



SEN Report 2019-20

Abbot's Lea School is maintained co-educational day special school located in Woolton area of Liverpool.

It currently caters for 260 students age 3-19 from Liverpool City Region.

We are a warm and welcoming school with highly skilled and caring staff who are committed to supporting the specialist education of all of our students.

We pride ourselves on our positive atmosphere and aspire to be a place where young people and staff alike can flourish, learn and be happy.

We value and encourage the support of parents, professionals and friends of Abbot's Lea School and we work collaboratively with other local, regional and national organisations.

Under the leadership of our Headteacher, who joined the school in September 2016, the school developed its vision and mission of ***Abbot's Lea School: the best specialist school in the world!*** ©

Additionally, we launched our unique ***Philosophy of Education: The ASD Model*** ©, which focuses equally on three broad areas of our students' development:

A – academic progress

S – specialist support

D – development of life skills

At our school, we welcome students, who, due to their Autism, learning disabilities and associated learning needs, require specialist approaches to teaching, learning and promotion of life-long independence.

We believe that all students should be given the right skills to enable them to participate in their local, national and international community. We also believe that all young people should be able to have a successful and fulfilling life, which for many includes paid employment.

At Abbot's Lea School we are able to offer all the support that a student will need in order to achieve the above goals and we:

- Have high expectations of staff and students
- Aspire to do more and do it better!
- Always focus on the individual needs of our young people
- Have a highly experienced and qualified staff team

- Have classes smaller than in mainstream schools with relatively high staffing ratios to allow personalised learning at all stages of education
- Provide a high quality learning environment and experiences
- Raise students' self-esteem and confidence
- Provide opportunities for all young people to experience the community safely and successfully
- Make use of the outdoors to deliver much of our curriculum
- Work in a multi-professional way to ensure that all therapeutic learning guidance we receive is considered for its application in the learning environment. This includes, but is not limited to working in line with the guidance from: speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists and other professionals who are involved in the education of each individual
- Use our expertise to help get all our young people "ready for life" to enable them to be successful in the outside world
- Have wonderful facilities on our auspicious campus in Woolton with extensive grounds, some specialist classrooms and sports hall - all in a secure and safe environment close to other schools and local community facilities

More information can be found at our website: www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk

1. Support for children with special educational needs

1.1 Who will oversee and plan my child's education programme?

There are many staff who will oversee the education of your child whilst at Abbot's Lea School.

The Headteacher has the strategic overview of all the educational provision of young people in the school and has high expectations from staff that appropriate and effective programmes of education are delivered.

The Headteacher is supported in this task by a team of senior and middle leaders, as well as teachers and support staff. The broad line of accountability and communication for all matters related to students' education is as follows:

Headteacher → Deputy Headteacher → Key Stage Leader → Teacher → Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) → Teaching Assistant (TA)

Additionally, for all matters related to Care and Safeguarding and family liaison:

Headteacher → Head of Care and Safeguarding → Family Adviser and EHCP Coordinator

Of course, most importantly parents are encouraged to be involved in direct discussions with the Class Team of a Teacher, HLTA and TA (or TAs) to help develop the most effective programme for any student.

1.2 How will I be informed / consulted about the ways in which my child is being helped?

Parents are kept informed in many ways.

We involve parents in meetings throughout the year to discuss progress and set and review targets for the personalised learning plans. Our students call the plans "My Plan". Each term (three times a year) we set new targets and evaluate progress made since the start of the year.

Each year we hold an annual review of students' needs and their placement at the school.

We also encourage parents to email, telephone or make appointments with teachers when needed to make sure that we work together to support our students.

Each student has a Communication Book to facilitate communication between home and school.

In addition, our Family Adviser is available offer advice and support where concerns arise – there is help available if needed.

Each Friday, throughout the year, our Headteacher publishes a Head's Weekly Newsletter providing up-to-date information about what has been happening in the school throughout the year and specifically what the given Department or Key Stage your child is in has been doing.

