



ROSSENDALE
SCHOOL

PRIORY EDUCATION AND
CHILDREN'S SERVICES



RAWTENSTALL
CAMPUS

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

INTRODUCTION

Rossendale School was established in May 1989 as a school catering for pupils who display emotional and behavioural difficulties and who were statemented under the 1981 Education Act as having special needs (since super-ceded by the 1996 Education Act and the 2002 Education Act and the 2006 Education and Inspections Act) and more recently the 2014 Children and Families Act. However, since the enactment of the 2014 Act the school is re-designated with DfE as approved under Section 41 of this Act for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties but who also have an Autistic Spectrum disorder.

The intention of the school is to be able to provide a flexible resource for local authorities where pupils who suffered emotional trauma could be provided with specialist intervention to help them come to terms with their difficulties; whilst at the same time providing them with a full and complete education which met their individual needs as well as the requirements of the National Curriculum.

The school has developed considerable expertise in dealing with pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders over a number of years. Increasingly, Local Authorities have been referring more and more complex pupils to us. In an attempt to meet this growing demand over the Summer holiday period of 2009 the school closed the residential provision in the Farmhouse and carried out extensive refurbishment to convert the Farmhouse into small classrooms for groups of 4 or 5, individual 1-1 rooms for counselling and social stories work and therapy rooms for specialist staff to work individually with pupils. Needless to say this was subject to a material change being sought from the DCSF as part of the school's approval. The formal approval was granted on 19 October 2009 enabling the School to admit pupils with a Statement of BESD with learning difficulties, including ASD.

The School provides education for young people aged from 6 – 18 years of age. The youngest age for admission to the school is usually 6 years and the maximum age for admission is 14 (although in particular specific circumstances 15 year olds MAY be admitted). The school admits both boys and girls, both on daily and residential placements. Historically, the school only provided education for young people up to the age of 16, i.e. statutory school leaving age. However, since the Government (2011/12) introduced the raising of the participation age the school, once again, applied to the DfE for a material change i.e. to extend our age range from 16 to 18. Consequently from 1 September 2012 the School has been able to provide post 16 education for pupils who already attend the School. In exceptional circumstances, where strong relationships already exist between the School and the LEA, the School MAY consider an application for a post 16 pupil who has not previously attended the School, but who has an EHCP. Through Section 41 of the Children and Families Act, the school has been approved by the Secretary of State as suitable for admitting high functioning pupils on the Autism Spectrum and who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Additionally, as a Section 41 approved school, Rossendale is able to help Local Authorities prepare young people's EHCP by providing an assessment placement for the purpose of providing Education Advice to inform the plan. This is particularly helpful if a young person is out of school or without a school.

We have a vibrant primary department as we believe that early intervention produces the best possible outcomes. Rossendale has long subscribed to early intervention and provides a curriculum that is both stimulating and challenging. Our ethos was created in the belief that a positive, supportive and achieving culture is essential to create an "outstanding" school. Pupils who have come from a negative, destructive and anti-achievement background needed a completely different environment in which to re-discover (or maybe discover for the first time) success and self-belief in an educational setting.

The School's 6th Form has been transformed since being founded in 2012. In September 2018 the 6th Form was relocated into a fully refurbished specialist facility which followed yet another material change approved by DfE, including raising the number on roll to 94.

PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES

In defining the School's "Aims and Objectives" we need to start with the School's ethos. We need to examine why the School exists - what we believe, what are our values?

The School was founded in the belief that pupils who had been statemented as having emotional and behavioural needs were often poorly served by the educational provision available to them. Substantial evidence existed that both the pupils and their parents continued to experience unmet needs which often led to conflict between the pupils with needs and the statutory agencies who should be addressing those needs. Today, this belief is strongly reinforced by the conflict that parents of pupils with ASD experience in securing the right provision for their child.

The founding principle on which the School was built was a deep conviction that ALL pupils had an entitlement to a positive education which allowed them to experience success. An entitlement which:

"first enlarges a child's knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding and thus his awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment; and secondly, to enable him to enter the world after formal education is over as an active contributor in society and a responsible contributor to it; capable of achieving as much independence as possible."

This is what Rossendale School is about. It is unashamedly about values. A view that has been fully supported by OFSTED, who wrote:

"successive pieces of educational legislation have had at their centre the belief that education in this country is not only about the gaining of knowledge and the acquiring of essential skills (though of course it is about those things), but also about personal development in its fullest sense".

