

2016

Ardmore House

Information



Help, Care, Support



Welcome

On behalf of all the staff at Ardmore, I would like to welcome your child to our school. We are immensely proud of the work we do, and with your help we can work together and make your child's education a success.

I hope that this booklet makes the transition to our school as seamless as possible. For more information about what we do, or if you have any concerns or queries please contact us or you can check our website at: www.ardmorehouse.org.uk

Barry Fettes

Principal

Reintegration

Our primary role is to support each pupil in their mainstream place. To this end, a detailed reintegration package is fully discussed with the mainstream school before each pupil returns. Detailed analysis from our AIMS database, together with positive handling plans, anger management plans, dos and don'ts for staff, educational progress and target progress reports are disseminated by our outreach staff. The outreach teacher will provide intensive support for the initial return, with regular, weekly support thereafter.

Addressing core issues

There are many reasons why a pupil may display maladaptive behaviours: it is important to try and understand and help with the root cause as well as the behaviour itself. Through our induction, functional behaviour analysis, BAD database and ongoing assessment, we can identify and address underlying causes of behaviour;

We address the core deficits in numeracy and literacy

We explicitly teach acceptable behaviours

We help pupils manage their anger

We develop pupils' emotional intelligence

We recognise and address social skills deficits

We re-engage pupils with their education

We give pupils the skills to reintegrate into mainstream.

Key to our success at Ardmore is our holistic approach to the management of pupil needs. It is vital that our discipline policy is seen as an integral part of a continuum of provision designed to address the individual social, behavioural and emotional needs of all our pupils. Pastoral care is at the core of everything we do, and our schemes of work are explicitly designed to enhance thinking skills and personal capabilities.



Identifying Pupil Needs

All our pupils have multiple and complex needs: emotional, learning, social, behavioural and physical. If we wish to make a real difference, we must accurately assess those needs in order to provide a tailored, focused provision.

Pupil Forum

Our very successful pupil forum enabled pupils and staff to work together on an equal basis to make decisions that have a real impact on the running of the school. Class representatives are elected and the forum meets on a weekly basis.

Lunch Club

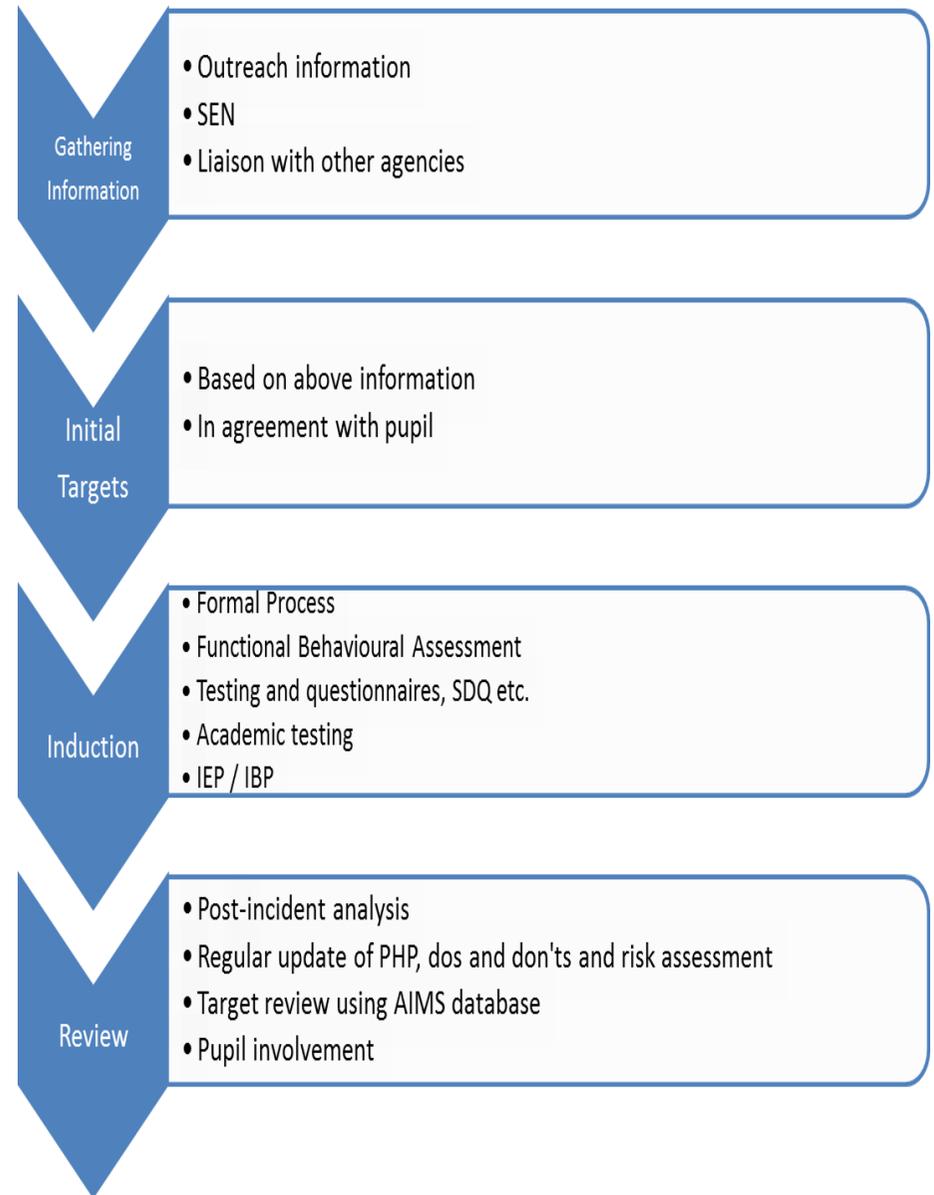
The Monday lunch club enables each class on a rota basis to prepare a well-balanced meal for all staff and pupils. This is great for promoting relationships, social skills and the appreciation of healthy eating