Our website www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk has our news, parental memos and sharing of good practice. Our official Facebook and Twitter pages actively encourage all parents and friends to follow us there for daily and relevant articles.

Finally, and fundamentally, we operate a very open policy on parental observations and we would always welcome any reasonable request to visit a class and observe your child in situ. This would, of course, need to be agreed in advance and is subject to last minute cancellation based on the children's needs or school's circumstances on the day of the planned visit.

1.3 How will the school balance my child's need for support with developing their independence?

At Abbot's Lea School we are passionate about enabling all of our young people to be as independent as possible.

We know that sometimes this is a life-long journey that will need to be carried out slowly and adjusted along the way.

The key is that we work in a very personalised way with every young person.

Our curriculum is focused on developing independence in all areas.

Our staffing levels mean that we are able to support every student to the level that they need, whilst our skilled staff are able to recognise where opportunities for independence can be developed by withdrawing or limiting the support and allowing a child or young person to make attempts (and sometimes mistakes) in a safe and supportive environment.

We will always work with parents in planning increased independence so that everyone feels involved and everything is done at the appropriate pace. This is particularly important at the early and latter stages of school, where the transitions are most dramatic and the feeling of uncertainty amongst the students, families and the staff needs to be managed sensitively.

As young people move through our school we look for a range of ways of developing independence including work placements/experience, travel training, volunteering, supporting younger students taking on roles of responsibility (student council, Head Boy and Girl), representing the school externally, taking on leadership responsibilities beyond the school altogether.

Of course, this will be different for each student depending on their needs and skills.

Our aim is that every young person will leave our school as a well-rounded adult with as much independence as would benefit them.

1.4 How will the school personalise the curriculum to meet my child's needs?

We base our curriculum around the National Curriculum, however, we adapt it greatly to meet the needs of our students.

Our unique Philosophy of Education: *The ASD Model* © is at the forefront of any decision we make about personalisation. We feel very strongly that we must work on the correct areas with each student in order to move learning on.

There is no 'one-size-fits-all' in education and we need to adapt as professionals to enable all students to have full access to the learning and to progress in all areas, whether it be English, Maths or social skills.

All our students have specific and individualised targets and personalised programmes to help them achieve these targets.

When all needs are being met, better learning and progress can take place.

All of our teaching staff have regular student progress meetings where data is analysed to see how each student is progressing. If there are concerns, the team look at interventions to aid progress. These will be reviewed regularly to check their effectiveness.

Students have My Plan targets set each term (three times a year) and both students and the staff work hard to ensure that these are met. Interventions are put in place should progress not be as rapid as expected.

Obviously, consultation with young people and parents is critical so that we all know how we can ensure that progress is rapid and that the young person is developing appropriately.

1.5 What teaching strategies and approaches does the school use for children with autistic spectrum disorder, learning difficulties, sensory impairments, speech and language difficulties and anxiety?

Our teaching is based totally around the needs of the individual student.

We group students in age and learning compatible groups and stable team of staff works with the students each day throughout the week.

The staff therefore know the students really well and they develop strong partnership with the families as well as any additional specialists from outside the school.

Staff utilise whatever strategies may be most effective with the individual student.

We constantly assess our students' progress and put in place interventions to ensure that progress and learning are rapid.

For specific needs we seek training for appropriate staff. For many aspects of learning difficulties, we use whole school training to enable all our staff to learn and develop their professional practice.

We run a very comprehensive Continuous Development Programme (CPD), which runs 5 days a year and, additionally, for two half-hourly slots each Tuesday and Thursday.

