

The Inclusion Centre

Its role as part of the Transfer to High School

The transfer into secondary education requires every member of the new Year 8 to adjust and adapt. No longer the most senior in their school, they become instead the most junior. They engage with many more teachers, each of them unfamiliar, as are some of their subjects as well. They must learn to navigate a large and complex site. Sometimes old friendships dissolve.

Careful preparation and timely information can do much to smooth the way. But the day-to-day reality of a school that is new and large is always a challenge for some of our Year 8 students. The Inclusion Centre is there to support them for as long as they need it.



The Centre is open before school, during break and lunchtime; it has experienced staff who know that appropriate help can take many forms. It has games and activities including pool tables, a full-size snooker table, fitness equipment, swing-ball and table tennis. It also has a garden area that is calm and even a dog (who is called Bella).

Many of the new Year 8 use the Centre as they develop the confidence to make their way in their new school. Some are occasional visitors, for others it is a place of transition, some appreciate its support well beyond these initial weeks and months.

The Centre recognises that it is offering a service, or rather a package of services. Individual students, guided by experienced staff, take from it what they need and for as long as they need it. The Inclusion Centre is distinct in the school, but by no means separate from it.



Conduct at The Centre

At the heart of ensuring positive behaviour within The Centre, and this being felt across the whole school community, are strong relationships. The staff model techniques used across the school to support behaviour for learning and give students an opportunity to explore these in a safe environment. They aim to be fair and consistent but allow students to discuss with skilled professionals any challenges they face in terms of their behaviour in the wider school environment.



The Centre also aims to develop students' attitudes towards education and society as a whole through its activities and alternative provision pathways. Inclusion staff make the most of any opportunity to develop an individual when a situation arises. This can be informally, but also through the techniques highlighted below.



- 1) Inclusive language. Encouraging the students to think of The Centre as 'their place' and therefore respect all individuals and materials within it.
- 2) Being creative and ambitious in regards to developing their space and making it the best it can be. Students work hard with staff to secure equipment for The Centre. This gives them a sense of purpose and achievement, increasing self-esteem and developing skills that are important for adulthood.
- 3) Consistent routines and boundaries. The staff know that students need consistency in order to thrive. It is important that they see The Centre as part of the whole school and understand that the same rules apply.

Curriculum at The Centre

In year 8, the Access Groups benefit from an hour a fortnight with our Head of Inclusion, Mr Buckell and our SEMH specialist Mrs Jones. They have created a programme which supports a positive transition to high school.

The Forest School pathway is offered to carefully chosen students in Year 9. This is based on developing outdoor experience and improving social skills. It gives a different dimension to school life and an opportunity to thrive outside a classroom environment. Mrs Coton is an experienced, outstanding teacher of Forest School and has already made a significant impact on the lives of Year 9 students.

At KS4 AQA Unit Award programmes are offered. These are tailored to specific students' needs and interests. Currently, we offer units in Upcycling, Motor Vehicle Maintenance, Animal Welfare and Fitness. All students have the opportunity to achieve an AQA endorsed certificate at least every term, which they add to their academic portfolio.