At Rossendale this view is translated into daily practice and underpins all that we do. Our ethos was created in the belief that a positive, supportive and achieving culture was essential to create a "good" school. Pupils who had come from a negative, destructive and anti-achievement background needed a completely different environment in which to re-discover (or maybe discover for the first time) success and self-belief in an educational setting.

Although Rossendale School is essentially a day School, we fully recognise that for a number of our pupils their wider educational, social and emotional needs cannot be met simply on a daily basis. Therefore, the School provides weekly boarding provision. Young people who are accommodated by the school are provided with an added dimension of stability and security in their lives. However, it is important that these young people have a home base (not necessarily with their natural family) to which they can return each Friday.

It is an important aspect of the School's beliefs that we form an effective partnership with the young person's family or carers and work closely with them to bring about a successful reintegration of the young person to their home. In addition to our weekly boarding programme we routinely provide respite support for a number of our families 1 or 2 nights per week, subject to ratification by the home LEA and usually confirmed through the statutory review process. This is available to any pupil following discussion with their family and host LEA.

Since the advent of EHCPs much more emphasis has been placed upon the need to develop independence, social skills and age appropriate skills. The school has developed extensive expertise in this area and makes this available to all the families we support. In any given academic year, as a consequence of this support being provided, at least 50% of the school's pupils will have had access to the school's residential provision.

We provide accommodation in two adjoining properties in the local community for a total of 6 young people in individual study bedrooms. These young people fall into two categories. They are either:

- a) older residents who are being prepared for independent living and leaving School; or

- b) younger residents who are developing more age appropriate life skills and greater self-control. This group can also accommodate female pupils.

The School maintains a second off site property in Newchurch, near Rawtenstall. This is a detached property totally refurbished, close to all local amenities and in the heart of a thriving community. Accommodation is provided for up to a maximum of 6 pupils in individual study bedrooms, on two separate floors. These young people will normally be older residents who are being prepared for independent living and moving on to further education or the work place. Upstairs is dedicated to providing accommodation for the group described in b) above.

The School's ethos was exemplified by the Warnock Committee's Report and although compiled four decades ago is still valid today. To enhance good practice and promote entitlement for our pupils the School is an active member of the National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN). The School shares many of the principles, aims and objectives of the Association and consequently has adopted their Statement of Entitlement and promotes it actively as a fundamental tenet of our beliefs. It states the following:

- Entitlement to a broad, relevant and differentiated education is a right for all.
- Neither gender, race, creed nor exceptional needs should constrain individual entitlement.
- Trained and qualified personnel are essential for the delivery of quality education.
- Individual learners should be involved in decisions about their educational programme and provision.
- Thoughtful assessment and testing should be used to the benefit of the learner.
- Learning is most effective when it takes place in a happy, sensitive and secure environment.
- Equality of opportunity must be integral to the planning of educational provision.
- Maximum participation by parents and carers must be secured in order to achieve partnership in education.
- Educators should utilise teaching strategies which are responsive to different learning styles, and which ensure effective learning.
- Notable achievements by all learners should be recognised and recorded.
- Total commitment to the principles of educational entitlement must be the responsibility of everyone in an inclusive society.

OVERALL AIM

To develop a caring community in which concern and respect for others is fostered and the importance of goodwill, sensitivity and tolerance in interpersonal relationships is exemplified.

APPROACHES TO CARE PRACTICES

Care practice at Rossendale School is based upon a belief that young people need consistency and support to enable them to deal effectively with traumatic experiences.

In responding to the individual needs of pupils, Rossendale School will, at all times, operate within the framework of the Education Act 1996, the Education Act 2002, the Children's Act 1989 and the Children's Act 2004 as well as the Care Standards Act 2000 and now the 2014 Children and Families Act. Needless to say the School will always operate within the legislative framework. In recent years' major legislative changes have occurred and many more Acts of Parliament have a direct impact upon the working of the School. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act, some aspects of which came into force in April 2007, had a significant bearing upon the School. Secondary aged pupils who started Year 7 in September 2008 were required to remain in some form of education until they reached 17 years of age. This was required adjustment by the School and as stated in our Introduction a material change was granted by the DfE, allowing us to continue to provide education for young people up to the age of 18 years from 1 September 2012.