The training looks at many aspects of learning and interventions and examples include the following:

- Induction for new staff
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour Support
- Differentiation
- Assessment for Learning
- Total Communication
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- English support
- Mathematics support
- Specific therapy training
- Speech and Language Support
- Hearing and Visual sensory impairment support

- TEACCH (a programme for supporting young people with autism)
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- Fire Safety
- Health and Safety
- Food Hygiene
- Minibus driving
- First Aid
- Fire Marshall

We have in-house clinics for CAMHS (Children and Adolescence Mental Health Service) and SALT (Speech and Language Therapy).

Those clinics are aimed at very personalised clinical guidance for the teaching teams in respect to the students' emotional wellbeing, their mental health, their readiness for learning in general and specific programmes of therapeutic support in particular.

We also have OT (Occupational Therapy), Educational Psychology and Psychotherapy (using a range of therapeutic approaches to suit the needs of the students).

1.6 What specific intervention programmes does the school offer and are these delivered on a one to one basis or in small groups?

The school offers a number of specific intervention programmes, amongst them:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- LEGO therapy
- Sport teams
- Lunchtime clubs
- Behaviour Support programmes

The above are accessible to individuals and groups and are adjusted dependent on the type of activity and needs of the students.

1.7 What equipment does the school provide?

We have a great array of educational facilities and equipment to enable our students to access the curriculum successfully.

This can range from sensory support equipment, specialist sensory clinic, small soft play room, music facilities, accessible technology devices to increase access to learning.

We will always work with professionals and parents to try and purchase equipment that will aid the learning and experience for any of our young people.

1.8 What special arrangements can be made for my child when taking examinations?

We will ensure that when exams are being taken all appropriate special arrangements will be applied for and utilised. This may include some or any of the following:

- Extra time
- A reader
- A scribe
- Alternative fonts and layouts
- Use of laptops

2. My child's progress

2.1 How will the school monitor my child's progress and how will I be involved in this?

Abbot's Lea School has a robust and clear monitoring programme to assess how each of our students is progressing.

Moderation of teacher's assessment takes place every term to ensure that the progress for each student is secure.

Middle and senior leaders of the ASD Team oversee the moderation and track progress across each Key Stage and each Departments and specific groups of students to ensure overall effectiveness of the provision.

If there are any concerns regarding the rates of progress, we will identify additional or different interventions to be tried to secure greater progress. These measures, when implemented, would continue to be monitored and assessed for effectiveness so that we can ensure that each young person is given the best opportunity to progress rapidly.

Parents will be involved at various stages.

We invite parents to meet with us before admission, six weeks after the admission, and then communicate regularly, when My Plan is being drafted. This enables parents to be part of the ongoing conversation with regards to target setting and progress.

We also encourage parents to contact the class team if they have any concerns. Class teams will also contact parents when there is a concern in order to help move things on and get the student progress back on track.

Our person-centred annual reviews are also another opportunity to examine progress against targets to ensure that everything is on track. Those meetings are led by a class teacher.

Staff will use formative assessment in their planning to ensure that the student is being supported appropriately in their learning. We will moderate our judgements on progress with other schools – both mainstream and special – to ensure accuracy.

The Senior Leadership Team will review progress across the whole school using benchmarking tools to check that progress is good enough.

The Headteacher and other school leaders report regularly to the Governing Body and the Governors challenge and check that the school is doing all it can to promote outstanding learning and progress.

We also engage an independent School Improvement Partner, who works closely with the Headteacher, senior and middle leaders to ensure external perspective on the rates of progress made by the students of the school.

2.2 When my child's progress is being reviewed, how will new targets be set and how will I be involved?

At termly My Plan review points (three times a year), you will have the opportunity to be involved in reviewing your child's previous targets and in setting new targets.

It is very much a conversation between the students, teacher and the family, and so we want parents involved at the heart of it.

This is the only way to ensure that we can be truly successful in moving our young people forward in their learning.

Parents are also encouraged to be involved in the reviewing of the Statement/EHC Plan and progress at each annual review.

2.3 In addition to the school's normal reporting arrangements, what opportunities will there be for me to discuss my child's progress with school staff?

