students studying RWFS continue with extra support in English in Years 8 and 9 (instead of French). This is further supported by our Literacy HLTAs.

*TL*

### **7 Stars**

A significant development in ensuring the sustainability of the 7 Stars provision in 2019/20 was the addition of an additional teacher for some of the lessons in the timetable. This has enabled the expertise in teaching these students to be developed within the school, providing more depth of support for the 7 Stars teacher as well as knowledge and expertise within the department.

The 7 Stars Cohort 2019-20 contained a particularly high number of students with high needs (EHCPs), in particular those with a diagnosis of ASC. This required a need for routine, emotional regulation and highly differentiated work. Two students in the cohort had not previously been taught within a whole class setting and five students had been considered too vulnerable to complete their SATs in their primary schools. 7 Stars provided these students with the high visibility, nurture and care, explicit structure and differentiated work that they required. The students followed tailored Read Write Inc intervention groups and made steady progress with their literacy skills. Before lockdown, each child was allocated a key worker who 'checked in' with the family every week. 7 Stars students followed a simplified one-week timetable in order to focus on core subjects and to guarantee differentiated work during this period. Specific students who were not coping at home were allocated literacy and numeracy TAs who phoned home and worked 1:1 to remotely support the student. This worked particularly well. Some of the 7 stars students became increasingly stressed working at home and so were invited back in to school for three days a week. These were students with ASC who were stressed at losing the distinction between home for relaxing and school for work. The two 7 Stars teacher facilitated this additional support which also supported the students' transition in to Year 8. Transitions back to mainstream lessons, which would have normally occurred after Easter with support in mainstream classes from the 7 Stars teachers were not able to happen due to the lockdown. However, due to the increased vulnerability of this cohort, each class is being supported in English once a week by the 7 Stars teacher now that they have transitioned to Year 8.

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### **Maths intervention**

Our maths intervention specialist has continued to develop appropriate maths interventions for KS3 students. There is no widely used 'off the shelf' maths intervention package and so we have developed our own approaches. In September 2019 the KS2 SAT mathematic scores, a baseline test taken by students without an SAT score, class observations and consultation with the mainstream maths teachers were used to identify 47 students in year seven who would benefit from additional support in mathematics. These students either had demonstrated an area of persistent weakness or misunderstanding from the KS2 syllabus or were struggling to engage with their mainstream lessons due to cognitive overload.

The year 7 students all had a one hour intervention lessons once a week in one of twelve intervention groups. Those students with very specific areas of misunderstanding who required explicit re-teaching of KS2 topics were grouped together. Other groups consisted of students who benefitted from careful pre-teaching to prepare them for their mainstream classes so that they would not experience cognitive overload in class but be able to engage with the whole lesson and improve confidence and performance.

Once the year 7 students had been organised there was enough space in the timetable to organise interventions for fourteen year 8 students. They had all been part of maths interventions the previous year and their teachers felt that they would benefit from further assistance. In October they were arranged into three groups and took part in maths interventions for one hour once a fortnight. This program focused on pre-teaching and short regular practice of key numeracy knowledge and skills.

During the interventions, there is a process of continuous assessment. Using these assessments and in conjunction with their end of term tests, year 7 students were carefully monitored in their mastery of the KS2 syllabus and how effectively there were accessing the content of their mainstream lessons. Some students joined or left the group as a result of these assessments and teachers' and parents' input.

Of the 52 year 7 students who received maths intervention in the year 2019/20, 50 are still at the school and are under consideration for further support in mathematics during the current academic year. The progress of these students is being monitored by classroom observations and close consultation with their mainstream maths teachers. Once the tests at the end of term one have been analysed over half term, maths interventions will be organised for as many year 8s as we can timetable after provision has been made for the current year 7s.

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## **Inclusion Base**

The Base is Cherwell's equivalent of an Inclusion Unit and its main aim is to ensure students get the support they need to enable them to be successful in the classroom. It is also there to provide support for students who may be at risk of exclusion, as well as being an encouraging learning environment. It offers support to students who are experiencing social, emotional and relationship problems, those who are struggling with attendance and/or those who are finding the transition from one school to another difficult. Students who struggle with their behaviour are given time in Base to reflect on their behaviour and the opportunity to practice appropriate behaviours in a positive environment.

In 2019-20 (up until March Lockdown), 103 students from years 7-11 spent at least one day in the Inclusion Base following a behaviour incident. As a percentage of the school population, this was approximately 7.4%, and of those, 27% were students who were isolated three or more times during this time. This is a drop from 33% last year, but this was a short year. However, we noted that 47% of all behaviour incidents involved students on the SEND register, an increase from 36% last year. Base was also used at times as a sanction for year 12 and year 13 students, but there is little data recorded to show what effect this had.

During this year we had a number of students who accessed the Base for extended periods of time. This was often used as a way of engaging students who otherwise would not have attended school, or would have found, at times, a normal curriculum too daunting. Often these students had high level SEMH difficulties and required individual support on a daily basis in order to access the curriculum and this had a huge impact on staff resources. Some students also used Base during particular lessons on a regular basis, and these included students who dropped a language or option and/ or for medical reasons could not access PE. We also hosted students from other schools who were at risk of exclusion in a pilot scheme aimed at avoiding permanent exclusions.