We are committed to the protection and care of our pupils and therefore all Child Protection issues will be referred to the appropriate Local Authority and Social Services Department as required under Child Protection procedures. Overall responsibility for Child Protection procedures clearly lies with the Headteacher but on a day to day basis this is delegated to the Head of Care and the School ensures that he and the Headteacher have undertaken specific "Designated Senior Person" training. Needless to say the school adopts the principles in "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019 and "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2019. The Deputy Head has also undertaken DSP training so that she can act in this capacity at our Sixth Form site.

At Rossendale School practice has been developed through the establishment of a Keyworker system based upon building positive and trusting relationships with young people and their families. The Keyworker System in Rossendale School is designed to enable and develop the ability of the School to meet pupils' and their families' needs. All Keyworkers have had instruction in following the guidance in "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families" 2000 and "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" 2003, as well as guidance listed on the previous paragraph. Safeguarding Training is provided for all staff not just keyworkers and this training is updated on a 3 year cycle.

Further documentation outlining the tasks and role of the Keyworker is available if required.

CARE STAFFING POLICY

To enable us to put the above into practice we have evolved the following policy.

1. Care staffing levels, both through the day and at night will be appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils and to provide suitable and safe levels of supervision.
2. In the off-site properties which adjoin each other (Sally Barn), both housing 3 pupils respectively, there will be a minimum of 1 member of staff on duty in each house.
3. In our property accommodating 6 pupils (The Quarter), 3 pupils are housed on the first floor with two staff sleeping in and 3 pupils are housed on the ground floor. There will be at least 1 member of staff on duty on each floor.
4. Between 10.30pm and 7.30am, Monday to Friday, term time only, pupils will be supervised/safeguarded by staff sleeping in on duty.

At Sally Barn, 1 member of staff will sleep-in in each house.

At The Quarter, 2 members of staff will sleep-in on the first floor and 1 member of staff will sleep-in on the ground floor to meet the individual needs of particular pupils.

5. Either the Head of Care or the Senior Practitioner will be available as Senior on-call support each night Monday to Thursday.
6. It will be the responsibility of the Head of Care, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team colleagues, to draw up this on-call rota.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the School is to meet the needs of individual pupils as defined in their Education Health and Care Plan. This document is prepared by the young person's Local Education Authority and it is a statutory obligation of the Authority to ensure that these needs are implemented and reviewed. The School carries out this function on behalf of a number of North West LEAs.

In addition, the School would also see that it has a major role to play in providing the following:

- to maximise individual potential
- to value the individual
- to promote self awareness and respect for others
- to provide a supportive caring environment
- to celebrate success in all its forms
- to create an ethos of high expectation
- to create a stimulating learning environment
- to prepare young people for social inclusion

INDIVIDUAL'S QUALITY OF LIFE

As can already be seen from the philosophical statements made by the School, we are fully committed to ensuring a high quality of service to the pupils in our care. This includes actively encouraging them to play a major part in planning for their futures beyond School and they are fully involved through the statutory review process in decision making regarding their future. In addition, the School has developed close links with the Young People's Service to ensure a wide range of advice and information is made available to our young people regarding future careers. The School also promotes a very active work experience programme and college link programme enabling young people to make informed decisions regarding their futures. For young people whose Local Authority may not have a Young People's Service actively engaged with a particular young person the school engages an independent specialist service to provide this.

Young people at Rossendale School are subject to an Education Health and Care Plan. Under this legislation the Local Authority responsible for the young person has a statutory duty to review the plan and the provision made available to the young person. The School carries out this process on behalf of the LEAs for the pupils placed with them. A comprehensive written report is made available at Review meetings to the LEA and parents, as well as other appropriate professionals who may be involved in the case.

In addition to Reviews held under the Education legislation, any pupil who is accommodated or in the care of his/her Local Authority is also reviewed under Section 26 of the 1989 Children's Act at 6 monthly intervals or more frequently if required. The appropriate Social Services Department assumes responsibility for setting and chairing these reviews as well as providing the written recommendations. Rossendale School co-operates fully with various Social Services Departments in promoting these procedures, providing written reports when requested, as well as hosting the venue when this is deemed appropriate. Comprehensive written documentation regarding Reviews is available if required. As Local Authorities have become Children's Services Directorates the School has endeavoured to encourage the different agencies to work more co-operatively and try to arrange joint reviews.

In addition to educational and career opportunities the School also provides access to a wide range of leisure activities in young people's home communities and actively encourages our pupils to develop interests and attachments to a wide variety of community based initiatives.