Each year we will hold Festival of Learning weeks – this is at the end of November and again in June when we will invite parents and any other relevant professionals to view the work students have undertaken and discuss individuals' progress.

This is an opportunity to reflect on the previous year and look at the Statement/EHC plan and progress towards the objectives.

We will invite parents to meet with the class teacher to discuss progress and set and review My Plan targets.

We also encourage parents to email, phone or make appointments with teachers and class teams whenever needed to make sure that we are doing everything we can to support your child.

Each child has a Communication Book for home/school communication and we are happy to communicate by whichever means a parent prefers, e.g. email, telephone, etc.

2.4 What arrangements does the school have for regular home to school contact?

Each student has a Communication Book which is the main mode of contact between school and parents.

We find this is usually a positive and effective method; however, we will always be happy to communicate in whichever method best suits parents, e.g. email, telephone, text, etc.

The Head's Weekly Newsletter is emailed to parents and governors providing news and information and is also available each Friday afternoon from the website: www.abbotsleaschool.co.uk

We believe that communication is essential and welcome parents to contact the school in order to ensure that this happens appropriately.

Increasingly, we embrace the preferred mode of communication of non-confidential information via our social media sites on Facebook and Twitter.

2.5 How can I help support my child's learning?

We strongly believe that we need to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the young person has the utmost opportunity for success.

As we have very individualised programmes the teacher can advise the parents how they might help to progress their learning at home whether it be reading, maths or independence skills. Equally it is extremely useful when parents give us advice from the home to help implement progress improvements in school.

2.6 Does the school offer any help for parents / carers to enable them to support their child's learning, e.g. training or learning events?

We have a Family Adviser who works with families to help with various aspects of development including behaviour, anxiety, bereavement and learning.

We host weekly Friday Coffee Mornings, from 9:30-11:00 and we welcome parents and carers to those informal sessions.

We also run training sessions for parents on various aspects of learning and arrange appropriate topical speakers.

We have a highly committed PTA (Parent and Teacher Association) called FAB! and we have seen a very dynamic interaction between the school and the families arise as a result of creating this team in 2016.

2.7 How will my child's views be sought about the help they are getting and the progress they are making?

Even from a very young age we will seek the views of our young people. We believe it is essential that they are all involved in their own education. This will be done in a variety of ways depending on their preferred mode of communication. We will ensure that we get views of all our young people for annual reviews and older students will also be encouraged to attend and even present their own feelings and ideas.

Each day students will be involved in the planning of lessons and the planning of their own learning, particularly in regard to their My Plan targets so that they are fully aware of what they need to do to move on to the next level of learning.

2.8 What accredited and non-accredited courses do you offer?

We are very keen on ensuring that our young people leave our school with the knowledge, skills and coping strategies for adult life.

All of our students progress to either further education, employment or vocational training.

To help them with that progression, we offer a range of qualifications and Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Where there are insufficient numbers of students to run a qualification, we will aim to secure it through our partnership with other local schools.

Our priority remains to increase employment and life skills' coaching.

2.9 How does the school assess the overall effectiveness of its provision and how can parents / carers and young people take part in this evaluation?

We will assess the effectiveness of provision through the analysis of the following areas:

- The Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management
- Early Years Provision
- Key Stage Five (Sixth Form) Provision

Our overall effectiveness will be judged against:

- School Development Plan:
 - Our leadership and management
 - Our students
 - Our families
 - Our team
 - Our autism research and development
 - Our resources

Practically,

- **Class Team:** The class team, led by the teacher, will use formative assessment on a daily basis to assess where each child is in terms of their learning and their progress towards the next level. The teacher will record progress onto the school system so that it can be analysed. Staff will use student-centred approaches to ensure that they are involved in their learning and progress as is appropriate. Parents will be involved daily through Communication Books, as well as occasionally through on-site meetings.
- **Student Progress Moderation Meetings:** These meetings take place three times per year and are led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. At the meetings the students' progress in each class is explored. If there are any concerns or issues then the class team will look at appropriate interventions that can be used. Once an intervention is implemented it will be monitored closely and evaluated at subsequent Student Progress Moderation Meetings.
- **School Progress Analysis:** The Senior Leadership Team will analyse progress of all students throughout the year and report to governors formally three times per year. Governors will ensure that there is rigour and will challenge anything that they have a concern about.