A particular focus was ensuring we spent more time in the classroom to support students and staff, which give us a real insight into why particular students find the classroom environment difficult. This in turn gave us the opportunity to work closer with staff and make student transfer from Base back to mainstream much smoother.

Many students used the facility informally in their free time, i.e. before school, break, lunchtime and after school. These tended to be students who found social interaction difficult and the school environment challenging and overwhelming. During this time, we encouraged students to build positive relationships to help develop confidence and improve self-esteem. We continued to see an increase in the number of students with ASC, who found Base a calm and reassuring centre, but hope in the future to find a more suitable environment for them.

There was a significant increase in students struggling with mental health issues and finding the best ways of supporting them continued to be our challenge. However, a more coordinated approach, working closely with the School Counsellor and his team, School Nurse and At the Bus (art therapy) left Base staff feeling more confident to deal with difficult issues.

Breakfast club continued to be a popular social event and an important start to the day for a number of students who needed the reassurance they were well prepared for the day. Base also continued to offer after school homework support for a number of regular Base students.

*LH*

### **Learning support (LS) north site**

We have a dedicated classroom on north site which supports GCSE students who have slots in their timetables allocated for catch-up work where they are not doing a full range of optional GCSE subjects. This can be because they have arrived at Cherwell late in year 10 or in year 11, or because they have dropped one option subject in order to concentrate on others. The LS classroom is manned by an experienced TA at all times, and they are supported by English and Maths colleagues working with small groups of students or one-to-one. LS also functions as an emotional support base for vulnerable students during break, lunchtime and before and after school. Approximately 15 students regularly access this facility.

*MHs*

### **Hearing Resource Base**

Update to follow

*LB*

### **Communication and Interaction resource base (CIRB)**

Update to follow.

*CW/PA*

## Priorities and Action Plan for 2016-18

The table below outlines progress on our Action Plan in 2017-18 and areas for focus for the year ahead.

Priority	Approach	Outcomes
Provide more high quality training specifically on supporting students who have ASD	<p>SLT training by SENSS advisory teacher to consider 'characteristics of an autism-friendly school'.</p> <p>Whole-staff training at January Inset. Follow-up at staff meetings for remainder of the year.</p> <p>Creation of 'ASC champions' group to bring together wider group of staff interested in learning about and supporting students with ASD.</p>	<p>SLT received training in Autumn 2019. Whole-staff training was delivered at Jan Inset and followed up at one further staff meeting with more input (Nicky Ashby – SENSS). 'Social stories' training was delivered to SEN team and deputy year leaders.</p> <p>Zones of Regulation training to be delivered in Nov 2020.</p> <p>Autism-friendly school group was initially convened but was halted due to the lockdown. Due to be relaunched in Nov 2020.</p>
Develop better systems to support 7	Creation and implementation of '7 Stars Roadmap' to specify	Ex-7 Stars keyworker system is now underway

<p>Stars students as they move into Yr8 and beyond</p>	<p>support to be provided for ex-7- Stars students as they move through the school with the aim of improving engagement and resilience so that these students achieve the best possible outcomes.</p> <p>Keyworker system for these students to be implemented as part of this process.</p> <p>Focus on new interventions for reading comprehension for students who have completed phonics interventions but whose reading fluency remains behind that of their peers.</p>	<p>with increased monitoring of the most high-profile students and regular support for their learning and emotional wellbeing. 7 Stars teacher is taking a lead with this.</p> <p>Comprehension interventions are being delivered for year 7 students who do not need RWFS but whose reading is weak.</p>
<p><b>New for 2020/21</b></p> <p>Recruitment and induction of new lead teacher for the Inclusion Base due to retirement of current post-holder</p>	<p>Review of Base provision with outgoing Base lead teacher and relevant SLT colleagues led to development of 'Inclusion Hub' proposed system. This would be led by the new Lead Teacher, and aims to streamline all current interventions as well as developing more appropriate provision for students with mental health difficulties and ASC.</p> <p>New lead teacher has been appointed (Oct 2020) and will</p>	

	start in Jan 2021. Development of this role will be a significant improvement to the way that interventions are delivered, and monitored, leading to enhanced impact.	
Continued development of Teaching Assistant Protocol to ensure safe ways of working	TA Protocol was established with input from colleagues already working under Covid conditions in school in summer term 2020, and was presented in Inset in July 2020 and Sept 2020. New developments and ideas from colleagues are incorporated as they arise. There is a need for regular reminders, updates and vigilance to ensure that staff retain high levels of personal safety and alertness to risk.	
Relaunch of autism-friendly schools initiative	As above	
Continued development of '7 Stars roadmap' to ensure visibility and ongoing support for students leaving 7 Stars.	As above	

*MHs*

*Oct 2020*

1. DfE Special Educational Needs in England January 2020.  
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>
2. DfE Pupil Absence in Schools in England 2018-19.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/875275/Absence\\_3term.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875275/Absence_3term.pdf)
3. DfE Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2018 to 2019.  
<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england>

Organisational Chart 2020/21