Many of our young people have experienced major traumas in their lives and in order to help them come to terms with this the School has been active in advising and supporting them by providing them with access to a wide range of clinical services including psychiatry, psychotherapy, CAMHS, drug counselling, general health, family planning and specialist medical advice. As some of these services have become more difficult to access, Rossendale has developed its own Therapy Team. We now employ:

- 1 Clinical Psychologist
- 1 Speech and Language Therapist
- 1 Art Psychotherapists
- 1 Neuro developmental family support worker
- 2 Sensory Trained Occupational Therapist

The School also provides our pupils with access to an independent complaints panel who offer advice for young people in a range of areas, including advocacy, equal opportunities and racism.

Within the curriculum Religious Education is taught as a requirement and a great deal of emphasis is placed upon a multi-cultural approach as well as promoting an extensive range of moral values. Any young person of a particular religious faith is given further encouragement to continue and extend their beliefs. The major religious feasts of all faiths are noted and observed and explanations provided for pupils not of that faith. The school has a number of Jewish pupils and has engaged the services of a Rabbi one day per week to meet these pupils' particular religious needs.

A copy of the Religious Education Curriculum is available to appropriate persons on request.

INVOLVEMENT OF FAMILY, CARERS AND FRIENDS

The School believes that young people cannot be effectively dealt with in isolation and in order to help them deal appropriately with problems young people must be viewed in the context of their complete family dynamic.

Consequently a great deal of effort is expended at Rossendale in fostering close and positive links with young people's families in the belief that this is the best way to bring about positive and lasting change. Through the work of Form Tutors and Keyworkers this philosophy is put into practice and pupils are very much aware that home/school liaison is a reality and not a theory at Rossendale.

EQUALITY IN PRACTICE

The School is actively committed to equal opportunities for all young people irrespective of their origins and this is actively promoted through the School's PSHE programme as well as through individual work undertaken by Keyworkers.

ENVIRONMENT

Rossendale School was originally housed in a stone built 18th Century farmhouse and was specifically designed to create a non-institutional atmosphere. As we are both home and school for a small number of our pupils we feel it is essential that the right climate is created. We are both warm and caring whilst offering opportunities for learning and personal development. The uniqueness of the former farm buildings enhances this philosophy. A high material standard is provided in all living spaces and young people are encouraged to personalise their bedroom as well as showing respect and consideration for others in communal areas. As the School has developed and grown, new specialist classroom areas have been created to compliment the Farmhouse.

The School has specialist facilities for primary pupils, Food Studies, Art, Science, Design Technology, ICT and Learning Support. PE and Outdoor Education feature highly on the timetable and as well as specialist staff and equipment which are exclusively within the school's own resources, the school also uses a variety of community based resources. All of these facilities are available to the resident pupils after School is over, although a great deal of effort is taken to ensure that "home" and "School" are kept separate.

Resident pupils have individual study bedrooms and have free access to individual showering and toileting facilities to ensure personal dignity is maintained. A number of our residents actually enjoy en-suite facilities. Meals for resident pupils are prepared in the houses and eaten in the houses, except at lunchtime when all pupils eat in the main School dining room.

We believe it is important not to isolate our pupils from the wider community into which we aim to reintegrate them. Consequently, a great deal of use is made of local communities and the close proximity of a number of sizeable urban communities allows our pupils the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of leisure and social activities, thus ensuring that they maintain community links, form relationships within a wider circle and enhance their social skills.

SALLY BARN

These two adjoining properties were originally part of an 18th Century farmhouse. A local property developer demolished the farmhouse and rebuilt it using the original stone and maintaining the original style but obviously ensuring that internally all facilities were of the highest expected standards of today. These included central heating, double glazing, modern bathrooms, kitchen etc.

Pupils are accommodated in individual study bedrooms. In one of the houses all bedrooms have wash hand basins in them with one having its own en-suite facilities. The other house is three storeys and has two bedrooms on the top floor which share a bathroom, whilst the bedroom on the first floor has its own bathroom.

In order to be accommodated at Sally Barn, pupils first of all would have to have an identified need and agreement reached with their placing authority, that their education would be enhanced by the authority agreeing to fund residential provision for the young person. This is usually confirmed by the Statutory Review process. The need would either be to develop greater independence and self-help skills in preparation for leaving School and/or independent living. Alternatively, younger pupils who are being considered for a return home but who need to develop less dependence and greater self control would also meet the criteria.

The routine at Sally Barn is similar to that within all of the School's residential accommodation, particularly with regard to expectations and standards.

