

John Ruskin Speech & Language Unit

Information Booklet

2022/23

Teacher in Charge: Liz Corbyn



Celebrating 10 years as an Ofsted Outstanding school 'Shine a Light' finalists

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL

Criteria for placement of a pupil in John Ruskin Language Unit

1. The pupil must have an EHCP or be undergoing a formal assessment under the 2011 Education Act and be within the primary range of Reception-11 years old.
2. The pupil must have a recent speech therapy assessment diagnosing and giving evidence for a severe specific speech and/or developmental language disorder, apparent in both languages if bilingual.

OR

This evidence will need to be gathered by staff at JRLU (if recent Salt report not available).

3. The pupil demonstrates a desire/intent to communicate, irrespective of language impairment, but has presenting language difficulties which might include one or more of the following:
 - Echolalia- immediate or delayed;
 - Disordered sentence structure;
 - Perceptual difficulties – sequencing, spatial awareness
 - Comprehension difficulties – e.g. inability to comprehend simple sentences;
 - Expressive speech or language difficulties –e.g. minimal use of language, speech may be unintelligible, inappropriate use of gesture and facial expression.
4. Language Impairment should be a primary need and in the absence of:
 - Emotional or behavioural problems sufficiently severe to warrant regular intervention (or there should be evidence of sufficient social and emotional skills and development to cope in a class/group of up to 10 children).
 - Severe cognitive delay or difficulties that would prevent them benefiting from the intensive Salt input or specialist teaching.
 - A label of ASD, Asperger's, Autism or pervasive developmental disorder.
 - Hearing impairment which would require alternative communication systems (BSL).
 - Visual Impairment that would prevent them from accessing the visual support provided in the LU.

Why are children referred to John Ruskin?

- Children with a diagnosis of a developmental language disorder with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) are referred to the Unit.
- Children with a developmental language disorder have difficulty accessing the National Curriculum in a large mainstream classroom.
- Children attend the unit to develop strategies to help them access the National Curriculum.
- Some children are referred to the unit because they have a speech disorder (e.g. developmental disorder, DCD coordination) that prevents them from accessing a mainstream curriculum.

What is a Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)?

- A child with a DLD will have difficulty using and/or understanding spoken language. Some children with a DLD also have difficulty with written language.
- A child with DLD develops language in an atypical way. His/her language skills may be 'patchy' with some aspects severely affected, while other areas are developing well.
- Children with DLD have language skills that are significantly lower than their non-verbal skills.
- No two children with DLD present in the same way.
- Children with DLD may show some difficulties associated with their language problems. These include difficulties with attention and listening behaviour, general organisational problems, memory or social interaction, but none of these should be the child's primary presenting problem.

Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD):

- A child with oral and/or verbal DCD is likely to understand at a much higher level than they can express.
- With DCD, there is no damage to the muscles or nerves, but the child has difficulty making and co-ordinating movements.
- A child with DCD may have speech that is very hard to understand. Sounds may be inconsistent and in the wrong order.
- Children with DCD need more practice learning motor movements, (and they tend to progress more slowly with developing complex motor skills).

We follow the National Curriculum in the same way as the main school, but work is planned taking into account each child's language needs and IEP.

How many children are at John Ruskin?

The Language Unit has 24 places organised into three class groupings in the 'Island Building', which is on site to the main stream school. Integration into John Ruskin School is established and monitored for individual children, when appropriate, following a settling in period. Children from the main school also work in integration groups established with the unit, such as the social skills, Lego Therapy and oral narrative groups.

Who works here?

We have a range of staff working within the unit, including teacher, learning support assistants and speech and language therapists. All staff work together to promote a safe learning environment for all of the children. We also have an Educational Psychologist who visits termly. Advice from an occupational and physiotherapist may be sought for fine and gross motor programmes.

There is a full list of current staffing at the back of this handbook.

What do the children do here?

Work is planned following the National Curriculum as in the main school, but work is planned taking into account each child's language and developmental need. Some work is individual; some is in small groups but always allowing the children to progress at their own pace. Speech therapy provision is intensive and incorporated into the overall planning.

Teaching is structured, multisensory, with much repetition and consolidation work. Emphasis is placed on developing foundation skills such as: attention and listening skills, organisational strategies, memory, comprehension monitoring and social skills necessary for equipping children returning to larger mainstream classes.

The classes

The children are generally in 3 teaching groups. Our classes are Red, Purple and Lime. Class teachers manage the team working within their classroom and for the children who integrate. The classes are grouped by age and comprehension level.

Each child has a speech and language programme incorporated into their IEP.

The children have gross motor sessions each week. Children in years 3 and 4 go swimming with the mainstream classes. Some children have individual programmes from occupational and physiotherapists, which are incorporated into the overall programme.

We have a specialist music teacher who works with each class; KS2 children also learn French.

The children are encouraged to take books home each evening in their book bag. We would expect parents to read with their child every evening and to make a comment in the reading diary. This extra reading practise is essential for their progress. The children may also have spellings to practise in the 'Look, Cover, Write and Check' method. The children also have a home/school book, which is for both you and your children's teacher to write in. Please check the bag daily as any correspondence is put in these bags.

How do the children come to school?

Southwark Children Services provide transport for children who have Special Educational Needs if they meet agreed entry criteria; children who live locally walk, get the bus or sometimes cycle to school.

What are the school hours?

- School starts at 9.00
- Finishes at 3.20
- Lunch is at 12.00 (Red class) and 12.30 (Purple and Lime class)

How will the Speech and Language Therapist work with my child?