We will also take onboard the following feedback:

- Students' views
- Parents' views
- Staff' views
- Commissioners' views
- Inspectors' and other regulators' views

3. Support for my child's overall wellbeing

3.1 What support is available to promote the emotional, behavioural and social development of children?

We place great emphasis on the holistic development of the young people at Abbot's Lea School.

All our staff are fully committed to the Philosophy of Education: The ASD Model © and are trained in a variety of methodologies of supporting emotional, behavioural and social support.

We always use positive behaviour approaches to enable all young people to be positive about themselves and their behaviours. It also ensures that the school is a calm and safe place.

Where behaviours result in crisis, Team Teach and Restorative Practice is used to help young people and adults restore positive relationships and trust.

The use of Restrictive Physical Interventions is only used in situations of imminent risk of harm to the child, other children or the adults or significant damage to the school property.

3.2 What support does the school put in place for children who find it difficult to conform to normal behavioural expectations and how do you support children to avoid exclusion?

We do not believe exclusion is a positive form of behaviour management and it is our policy to aspire to never exclude students from the school.

We have a very personalised approach to behaviour in exactly the same way that we approach all our learning.

All our staff are trained in Team Teach and Restorative Practice which is a positive behaviour management system used by many special school in this country.

It enables us to ensure that any behaviour difficulties are sorted at the earliest opportunity in a positive way.

This may include writing a behaviour plan to ensure that every member of staff working with a young person knows what will work and what not to do with regards to the behaviour.

This helps greatly in reducing occurrences of the behaviours.

Due to this very personalised approach we have a very calm school where students feel safe and can learn effectively.

We focus very much on personal, social and emotional education to enable our young people to learn how to interact appropriately.

We very much believe that a proactive approach like this works best when allied with a positive intervention programme.

Our staff are highly skilled and are able to deal with issues around behaviour effectively and safely enabling the young person to move forward with dignity.

3.3 What medical support is available in the school?

We have a school nurse who is available to support with all medical matters whether they be related to medication or training. She is also able to liaise with medical professionals about any issues.

In addition we have a variety of medical support professional who visit the school to offer support to parents and families and professionals including a wheelchair clinic.

Medical practitioners are also used to train our staff for particular conditions such as diabetes care and epilepsy intervention.

We have created a medical room which is used as a sick bay should a need arise.

3.4 How does the school manage the administration of medicines?

At Abbot's Lea School we take security and administration of medication extremely seriously.

Our Head of Care and Safeguarding is responsible for the management of medication.

All medication that is to be administered in school is subject to a specific medical plan and is subject to our school policy.

All staff in school are trained in administering medication by our school nurse or an appropriate medical professional if needed.

3.5 How does the school provide help with personal care where this is needed, e.g. help with toileting, eating etc?

We are here to support young people whatever their needs. This may well involve personal care and staff are appropriately trained and will ensure that any intimate care is carried out safely and with the utmost dignity and respect for the young person.

We offer support for any aspect of care that the young person requires. If appropriate, we will support toileting programmes and will work closely with families to ensure success.

We will always seek professional advice from the Continence Nurse when planning any aspect of toileting to ensure that it is the right thing to do.

We are very keen on developing independent eating for all children.

We realise that not all young people are ready for this so we will, again, work with families and children to develop appropriate programmes to help develop skills.

Lunches are always spent with members of the class team and this enables us to ensure consistency of delivery in eating programmes.

4. Specialist services and expertise available at, or accessed by, the school

4.1 What external SEN support services does the school use, e.g. educational psychologists, teachers for hearing impairment, visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment etc?