At a practical level the young people are expected to undertake all domestic chores including hoovering, washing and ironing. In addition, they plan their own menus (with some support and guidance), shop with cash in the local supermarket for the ingredients and then cook their own meals. They have regular meetings to discuss issues and to ensure that they can co-operate effectively and live together in harmony. Support and guidance is provided by Keyworkers who accompany the pupils to the property after School and sleep in on a rota basis. Again a vital aspect of the Keyworkers' task is close liaison with the young person's family.

THE QUARTER

The Quarter has been, for a number of years, operated as 4 separate flats under one roof. It is well located in Newchurch, close to local amenities such as Marl Pits recreational area, the Rossendale Dance and Drama studio and is on the main route for pupils walking to Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School and Fearn Community Sports College.

A major renovation programme was undertaken in the early part of 2004 with the then owner intending to create 4 separate luxury flats for sale on the open housing market. School became aware of this development and felt it would be an ideal resource for us to be able to meet the growing need for our pupils to develop greater independence and self-help skills in preparation for moving on to Further Education and/or independent living.

There are 2 flats on the first floor and 2 flats on the ground floor. Each floor having its own separate entrance. Each flat on the ground floor comprises of 2 bedrooms (1 en suite), a bathroom, kitchen and lounge. The flats on the first floor comprise of a 3-bedroom flat (1 en suite), a bathroom, kitchen and lounge and a 2-bedroom flat (1 en suite), a bathroom, kitchen and lounge. An en suite bedroom on each floor has been designated as a staff sleep in room ensuring that on each floor a pupil also has the opportunity to enjoy an en suite bedroom. This means that in most cases the separate bathroom in each flat is then for the exclusive use on only 1 pupil.

On each floor one of the kitchens has been designated as a main kitchen and is fully equipped with fridge/freezer, dishwasher etc. The 'lounge' in the flat with the operational kitchen is then used as a dining room. The lounge in the adjoining flat is then the lounge for relaxation and the kitchen in this flat is used as a laundry. Pupil accommodation is in individual study bedrooms with modern fitted furniture and a work station to ensure homework and examination preparation can be carried out adequately.

In order to be accommodated at the Quarter downstairs, pupils usually will have an identified need that is usually confirmed by the Statutory Review process. Generally, pupils living at the Quarter would be older adolescents being prepared for further education or moving into a working environment. Exceptionally, younger secondary aged pupils can be accommodated if they are being considered for a return to home but need to develop less adult dependence and greater self-control. Upstairs is for the younger children who need a nurturing environment.

The routine at the Quarter is similar to that within all of the School's residential accommodation, particularly with regard to expectations and standards.

ADMISSION AND MOVING ON

Before agreeing to admit a pupil to Rossendale School very careful consideration is given to each case to determine whether a pupil's individual needs can be fully met by the School. Case papers are studied, parents and young person are interviewed and expectations discussed before a commitment is made.

On admission a member of Senior Staff meets the young person and their parents and re-outlines the School's expectations and practice. Parents and young people are then expected to sign a Home/School Agreement covering key issues.

Following admission, a date is set for an initial planning meeting, usually within 12 weeks of admission, in order that an effective treatment plan can be evolved. All persons with an active interest in the young person are invited to the meeting and their views are sought. This includes the young person, his or her parents or carers, educational psychologist, parent partnership officer, social worker, keyworker, form tutor etc.

As part of our Statutory Review process we are required to address the question of whether the placement at Rossendale is still appropriate. This is given a high priority by the School and careful consideration is given to opportunities to

reintegrate our young people back to their own homes as well as into mainstream schools. All participants in the Review process are actively involved in this decision and it is never taken by Rossendale School in isolation. This ensures that a variety of opinions are sought and that all parties are committed to the final decision. In practice most young people who attend Rossendale School as residential pupils are returned to their own homes by the time they are Year 10 pupils, ensuring that Rossendale can continue to work with and support both the young person and his or her family until they reach statutory school leaving age. Through the links established with the Young People's Service and a number of local colleges Rossendale also works actively to ensure a positive start to a young person's 16+ career by encouraging and supporting their involvement in the field of Further Education. We would also ensure that the young person's EHCP was amended, thus ensuring maximum support is provided in any Further Education setting. A copy of the School's Admission Policy is available on request.

DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS

As a School clearly the greater part of the waking day is taken up by formal classroom lessons and each young person is assigned to a Year group appropriate to his or her chronological age and academic ability. The School follows the National Curriculum and the School day is based upon the established pattern found in most mainstream schools. Pupils are taught in 1 hour periods during the morning and in 50 minute sessions in the afternoon, over a 5 period day.