Speech and language therapy is delivered through joint planning with education staff.

Speech and language aims are included as part of the child's Individual Education Programme (IEP).

Children may be seen individually or in small groups, usually in the classroom, or in the speech therapy room.

Formal assessments are completed once a year for most children. Parents can discuss their child's speech and language progress with the speech and language therapist in the same way as they contact teaching staff.

Will there be signing?

We use **Makaton** with the children who benefit from this extra type of help. It is a signing system that is used alongside spoken language, not instead of, to give children visual prompts when learning, storing and later with recall of vocabulary.

Cued articulation is also used. It is a system to help teach children to discriminate the sounds in spoken words. Attention is drawn to the sounds in spoken language using hand movements. These can then be linked to letters and letter patterns used in written language. The children find the method easy and fun to learn. Parents are encouraged to learn basic signs/cued articulation in order to aid their child's learning and enhance communication skills at home.

Where appropriate we use Makaton with the children who need extra support to understand language. It is used alongside spoken language and not as an alternative.

What are the links with the main school?

Integration, a primary aim for all our children, encourages social interaction, unity across the school, academic progress and greater confidence for the child.

All the unit children join in weekly 'Social Use of Language' groups. Identified pupils from the main school may come to the Island building for these groups. The children are encouraged to develop their social skills and establish friendship links with the main school ready for morning and lunchtime playground integration.

Individual integration sessions will increase as a child becomes more confident and independent within their class. This varies according to the individual child's needs. Adult support will vary according to the needs of the child and is closely monitored to ensure maximum independence.

The children and staff attend whole school assembly at least once a week in the main building.

Language Unit staff and children eat together in the main school. This is an important opportunity for informal social skills development.

The staff are part of the main school staff and as such attend all meetings and training sessions.

Every twelve months, the children's EHCPs are reviewed by all those working with the child. This is called the Annual Review and is required by law. Parents are invited to attend and contribute to the review.

Does my child need any special clothes?

School Uniform

Juniors

School sweatshirt, white shirt school tie & P.E. kit.

Navy skirt/trousers & black shoes.

All available online from: www.mandsyourschooluniform.com

Infants

School sweatshirt, white shirt or polo shirt, school tie & P.E. kit.

Navy skirt/trousers & black shoes.

All available online from: www.mandsyourschooluniform.com

Swimming

Children in Year 3 and 4 only will need a swimming costume, towel, swimming hat and swim bag.

Book bags and ties can be purchased from the school office.

No jewellery is to be worn in school.

Please remember to mark all clothing with your child's name.

What reports are written?

Annual reports are produced at the end of the summer term for Parents' Evening. These cover all aspects of your child's school work during the previous academic year and include speech and language therapy and integration reports. You will be invited to give your own views of your child's progress and your comments will be added to the annual report.

Annual reviews of your child's EHCP are timed to coincide with the term in which their EHCP was issued. Annual review reports detail progress in terms of the objectives specified on your child's EHCP and the annual targets set during the Review meeting the previous year. A copy of the reports (including class teacher, speech and language therapist's report) will be sent to you before the meeting and you will have the opportunity to submit your own report if you wish. The annual review offers the opportunity to discuss your child's placement at the unit and monitor the progress of his/her school career. During years 5 and 6 the reports will take into account the needs of your child on transferring to Secondary school.

At parents' evening, parents are also given their child's Individual Education Programme (IEP). These are revised termly and used to inform planning.

How often do parents visit?

Parental support is an integral part of every child's education. We welcome and encourage visits which can be easily arranged with your child's class teacher. There are parents' evenings once a term, when you will have the opportunity to talk to the staff and to look at your child's work. In addition there may be plays, concerts, shared work assemblies and exhibitions of children's work which you are invited to attend. Parents may also be invited to school when their child is being assessed by other professionals.

What happens when children leave?

When children leave, they either transfer to Secondary school or go to their local mainstream primary schools either with or without a support. Some children go to other special schools where they continue to have access to speech and language therapy.

Staff

Teachers

**Teacher in Charge
& Assistant Headteacher**

Liz Corbyn

Red Class

Gisella Bernarda

Purple Class

Sarah Pitkin

Lime Class

Ericka Driver

Speech & Language Therapists (4 days per week)

Emma Corrigan
Bethany Marsden

Classroom Teaching Assistants

Karen Cole
Christine Wright
Olivia Saad
Edita Torokova
Anastasia Obeng
Humaira Qayyum
Lauren Hill

Bus/Car Guides

Christine Wright
Jennifer Ellis

Term dates – Academic Year 2022/23

Autumn Term

INSET days: Thursday 1 and Friday 2 September (school closed to pupils)

Monday 5 September - Friday 21 October

Half Term - Monday 24 October - Friday 28 October

Monday 31 October - Friday 16 December (school closes at 2pm)

Spring Term

INSET day: Tuesday 3 January 2023 (school closed to pupils)

Wednesday 4 January - Friday 10 February

Half Term - Monday 13 February - Friday 17 February

Monday 20 February - Friday 31 March (school closes at 2pm)

Summer Term

INSET day: Monday 17 April

Tuesday 18 April - Friday 26 May

(May Day Bank Holiday will be taken on 1 May)

Half Term Monday 29 May - Friday 2 June

Monday 5 June - Thursday 20 July (school closes at 2pm)

INSET day: Friday 21 July (school closed to pupils)