Abbot's Lea School utilises the support of a multitude of agencies to ensure that we can support all of our young people in the best way possible. The professionals that we regularly use are:

- CAMHS (Child and Adult Mental Health Services)
- Specialist Medical Consultants
- Social Care experts
- Educational Psychology
- Bespoke Therapists
- Parent Partnership
- Family Support Service

If there is anything in particular that you require, please contact the school.

4.2 What specialist support services are available from within the school?

We have many support services within our school as follows:

- Family Adviser
- Behaviour Specialists
- Communication Specialists
- Parent Support and Training
- Learning Mentor
- Emotional First Aider

If there is anything in particular that you require, please contact the school.

4.3 What should I do if I think my child needs support from one of these services?

The best way to enquire about any of the support is to contact your child's class teacher.

The class teacher or a member of the team will be happy to advise you.

Alternatively, you can contact our Family Adviser who will also be happy to advise you on available support and services and how to be referred.

4.4 How are speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy services provided?

The individual children come with their diagnosis on admission and then, if required, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy are delivered in school by school staff under guidance and training from the NHS team.

If needs arise after admission, teacher will seek EHCP Coordinator's input to provide professional assessment and design support package.

Some young people receive regular support directly from therapists although this is provided by the NHS and now ALS.

4.5 What arrangements does the school have for liaison with Children's Social Care services?

At Abbot's Lea School all staff are trained in Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures at least every year. Any updates arising from changed national or local guidance or "lessons learnt" are shared as and when required.

The school has a large Safeguarding Team led by Head of Care and Safeguarding who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other members of the team are Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

All staff know that if any concerns are raised then they must pass them onto one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads in school.

In cases where a concern is raised we will contact the child's social worker or the duty social team in an emergency.

The school will attend multidisciplinary meetings and Child Protection Conferences to support children and families.

Where appropriate, we will invite representatives of Children's Social Care to annual reviews and other relevant meetings to help support young people and their families.

Any person can make a referral to Social Care team and there are no hierarchies within the commitment to safeguarding children.

5. Training of school staff

5.1 What SEND training is provided for teachers in your school?

At Abbot's Lea School we run a very rigorous recruitment and training programme for all staff.

The training we offer on the job looks at many aspects of learning and interventions and is delivered by expert school staff and other professionals and examples will include the following:

- All staff new to the school undertake a comprehensive induction programme
- Autism Awareness
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour Support
- Team Teach
- Restorative Practice
- Differentiation
- Assessment for Learning
- Phonics and reading development
- Medical needs
- Feeding and healthy eating
- Total Communication
- Literacy interventions
- Maths interventions
- Therapy training

- Speech and Language Support - HI/VI sensory impairment support
- Different needs of students require different modes of delivery and therefore certain class teams will have training very specific to their needs.

5.2 What SEND training is provided for specialist support assistants and other staff in your school?

The staff at Abbot's Lea School have a wide range of skills and qualifications ranging from Masters' Degrees to NVQ and QCF level certificates and diplomas. We are very keen on encouraging our staff to engage in continuous training for their own professional development and we have a very high uptake on voluntary courses.

As above, all of our support staff participate in weekly CPD time, and all have access to the equivalent of 5 INSET days a year.

5.3 Do teachers have any specific qualifications in SEND?

All of our teachers have a recognised qualification leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Teachers also have experience and skills in various areas of special needs.

We also participate in Schools Direct teacher training and PGCE training and so have a number of trainee teachers who learn in a range of academic and school settings with the latest pedagogical practice and methodologies available.

5.4 Do support assistants have any specific qualifications in SEND?

All specialist support staff at Abbot's Lea School are encouraged to work towards recognised qualifications through our own training programmes.

In addition, many teacher and support staff will take part in other qualifications relating to the classes and teams they work with to improve their professional practice.

