



National
Autistic
Society



Vanguard
School

Vanguard School SEN Information Report 2020/21

Last reviewed on: September 2021

Next review due by: September 2022

Vanguard School

Vanguard School is an outward facing school, with inclusion and community engagement at its core. Our specialist secondary school is designed to support students who are able to complete GCSEs and A Levels to thrive and achieve their aspirations.

At Vanguard, we have built a new kind of school, which focused on young people's futures and put skills for life and employment at the heart of the curriculum. Vanguard school is an ambitious, forward-thinking specialist school, which seeks to advance thinking on what autistic people can achieve and how vital their place is in society. We take enormous care to give our pupils the support they need to learn well and to develop their confidence and independence. Small classes, committed and experienced specialist teachers, and a wonderful learning environment all make our school an exceptional place to be. We are encouraging and supportive, and always celebrate achievement. We also ask pupils to work hard, and help them to enjoy the success that this brings.

Our pupils receive an ambitious, highly-personalised education at Vanguard School. We are specialists in autism, and our aim is for our students to lead successful, fulfilling lives in society. Our doors are open to all our families and we want them to feel as much a part of our school community as their children.

1. The kinds of SEN that are provided for at Vanguard School

Our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- Communication and interaction, for example, autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties
- Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy

Vanguard School is a maintained day specialist autism school for students aged between 11-19 years. We offer specialist education to autistic children who have been referred by their local authority through a curriculum tailored to suit their needs.

All students must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that refers to a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Though no longer recognised in the DSM-V, our students' diagnosis may include Asperger's or High Functioning Autism.

Students may also have additional needs, for example obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Students may also have associated needs in the areas of emotional, social and communication and interaction development and/or psychological or mental health difficulties.

In addition, students may have sensory, or physical/motor difficulties. Our students benefit from provision that opens up the breadth of the full mainstream curriculum while recognising that some children need the additional support of our school to manage anxiety arising from their autism, sensory, social and communication difficulties are unable to manage a mainstream school environment.

Our students work at broadly age-related levels of attainment and we anticipate that they will gain a range of qualifications, including GCSEs and A-levels.

2. Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

All students have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), put in place by the Local Authority in which the student lives. These include, but are not limited to, the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Wandsworth, Southwark, Westminster, Lewisham and Merton.

Vanguard School aims to identify the learning needs for each individual student taking into account their barriers to learning and will put in place an appropriately paced and differentiated curriculum to help the student achieve the best possible results. Further information on the admissions process to our school can

be found on the Vanguard School website: <https://www.autism.org.uk/our-schools/vanguard/about-us/admissions>

3. Consulting and involving pupils

At Vanguard School, our students' voices are central to the construction of their own plans and supports.

Through our Quality of Life Framework, students have a key worker, with whom they work with to acknowledge their strengths and set targets. The process is empowering for the young person and helps to consolidate and celebrate the gains they have made. Students are supported to contribute towards and attend their Annual Reviews. Annual Review documentation is adapted to suit the needs of our students.

We also have a school council who make decisions about matters of concern to all pupils.

4. Consulting and involving parents

At Vanguard School parents, carers and families are fully included in the process of working with their children/young adults. This includes:

- Initial visits to school
- Introductory meetings
- Daily home/school book for information exchanges and key messages
- Termly Progress Report with comments from parents, teachers and key worker.
- Annual Review meeting and report
- Parent workshops and training
- Coffee mornings
- Open Evenings
- Parental Representation on the Governing Body
- Parent involvement in changes in school through informal and formal consultations

4. Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

The class or subject teacher will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- The pupil's own views
- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
- Their previous progress and attainment or behaviour
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data
- The views and experience of parents
- Advice from external support services, if relevant

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class, ensuring that all information and data on each student in class is up to date and freely available to review. All members of staff take a proactive rather than reactive stance when it comes to the students' progress or lack of it. Where a student is not making adequate progress, teachers (class teachers or form tutors), the therapy team and parents will collaborate on problem solving, planning support and teaching strategies for individual students.

5. Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

All transitions are well planned for throughout school as children and students move from class to class and phase to phase. Parents/carers always have the opportunity to meet the new teacher and class staff.

Students are increasingly supported in planning for their transition from school to adult life. Our Careers Education Lead works closely with students in school to get to know them and to advise students and parents/ carers on what is available after leaving Vanguard School.

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this.

6. Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class.

High-quality autistic specific teaching is our first step in supporting our autistic pupils and is differentiated for individual pupils, in line with the school's SPELL Framework:

- Structure
- Positive Approaches
- Empathy
- Low Arousal
- Links

We will also provide the following interventions where appropriate:

- Positive Behaviour Support
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy

7. Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

Vanguard School has been specially designed to meet the specific needs of our autistic pupils. The environment is deliberately low arousal to meet our students' sensory needs, including muted colours, wide corridors and sound insulation.

We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson,
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font,
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud,

8. Additional support for learning

We work with the following professional to provide support for pupils with SEN needs not met by our usual differentiated approach:

- Positive Behaviour Support Coordinator
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Educational Psychologist

9. Expertise and training of staff

The professional development of all staff is ongoing and continuous. A wide range of training opportunities related to care, education and developing expertise in the area of Autism are provided both in induction and beyond.

These include:

- An extensive induction programme for new members of staff
- Skill sharing and the demonstration of teaching techniques and strategies organised within the school
- Extensive access to online training
- Professional development sessions and one-off sessions on relevant subjects provided by SEN specialists
- Attendance at courses offered by external providers, accredited and non-accredited, as part of the School's Performance Management process

10. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term using Personal Learning Targets
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after 4 weeks
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews of EHC plans
- Using a transdisciplinary approach, including education, behaviour and therapy teams

11. Support for improving emotional and social development

At Vanguard School, we recognise the importance of good emotional and social wellbeing and understand the impact that poor wellbeing can have on our students' learning and behaviour. Therefore, to best support pupils to develop their social and emotional wellbeing, we integrate our Quality of Life approach into our everyday practice. Each student has a Key Worker, who they identify as being a preferred member of staff. Staff engagement with pupils to build positive meaningful relationships is key to supporting pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. Staff build these relationships by being attentive and responsive, reliable and predictable, anticipating needs and meeting needs calmly and are available to help regulate the child's emotional and physiological state.

The broad and balanced Personal Development and Life Skills curriculum offer effectively contributes to the pupils' learning about themselves, their relationships with others and their feelings.

We have a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

12. Complaints about SEN provision

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the Deputy Principal/SENCO in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy. The school's complaints policy is available on the Vanguard School website: <https://www.autism.org.uk/our-schools/vanguard/about-us/policies>

The parents of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

13. Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

Links to support services for parents and families can be found on the Vanguard School Website.

14. The local authority local offer

Our contribution to the local offer can be found on the Vanguard School website.

Our local authority's local offer is published here: <https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/lambeths-send-local-offer>

<https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/schools-colleges-nurseries/vanguard-school>