Most pupils at the School attend as day pupils but clearly our residential pupils have a much more extensive routine and a copy of their daily routine is available on request.

All full time resident pupils are registered with a local Health Care Practice which attends to all their medical needs, including providing a specialist asthma nurse and making referrals to specialist consultants where appropriate. Resident pupils are also registered with a local dental practice and regular appointments are made to ensure our pupils' needs in this area are fully met. In addition, the local Health Care Trust, through the offices of the SCMO, provides the full range of School health care for all our pupils, including admission medicals and regular checks for height and weight, eye sight, injections and inoculations and carrying out hearing tests. The SCMO can also assist with the provision of specialist consultancy services in specific cases. A written medical policy is available on request.

The School takes its responsibility to provide a safe environment for its pupils seriously and an excellent relationship exists between the School and Lancashire County Council's Fire Prevention Officer who attends School regularly to provide advice and support in this area. Regular fire drills are carried out for both day and resident pupils and staff have been trained in the use of fire extinguishers. A written fire procedure is available on request.

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Rossendale School has an established Complaints Procedure and a copy of the appropriate documentation is available if required. Fortunately, the School is more used to dealing with compliments than complaints and these are passed on to both staff and pupils through a variety of formal and informal means. Generally speaking, compliments are announced in assemblies which occur at the beginning and end of each day and where appropriate are relayed to parents either in writing from the Headteacher or verbally via the Keyworker over the telephone. Staff are also made aware of compliments through the various staff meetings which are held weekly. In addition, residential pupils are notified of compliments concerning themselves through their informal meeting which occurs at the end of the School day on a daily basis.

If any parent or pupil felt that a complaint had not been adequately dealt with by the School then they could seek advice on this matter through either contacting the Group Complaints Manager, Priory Group Headquarters, 80 Hammersmith Road, London, W14 8UD or Ofsted Tel No: 0300 013 0415.

SAFEGUARDING

The Education Act 2002 created a new statutory duty for all schools, including Independent Schools. This was to safeguard children and ensure everyone involved with them plays their full part in protecting them from abuse and neglect and by promoting their welfare. This has been reinforced by another Government publication, "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2020. The school adheres to these principles and ensures that the latest advice on radicalisation and child sexual exploitation is followed, including the 'Prevent' agenda.

Rossendale School complies with Section 157 of the Act by ensuring ALL staff receive recognised training at 3 yearly intervals. Both the Head of Care and the Headteacher have undergone Designated Lead Person training and this is updated on a 2 yearly cycle. The lead responsibility for Safeguarding lies with the Headteacher, although all Senior Leadership Team members have had training in this area. The Senior Management Team review the Child Protection Policy and Procedure annually.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES

Whilst Rossendale School is wholly committed to the establishment and maintenance of positive relationships between staff and pupils, it recognises that on occasion, particularly in a School that deals with pupils who have highly functioning autism and challenging behaviour, a young person's behaviour may deteriorate to the point where they lose self control. If this happens it is important for the young person that their physical safety and emotional security is safe guarded. On such occasions it may be necessary for the adults to impose external control by the use of physical intervention to ensure the young person's well being is safe guarded. This would only occur when all other strategies had proved to be ineffective and when immediate action was "necessary to prevent injury to any person, or serious damage to the property of any person (including the child's)" (Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 Section 20). It should be stressed that situations where force would be used are exceptional, and even then are subject to strict guidelines.

Rossendale's practice is to ensure that pupil's are warned before any action is taken and considerable effort is made to constantly explain the reason for the action. The pupil is constantly encouraged to regain self-control in order that physical intervention by staff can be discontinued. When physical intervention occurs it must be:

- Deliberate, i.e. planned.
- Controlled.
- With the clear objective of defusing a dangerous or highly charged situation.
- Involving the minimum amount of force.

The acceptable definition of physical intervention within Rossendale School's practice boundaries is the positive application of force with the intention of overpowering the child in order to protect them from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property or prejudicing good order.

The proper use of physical intervention requires skill and judgement as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of intervention. At Rossendale School all staff have been trained in the use of non-harmful intervention and this training is regularly updated to ensure new staff are trained and trained staff are reminded of the principles.