Involving pupils

By definition, pupils attending Ardmore have had a very negative experience with education and schools. It is vital that we break down the barriers and enable them to re-engage with their behaviour, emotions, learning and with society as a whole. Our innovative curriculum not only addresses the core social, emotional, learning and behavioural needs but, just as importantly, makes learning fun.

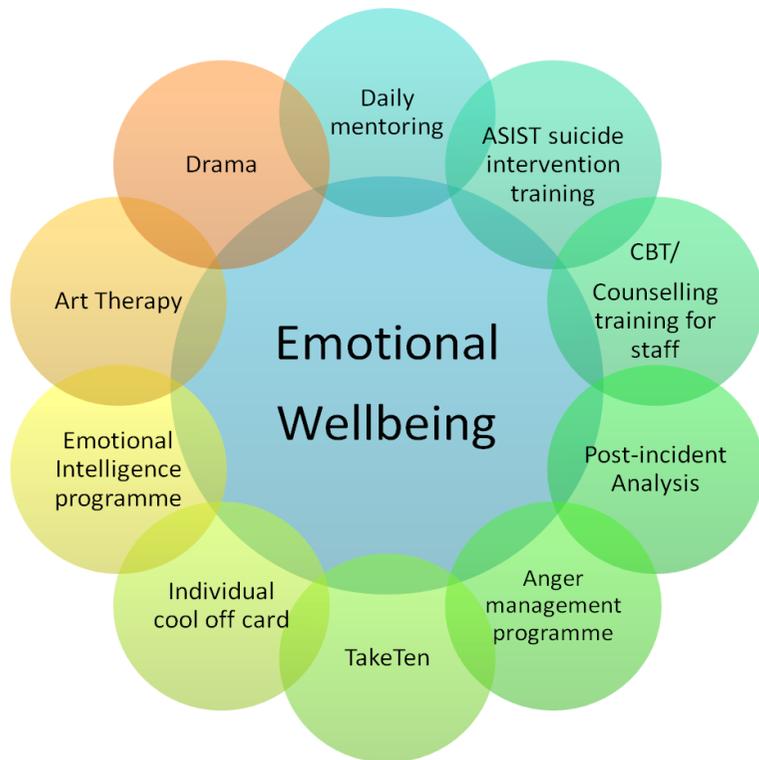
Induction

Our induction programme is designed to help each pupil make the transition from their mainstream school and feel part of the Ardmore community. In addition to an individual “get to know you” session, a series of teambuilding activities form positive personal and professional relationships from the very beginning.