6. Activities outside the classroom including school trips

6.1 How do you ensure that all children can be included in out of school activities and trips?

At Abbot's Lea School we believe that activities outside the classroom are essential in helping our young people develop both their academic and social, emotional and behavioural skills.

To ensure that everyone can take part in activities safely, the school uses LCC risk assessment system called EVOLVE. Risk assessments are used to ensure that we can support every student in order to make sure that they get the most from each trip and remain safe at the same time.

All staff are aware of the Equalities Act and we are passionate that all young people will experience trips and visits regardless of their abilities. We will differentiate activities as we would with any learning activity to ensure that everyone can have access and be included.

Where needed, we will use transport that is adapted for our young people who cannot travel in vehicle seats. If we plan a big school trip, we either organise an accessible coach or use our numerous school mini buses.

We believe that we can overcome any barrier in relation to ability and access and will always endeavour to do so for the benefit of our children.

6.2 How do you involve parents / carers in planning the support required for their child to access activities and trips?

When planning trips we will try to involve parents as much as possible to ensure that the young person gets the most out of the experience.

This may involve some or all of the following:

- Communication of information through letters and communication books
- Head's Weekly Newsletter
- Home visits
- Family Adviser
- Subsidising families whose children qualify for Free School Meals or are Looked After
- Giving notice in advance for parents so that costs can be spread over time.

We would also seek advice from parents as they may be invaluable when planning a trip with their child in mind.

7. Accessibility of the school environment

7.1 How accessible is the building for children with mobility difficulties / wheelchair users?

The school has certain limitations for wheelchair users in the Abbot's Lea House which is an old listed building, but lift and ramp are available.

The two newer buildings whilst accessible require other adult assistance as doors are not automated.

All corridors and all doors are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs.

7.2 Have adaptations/improvements been made to the auditory and visual environment?

We work closely with the students with complex sensory needs and often seek advice on any specific requirements for students with sight or hearing difficulties.

We follow National Autistic Society guidance regarding school environment.

Additionally, we use symbolic communication, as well as for some students, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) where appropriate and use Communicate and Print symbols, as well as Objects of Reference and signs throughout the school to help aid understanding of communication.

7.3 Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities?

There are several accessible toilet facilities.

7.4 How do you ensure that all the school's facilities can be accessed by all children irrespective of their SEND?

We are constantly monitoring access in all areas of the school.

We are a school that caters for students with SEND and therefore ensure that all students have access to a full curriculum adapted to their needs.

7.5 How does the school communicate with parents / carers who have a disability?

We use various methods to help communicate with parents/carers who have a disability.

We work on a personalised basis and would be happy to discuss any requirements that you may have.

Our Family Adviser would be able to help with this and help arrange for support and aid the school in using appropriate communication strategies to help you access the school and your child's learning.

We are keen that there are no barriers to communication and, as such, we will work with parents to ensure that we find the best method of communication. This may involve using written communication, translators or other methods.

Please contact the school directly if you feel this would affect you.

7.6 How does the school communicate with parents / carers whose first language is not English?

We are keen that there are no barriers to communication, and as such, we will work with parents to ensure that we find the best method of communication.

This may involve using written communication, translators or other methods.

Please contact the Reception directly if you feel this would affect you.

8. Preparing my child to join the school, or to transfer to a new school, or the next stage of education and life

8.1 What preparation will there be for both the school and my child before he or she joins the school?

We always want to ensure that every child has a positive transition into Abbot's Lea School. As with everything that we do, we like to personalise every transition because we know that each child's experience and needs will vary. Our transition will usually include some or all of the following:

- Visits by Abbot's Lea School staff to the school and home
- Information to parents about all the important things such as transport and uniform and how transition will work
- Care planning meetings to ensure that medical plans and care plans are in place for the young person
- Visual support such as books and pictures for the young person

- A person-centred plan for transition
- Equipment audit to ensure that we have all the right items in place to support the young person
- Parent visits
- Student visits to school and to class team
- Class swap over days where all our new students come in to school
- Multi-Agency meetings where appropriate
- Transition Week during July where students spend time in their new classes in preparation for the new academic year and parents are invited to meet the new team

8.2 How will my child be prepared to move on to the next stage within school, e.g. class or key stage?

When it comes to transitions within school we work very carefully to ensure that this is as smooth as possible. We can plan at a very early stage for transition as this usually happens at set stages during the child's time at school.