The principles relating to the use of physical intervention may be summarised as follows:

1. Staff should have good grounds for believing that action is immediate and necessary to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others or causing serious damage to property.
2. Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical intervention (e.g. through dialogue and diversion) and the child should be warned that physical intervention will be used unless they desist.
3. Physical intervention may only be used when;
 - a) it is a last resort and all other measures of de-escalation have failed;
 - b) action is immediately necessary because of the risk of injury/harm to self or others or serious damage to property will occur unless physical intervention is used;
 - c) or a serious risk of good order being prejudiced.
 - d) Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or serious damage should be applied.

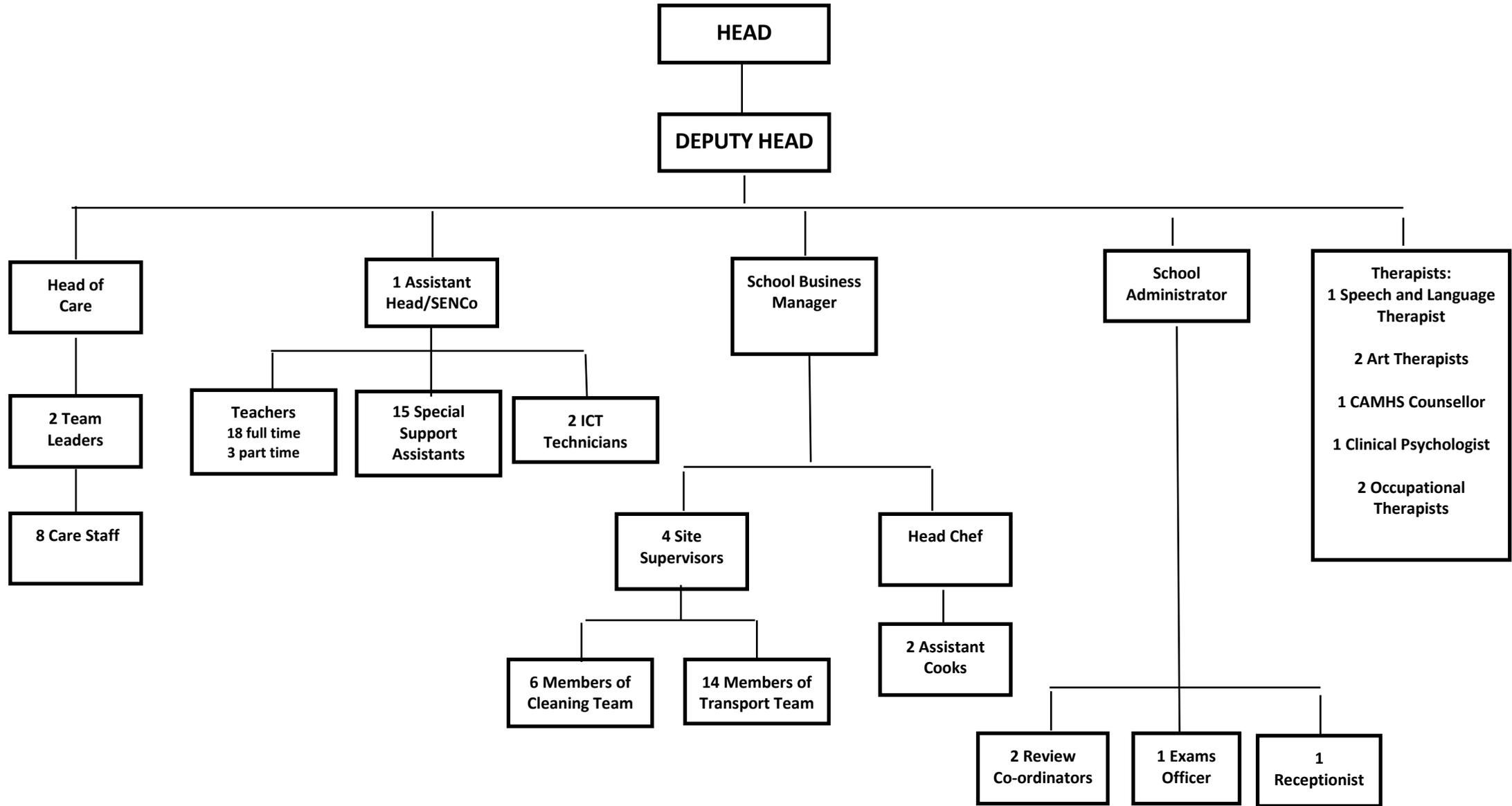
- e) Every effort should be made to ensure the presence of at least one other member of staff before using physical intervention.
- f) As soon as it is safe to do so, the intervention must be gradually relaxed to allow the child to regain some self control.
- g) Physical intervention should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- h) Physical intervention should not be used purely to enforce compliance with staff instructions or School rules, when there is no risk to either people or property.

