

## ACE Tiverton Special School: Frequently Asked Questions



### Students, Staff and Families

#### Welcome!

ACE Tiverton Special School is a brand new, innovative co-educational school designated to support secondary age pupils with SEMH needs and for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) pupils who fall within the average to high ability range. ACE Tiverton will be a learning family at the heart of the community that prepares our young people to be outstanding citizens. The way we establish our learning community in this first year is important because it will be the foundation for everything that follows in future years. We know, however that listening to students and families is vital in shaping our practice and routines as we go through this year and into the next. Many of the plans we have in place for this year will be actively reviewed to ensure that they meet our students needs and a fit for purpose; we welcome feedback as we refine our systems to make them the very best they can be.

#### Who will be on the staff team?

We have recruited four fantastic teachers from across the spectrum of subjects but all with significant experience of SEN including ASD and SEMH needs. In addition, we have five Teaching Assistants, a Learning outside the Classroom Co-ordinator and a Pastoral Manager to support students and families as part of their daily school experience. We will be ably supported to do this by a great team of administrative, site and catering staff who will be appointed in the next term. Further support and expertise is provided by our team at the Multi Academy Trust, who provide expertise and support in a range of areas including finance, HR and IT.

#### How will students be grouped?

In the first year, we will run a nurture group system, where students will be taught based upon the learning needs and preferences by one consistent Teacher and Teaching Assistant. Supplementing the classroom experience will be weekly learning outside the classroom sessions and support for our students to be active and move throughout the week.

#### What will the uniform be?

The uniform will be black shoes or trainers, black trousers, tracksuit bottoms, shorts or skirts; white polo shirt with logo and grey sweatshirt with logo. In addition, there will be a sports kits of silver-grey sports top and black sports shorts. The polo short, sweatshirt and sports kit will be available through the school and we will have samples of each item at the Transition workshops to enable students and families to see them, touch them and then decide on the best sizing options. Ordering and prices will be fully explained at the transition workshop.

#### Who do I speak to with any questions?

Before we start in September, please direct any questions or queries to Hannah Smart, Head teacher. By email is best, if possible but otherwise via telephone, her contact details are: Hannah.Smart@ATSS.acemat.uk; telephone: 07395 798129

#### What will the school day look like?

The school day will start at 8am and end at 2pm, on a Friday the finish time will be 1.30pm. The day will be structured, in the first year as follows:

Time	Event	Details
8am	Students Arrive Breakfast Club Morning Check In with Learning Family	Students welcomes by staff. Lockers accessible until 8.15am.
8.15am	Lesson 1	A learning break will occur between these lessons as required by each group, managed by the Learning Family team. Drinks and snacks will be available between 9.20 and 9.40am.
9.30am	Lesson 2	
10.45am	Lunch	Eaten communally with all staff present.
11.15am	Lesson 3	A learning break will occur between these lessons as required by each group, managed by the Learning Family team. Drinks and snacks will be available between 12.20 and 12.40pm.

Time	Event	Details
12.30pm	Lesson 4	
1.45pm	Afternoon Check Out with Learning Family.	Lockers accessible from 1.45pm
2pm	Students depart site	All staff will be involved in dismissal and farewell
2.15pm	Parent/Carer Updates	These will be equally split between the Teacher and TA, depending on the named lead for each student and relationship with family.

### What happens about lunch and break?

Breaks and lunchtimes will be supervised by staff and students will be encouraged to spend time together or, if required, take a sensory or decompression break. There will be space and time for informal games to be played as well as quiet zones for reading, conversing or doing an activity of choice.

### Who co-ordinates transport to ACE Tiverton?

Devon County Council co-ordinates transport and all enquiries should be directed towards them; the contact details are email: [schooltransportserviceenquiries@devon.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransportserviceenquiries@devon.gov.uk) or telephone: 0345 155 1019. We work closely with Transport to reduce travel anxiety and to ensure information is shared that is appropriate to support the positive experience of students in travelling to and from school. Transport does operate independently of the school however, so any questions or queries should be raised with them directly, in the first instance.

### What happens if my child is ill at school?

Our priority is to care for your child in a way that they feel safe, secure and confident. Whilst being unwell can be challenging, our priority is to keep children in school unless it is unsafe to do so. If your child is experiencing diarrhoea or vomiting, bleeding profusely or requires emergency medical treatment beyond our first aid remit, we will of course be in contact. However, with mild and low-level symptoms, unless there is a good reason, we will support your child in school, keeping them comfortable and in a low-demand environment until the end of the school day. We will ensure that you and your child are able to communicate during the school day and if this is a point of significant anxiety for your child, we will work with you to develop a clear communication strategy that will work, over time to the point where students are able to get through the school day without contacting home.

### What happens if my child can't attend?

It will be important that we hear from parents and carers as soon as possible on each day that a student is absent from school. We will undertake a 'first day calling' process if students are absent from site 30minutes after the school day as part of our attendance and safeguarding protocols. Once the school email address and telephone number are in place, we will share this information with all families. We understand that illness happens and that some appointments can't take place outside of school hours however we know that students with the highest school attendance rates report feeling happier, more confident and settled at school. This feeling creates a very positive learning environment and so we ask that absence from school is limited wherever possible.

### How will I know how my child is progressing?

You will receive, in the first year, regular (at least weekly) contact from your child's teacher and/or teaching assistant about the daily routines, successes and achievements. We encourage this contact to be via email to enable clear communication but understand that telephone calls can often be helpful. Initially, we would aim to make contact more regularly to support the students and families in settling into the routines of school. In addition, we will report on your child's academic, personal and social progress three times in the first year, with written feedback and comments using information from the EHCP and academic tasks to show how students have made improvements over time.

### How can families get involved?

There are many ways! We are keen to establish an active Parent Association who can support the school in several ways from fundraising, social events, parent and carer support and information sessions. Alongside this, parent volunteers in school would be very welcome. There is a process that would be undertaken with any volunteers to fulfil safeguarding requirements however if you can garden, cook, sew, paint, create or have any other skill or talent, please don't hesitate to let Mrs Smart know.