Emotional Wellbeing

At Ardmore, we try to ensure that our pupils' emotional needs are addressed, equipping them with the resilience and emotional wellbeing to achieve their potential.



In Sync

The title of this programme, 'In Sync', refers to the need to find balance and be synchronised in the agreed categories that define an individual in terms of their health (Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive and Spiritual). These areas will be touched on in varying degrees throughout many Areas of Learning and through the Pastoral Curriculum. 'In Sync' has been developed around ten themes which reflect the development of the whole person, and which address the statements of minimum requirement for PD.

Life skills

Our programme is tailored to equip pupils with the skills and knowledge needed to cope effectively with the many practical challenges that they may face in life. “Soft” skills include:

- Application forms
- Financial Capabilities
- Healthy eating

“Hard” skills include:

- Basic plumbing
- Household DIY
- Decorating the home
- Bike Maintenance

Daily Mentoring

Each Pupil is assigned a mentor and individual mentoring is timetabled throughout the week.

Role of the mentor:

- Pupil induction
- Reviews incidents and target progress
- Discusses events at home and in school
- Helps resolve any previous incident
- Helps pupil plan for the week ahead
- Keeps focus on pupil targets
- Works through pupil booklet, emotional literacy and anger management programmes
- Promotes a healthy breakfast in the morning

ASIST Training

Far too often we hear in the news of a young person who has taken their own life. Many of our permanent staff are ASIST trained (Applied suicide intervention skills training). This is a suicide “first aid” programme equipping staff with the skills to spot the warning signs and intervene and save a life.

CBT/ counselling

A number of staff have received counselling training and recently staff have been given an introduction to counselling techniques and open ended questioning. An introductory course on cognitive behavioural therapy was given in 2012 in conjunction with the SEELB psychology service.

Post Incident Analysis

After every incident, the pupil and a staff member (mentor if possible) review the thoughts and feelings before, during and after.

Personal Development

Through the new Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum, it is intended that the promotion of personal development for all young people is supported and addressed throughout the entire curriculum. Personal Development encompasses and includes all aspects of health : social, physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual. Here at Ardmore, PD, as in all schools, has become a statutory strand of the area ‘Learning for Life and Work’ although it is recognised that it relates to and is integrated in all other subjects throughout the curriculum. It is prominent in all aspects of school life through our extended curriculum. This encourages positive relationships between pupils and staff, self-confidence, and the ability to work together and support each other. Personal Development is promoted through the InSync Program, Mentoring Program, Emotional Literacy, Art Therapy, the Pupil Forum as well as all the other curricular and extra-curricular activities.

HeartStart

Heartstart is an accredited first aid programme, designed by The British Heart Foundation. All pupils complete the Heartstart programme.

Drugs awareness

We work in cooperation with ASCERT who provide staff with drug awareness training and addiction management. ASCERT also provide information sessions to pupils.

Sexual Health

This is often an area which is sadly neglected in mainstream schools and in our society. In order to more effectively promote sexual health through our InSync programme, staff have received “Relationships and sexual health” training from the Family planning Association.

Anger Management

Our anger management programme is a structured series of activities designed to be completed by each pupil with the help of their mentor. The aim of the programme is to help pupils gain an understanding of their anger and to equip them with the skills to recognise the warning signs. Each pupil will form their own individual anger management plan, and they will carry a Cool Off card in their pocket which they can use in school when they are getting angry.

TakeTen

TakeTen is a new system that has been developed specifically for teachers and pupils to enhance their emotional health and well being

Designed to improve concentration, behaviour, performance and results, TakeTen uses a combination of biofeedback and proven techniques to train children, young people and adults to control the way their bodies deal with stress.