In addition to physical intervention experience has taught us that some of our young people, even when in a highly agitated state, can regain self-control without adults intervening physically if they have access to a safe environment, without distraction, stimulus or peers. To try to help these individuals the school has developed safe spaces highly agitated young people can access and be observed by staff until they feel able to rejoin the main community. This process is carefully monitored and recorded and a written policy regarding its use is available.

On rare occasions young people may deal with difficulties by actually physically running away. These occasions will be minimised through the establishment of good staff/pupil relationships but even where these exist and are actively promoted, as they are at Rossendale, sometimes young people still feel unable to cope. When a young person is missing from the School it is important that the appropriate authorities are notified and every possible step taken to ensure the young person's safety. As in the case of physical intervention, it is important that when a young person is returned to the School time is spent re-establishing relationships and making the young person feel understood and valued. A written policy on both control and unauthorised absence is available if required.

Management Arrangements

The organisational structure of the school is as follows:-



The Headteacher, Mr Mills, has over 20 years teaching experience in both main stream and special, he has worked in the field of special education for over 10 years. Mr Mills has worked at head of department level and at Senior Leadership level at Rossendale School for over 7 years. He has a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Land, Management & Technology and brings a wealth of experience and expertise of a number of vocational subjects as well as the more academic. This area of speciality has often proved very helpful for some of our young people who wish to follow a more vocational pathway such as horticulture. Alongside this Mr Mills has also led and assessed our Duke of Edinburgh programme for a number of years. He has a PGCE in Information Communications Technology and Special Educational Needs and is a highly experienced practitioner in the classroom.

The senior staff are all very well qualified and experienced practitioners in their own areas.

Mrs Kane, the Deputy Head, was previously the Deputy Head of a main stream secondary school before joining Rossendale and working on the Senior Leadership Team as an Assistant Head for 5 years. In addition, she has worked for over 20 years in both main stream and special school variously as, a teacher, Head of Department, Assistant Head and Deputy Head. Her honours degree is in English and she has completed her National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). In 2016 she was awarded the Rowie Shaw NASS award and has a very keen interest in ensuring Rossendale School operates to maximise each pupils' potential in a caring and nurturing environment.

Miss Georgina Poole, the Assistant Head teacher assumed her post in February 2021 after 10 years working at Rossendale in a number of roles, including Head of Department, Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and in charge of Pupil Premium. She is an Outstanding classroom practitioner with excellent leadership and communication skills. Miss Poole's main area of responsibility is to oversee the Quality of Education at Rossendale School and Rawtenstall Campus.

Mr Jones, the Head of Care, has had 25 years' experience of working with children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a senior manager within the care sector he has worked with a number of families to help develop positive relationships and develop strategies to deal with their child's needs. He has NVQ Level 4 in Care and NVQ Level 5 in Management.

Miss Treasure, The School Business Manager has worked for 6 years at Rossendale, working to ensure that School is up to the correct standards, with specific responsibilities for Finance, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Facilities Management. She is a qualified HR specialist and has a degree in Personnel Management as well as a NVQ Level 4's in Human Resource Management and Finance. She has previously worked for the NHS in Mental Health Services as a Facilities Manager for Lancashire Care NHS Trust and also as a Head of Hospitality & Catering Services at University of Central Lancashire.

Mrs Butler, the School Administrator, has worked for over 26 years at Rossendale and is responsible for admissions and referrals of young people to the School, Recruitment, Attendance, PA to the Headteacher and Staff Training administration. She has a Certificate in Personnel Practice, an NVQ Level 4 in Business Administration and a Certificate in Education.

The care staff team has been built to produce a blend of experience, qualification and youthful enthusiasm that allows us to meet the needs of the pupils we deal with. In addition to a degree, which many have, all staff have now completed NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care/Diploma Level 3 in Health and Social Care. Our two team leaders both hold the Level 5 Diploma in Health and Social Care. In addition, 2 further staff are currently in the process of completing the Level 5 Diploma also.

A more comprehensive description of the School's practice and beliefs with regard to:

- a) Staff development and training
- b) Duty rotas
- c) Staff establishment
- d) Areas of responsibility

can be made available if required.