During this time the class team will plan for visits to the site that the young person will be going to so that they can familiarise themselves with the environment and get used to the surroundings. This may be built into their weekly timetable so that it becomes normal and part of the routine.

In addition we will have further transition visits for those students who may find it particularly difficult. We will also be keen to involve parents/carers in the process as this will usually make things a lot easier. For those who require it we can make a very personalised transition programme that may involve social stories and visual support.

We have a great success in transitions and very rarely have difficulties and were we do we are able to sort them out very quickly. Our students are happy and successful in their transitions.

8.3 How will my young person be prepared to move on to his, or her, next placement, e.g. FE college or Adult Services?

We work very hard to ensure that all transitions for students leaving our school are successful in their new school or college. Like transitions within school, it is essential that we involve the advice and expertise of parents/carers.

Most of our students stay with us until they are 19 and will usually go to a local college. As such, we will work closely with local colleges and ensure that students are given opportunities to attend link courses so that the college environment becomes a routine part of their week, which in turn will make transition easier. Our staff will work with colleagues at other colleges and schools to ensure that they have the right training and understanding in order to support the young person in their transition.

8.3 How will the school prepare my child for the transition to employment?

For those progressing to apprenticeships and employment, Job Coaching has proven very successful.

Our staff ensure that they have the right training and understanding in order to do their job well and that the employer has received all the support the young person will need from them in their transition.

We also occasionally offer supported apprenticeships which may be open to some school leavers.

9.1 Who can I contact to discuss my child?

9.1 Who would be my first point of contact if I want to discuss something about my child or if I am worried?

If you are worried or concerned then the first person to contact would be the **Class Teacher**.

If this is not suitable then you should contact the following (in this order):

- Key Stage Leaders
- Job Coach
- Deputy Headteacher
- Head of Care and Safeguarding
- Headteacher

We are keen to resolve any issues and we urge you to contact us as soon as possible so that we can help sort things as soon as possible.

9.2 Does the school offer any specific support for parents / carers and families?

At our school we have a Family Adviser who supports parents/carers and families. She is able to provide advice, guidance and support with all elements of parenting and family difficulties.

Parents, for whom English is a foreign language, can benefit from the translation/interpretation services provided and paid for by the school.

9.3 What arrangements does the school have for signposting parents / carers to external agencies which can offer support, such as voluntary agencies?

We can help signpost parents/carers to appropriate external agencies through a variety of routes including:

- Class Teacher
- Family Adviser
- Key Stage Leaders
- Deputy Headteacher
- Headteacher through the Head's Weekly Newsletter
- School Nurse
- Meet The Team Days
- Parents' meetings
- Annual reviews
- Website
- LCC Local Offer
- Facebook and Twitter

We would encourage parents to contact the school as soon as possible to arrange support.

9.4 What arrangements does the school have for feedback from parents, including compliments and complaints?

We have a clear complaints procedure. We welcome emails to:

headteacher@abbotisleaschool.co.uk

We would encourage parents to contact the school as soon as they have concerns as most issues are easily sorted through discussion.

In the first instance we would suggest that you contact the class teacher.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, then please contact the Headteacher who will help to resolve the problem as swiftly as possible.

We operate an open door policy and so encourage parents to make contact at the earliest opportunity as we find that good communication is the best way to solve any issues.

The Headteacher includes public praise of students and staff in her Head's Weekly Newsletter when appropriate.