Art Therapy:

In Ardmore we recognize the need for pupils to express themselves, to direct their own learning and to try out their ideas and opinions without feeling judged. As a response to this, we have developed a comprehensive art therapy programme.

Our programme:

- Offers respite from their pressured lives
- Supports children in developing positive relationships
- Enables them to express themselves by engaging in different forms of creative art
- Provides an opportunity to engage with education.

Each class is timetabled for at least one art therapy class per week

smoking when they come to us. Two of our staff (Mrs. Warke and Mrs. Hanna) are qualified smoking cessation officers – we also have a dedicated smoking cessation room in the school. All pupils who smoke are offered a weekly individual programme. This is an innovative approach providing ongoing support, along with individual materials on topics such as relaxation techniques, weight gain or quit tips - whilst offering combination Nicotine Replacement Therapy for those quitting.

HE

Our schemes for HE and science are designed to promote healthy lifestyle choices, emphasising the following topics

- Fitness
- Food groups and nutrition
- Health and disease
- Smoking

Monday lunch club enables each class on a rota basis to prepare a well balanced meal for all staff and pupils. This is great for promoting relationships, social skills and the appreciation of healthy eating.

Adventure Programme

Our adventure programme encourages physical activity and promotes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make great use of our new mountain bike track at the school and the fantastic facilities provided by the Mourne Mountains. All pupils are encouraged to participate in adventure activities in their own area.

Please read our Adventure Programme brochure for more information.

Smoking Cessation

We take the issue of smoking very seriously and we recognise that many pupils are heavily addicted to

Drama

Where appropriate, we use role play activities and social stories to promote social skills, with an emphasis on the ability to mix with others.

Behaviour Management

Behaviour management

- Teaching rights and responsibilities
- Assertive Discipline system
- TeamTeach
- Positive handling
- Risk assessments
- Rewards programme
- Flexible System
- Mentoring
- Withdrawal
- Post-incident analysis
- Monitoring and recording
- Behavioural Analysis
- Individual targets
- Dos and Don'ts
- IBP
- Conduct file
- Parental involvement
- Weekly Inset

Fitness

There is a strong emphasis on physical fitness throughout the school, with a focus on outdoor activities and the use of the local gym at Ballymote Centre. All pupils have regular opportunities to participate as part of timetabled activities, as a reward, or at break and lunch.

Healthy Eating Policy

The school operates a strict healthy eating policy, as outlined in the pupil workbook. Your cooperation is very much appreciated and we would urge you not to send in any unhealthy items with your child. A separate letter gives details of what can and cannot be brought into school. In addition, every pupil participates in Home Economics where healthy eating and basic cooking skills are promoted. Pupils are consulted on recipe and menu choices with the view to promote independent living in the future. All foods are locally sourced and delivered fresh on the day. The

Healthy Body



Healthy Breakfast

A healthy breakfast is provided to each pupil during form time, There is a strong encouragement to pupils to have a healthy start to the day. It is school policy to contact home if a pupil is not eating well.

Rights and responsibilities

We recognise the importance of ensuring that pupils understand and take ownership of the rules, rewards and sanctions of the school. As an important precursor to this, we aim to teach pupils their rights and responsibilities, and how the school rules help to protect these rights.

Assertive Discipline

Our assertive discipline system is central to our management of behaviour. Our rules, rewards and consequences are agreed and displayed in every room. There is an agreed staged plan for dealing with misbehaviour and a written plan for dealing with severely disruptive behaviour. Our priority is to ensure that pupils understand the system and we use a detailed pupil workbook (enclosed) to assist with this. By having agreed consequences and agreed responses to misbehaviour, we are able to de-personalise and objectively manage incidents, placing the focus on the pupil; their choices and the consequences.

We operate a points system, whereby pupils earn up to three tokens per class, recorded in a daily points book. The criteria for earning points are clearly outlined in our assertive system. Guidelines for scoring books and dealing assertively with incidents are outlined in the staff handbook. Frequent and ongoing staff training in assertive classroom management and regular inclusion in our PRSD programme ensures a high level of consistency among staff.

Staff Training

Behaviour management is crucial to our success in the school. A great amount of time is given, on INSET days and every Wednesday to address and refresh our expertise in the areas of de-escalation, assertive discipline, classroom management and TeamTeach techniques.

Conduct file

The conduct file is a computer programme with accompanying worksheets which aims to provide structured guidance to pupils, helping them to address problem aspects of their behaviour. It uses realistic scenarios and videos combined with specific and challenging questions to lead the pupil to address the problem, take responsibility and bring about a positive outcome through a change in their behaviour. The conduct file is timetabled once a week for each class, and it is used extensively in our Outreach service.

Parental involvement

It is our policy to involve parents as much as possible with the pupils' progress. It is our policy to make a positive call home whenever a pupil has had a good day. A detailed report outlining all incidents (positive and negative), scores and target progress is produced by our behaviour database and sent home weekly.

TeamTeach

Team-Teach training is fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities and has the following aims:

- To develop an understanding of the causes and signs of aggression and conflict.
- To improve staff self-awareness and self-control whilst managing difficult behaviour
- To understand the typical stages of crisis behaviours and appropriate staff responses.
- To appreciate the importance of recording and reporting including risk assessment and behaviour management plans and the value of a process for monitoring and evaluating.
- To develop a gradual and graded range of personal safety and positive handling techniques, including standing and seated responses.

- To understand their involvement and entitlement to a post Incident support and debriefing framework for all involved in serious incidents.
- To develop a range of responses: non-verbal, para-verbal and verbal de-escalating and calming strategies, including a Help Script & Help Protocol when faced with challenging behaviour.

All staff are qualified in advanced TeamTeach and regular in-house training is provided.

Individual Targets

Each pupil has typically three SMART targets, either behavioural or social/emotional. These targets are based on objective data obtained from Outreach, from our induction programme/functional behaviour analysis and from our AIMS database.

Target progress is scored daily and pupils are able to view their specific progress with their mentor each week. This forms the basis of the pupil's weekly plan.

Dos and Don'ts

In addition to the positive behaviour plan, the dos and don'ts for each pupil are carried in the class folder. These inform staff clearly and concisely what to do/not do, say/not say when dealing with an incident. As with the positive handling plans, these are as the need arises, often on a daily basis.

Behaviour Analysis

The Ardmore Information Management System (AIMS), developed by Principal Barry Fettes provides a means to accurately record, analyse and report on individual/group behaviour and target progress. The program provides staff with objective, accurate information about when, where and why disruptive behaviour occurs, together with strategies to be shared with other staff. All staff use the database to set and monitor individual targets, look at patterns in behaviour between pupils, track the progress of pupils/groups over time and many other functions. It also provides a very convenient method of reporting to other agencies/parents and forms the basis of our reintegration package which accompanies the pupil when they return to their mainstream school.

Positive Handling

The term 'Positive Handling' includes a wide range of supportive strategies for managing challenging behaviour. Included in this policy are a small number of responses which may involve the use of minimal force, to control, escort or restrain a pupil.

This is referred to as 'Restrictive Physical Intervention'.

We have a clear and consistent positive handling policy which supports pupils who have social, emotional and behaviour difficulties; within our ethos of "Help, care and support."

Aims

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are essential in ensuring safety and good order in school:

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children at school
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

Most of the children attending Ardmore respond positively to the behavioural strategies and techniques used by staff, as outlined in this document. However in exceptional circumstances staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required, For example:

- To prevent harm to the young person
- To prevent harm to others/ property damage
- To prevent a crime being committed
- To maintain the good order of the school

Monitoring and recording

All behaviours, positive and negative, major and minor are meticulously assessed and recorded. All details are entered into our behaviour database each day.

- Pupils' points diaries are filled in each class with comments as appropriate
 - A detailed incident form is completed for every severe incident. This records specific, objective information about the type of behaviour, the precursors, consequences, probable purpose and any useful strategies.
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Mentoring

As detailed previously, the role of the mentor is to help and guide the pupil in making the right behavioural choices. The mentor will review progress, set targets and discuss/resolve incidents with the pupil.

Post-Incident Analysis

After an incident, all staff involved have the opportunity to reflect upon what happened and how the situation developed. This is carried out in a positive and supportive atmosphere. Staff discuss why the behaviour occurred and highlight strategies that worked/didn't work. These are then fed into our database and Positive handling plans are updated as required.

Any actions must be Reasonable, Proportionate and Necessary, using **the minimum force for the minimum amount of time**.

The school takes its duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school very seriously. Staff protection is an important part of child protection. Both depend on confident and competent staff, who feel supported by their management team and colleagues.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in the school clearly understand the policy and their responsibilities so that they can:

- Can Identify situations where reasonable force is necessary
- Are provided with appropriate training to deal with challenging behaviour

A positive handling plan outlines for staff key Team Teach, classroom management and de-escalation strategies along with simple dos and don'ts that need to be followed before intervention is used. Plans are carried in the class folder which accompanies each class and each pupil plan is reviewed on a regular basis and whenever a serious incident has occurred.

Staff should always think ahead to anticipate possible incidents; should a proposed activity or situation involve unacceptable risk, then the correct decision is to do something else.

Longer-term rewards are offered two or three times each term. Pupils will be set a 2-3 week points target and scores are recorded on the BAD system. Recent examples include:

- Skating/ bowling
- Go Kart Racing
- Laser Quest

A flexible system

Whilst it is important to have an agreed discipline system, we understand that each pupil will have individual behavioural needs. We can tailor our system by making sure that pupils' targets (behavioural and social) match their needs. In addition, Mentors have the flexibility to request additional rewards/sanctions/ systems that they think might help. Recent examples include a "shoutometer", individual reward trips – for coffee etc. Pupils in the support centre follow an individual plan, whereby all the rewards, rules and sanctions are tailored to suit them alone.

Our system offers two types of reward, weekly and longer-term.

Last period on a Monday and last period of Wednesday are reward periods. The criteria for achieving the rewards are negotiated each term with the pupil forum. Typically a pupil is eligible for a reward if they have not progressed beyond a certain stage in our discipline system. These rewards are in-school, making the most of our facilities and staff expertise. Pupils are given a list of available rewards during mentoring – recent examples are:

- Football in the yard
- Use of the Playstation/ Wii
- Use of the mountain bike track
- Use of the climbing wall
- Archery
- Working on their CD/ DJaying
- Bike maintenance

Reporting and Recording use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

Whenever physical intervention/restraint is used the incident must be recorded using the approved incident recording forms. The record of the Use of Reasonable Force will also be logged in a bound and numbered book kept in the main office.

All staff involved in the incident (including witnesses) must contribute to the record and the form must be completed within 24hrs of the incident.

Incidents that require the use of physical interventions/restraints can be very upsetting to all involved and may result in injuries to students or staff. Until an incident has subsided it is essential to reduce risk of re-escalation and to ensure the situation remains calm. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything that might inflame the situation during the recovery phase.

Pupils should be given time and space to calm down after an incident.

Staff should also be offered a short break out of the classroom where possible

After an incident it is important to ensure that staff and pupils are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid.

All injuries should be reported and recorded on an accident form and in the accident log book. The school should take action to report any injuries to staff or pupils in accordance with guidelines.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

The school acknowledges that on occasion staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations, when they have no option but to use reasonable force to manage a crisis. However before proceeding with a physical intervention staff should think through the likely consequences and reflect on the following questions.

- Is the intervention in the best interest of the child?
- Is the physical intervention reasonable and proportionate and necessary?
- Is the intervention intended to reduce risk?
- Is the response the least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective?

Whenever a physical intervention is used there should be a verbal warning. Staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical intervention. Staff should only use the techniques and methods approved for use by TeamTeach.

Risk assessments

Where a pupil's behaviour has caused an identified risk to self, others or property, a detailed risk assessment and risk management plan will be undertaken.