

## Summary of Leadership & Management

Ofsted March 2014:

*"High expectations and a strong ethos based on the achievement of each individual student now pervade every area of the school. The headteacher is an exceptional leader and is highly committed to establishing a culture where the love of learning has real meaning and value to the students. All staff are totally committed to the school vision and work collaboratively to 'make every day count' "*

- Leadership and Management is outstanding because every member of the school community from the Governing Body through to the kitchen and cleaning staff is committed to sustaining and improving high quality provision and learning opportunities for all students. The pursuit of excellence is paramount and, as a result, student achievement, behaviour and personal development are consistently improving.
- The new Deputy joined the SLT in January 2016 The Head and the Deputy has a well-established commitment to driving school improvement through a targeted focus on maximising the effectiveness and impact of teaching on learning.
- The school has actively embraced Ofsted's recommendation and continues to develop leaders of learning at all levels across the school by making sure every teacher had targets within their appraisal that promoted and challenged this aim.
- The impact of the school's ethos of "Making Every Day Count' is well evidenced by the very positive relationships between staff, students and parents/carers. Across the school, there is a sense of enjoyment and a happy atmosphere which leads achievement and progress.
  - The school has an established, embedded and extensive process of monitoring and evaluation which underpins a robust programme of performance management and training for staff.
  - Monitoring records and evaluation reports, are now readily available for analysis. As a result, the school is effective in securing an accurate analysis of its strengths, areas of improvements and development priorities and consequently the School development Plan is targeted on need.
  - Through the effective and well established appraisal structures, all staff are encouraged and enabled to undertake continual professional training that is specifically focused on the needs of the students, as well as promoting leadership in learning
  - In addition the school has undergone literacy training to ensure everyone understands phonics. There is a fundamental commitment to monitoring and training. This underpins all development projects and activities. The effectiveness of this approach can be seen in the consistently good progress and achievement of the students. Indeed work complete as result of this and other such training has in part lead to the Deputy Head becoming an advisory teacher for literacy and phonics across Hertfordshire.

- Critiquing and supporting all monitoring and development is the Governing Body. Through their robust and challenging analysis of evaluation reports at meetings and school visits, the Governing Body has established an accurate picture of the school and is able to use this knowledge effectively to hold the leadership and management to account.
- The Governing Body has a firm commitment to succession planning. The school has very successfully trained and supported GTP, NQT and unqualified teachers. Batchwood is part of the TSA (Teaching School's Alliance) and has successfully delivered SEN training to the graduate trainees. Because of the quality of its mentoring and performance management procedures, many of these have chosen to stay at Batchwood in order to develop their skills further. In July 2016 Both of Batchwood's trainee teachers (In English and Music) graduated from the TSA with a grading of Outstanding. In addition to this another member of staff qualified through Herts University with Outstanding in History. Consequently, as staff have retired, the school has been able to call upon a pool of high quality personnel. In preparation for leadership succession, all teachers are given opportunities to take on the coordination of school projects in order to develop their leadership and management skills.
- The Governing Body monitors the implementation of the budget effectively and therefore ensures that the school maintains financial stability. The innovative use of the student premium to part fund residential and day trips as well as 'Inclusion' provisions such as 1:1 Literacy, numerous and well-being sessions has ensured that all students make outstanding progress in relation to Literacy and Numeracy from their starting points.
- With an ethos of constantly developing the impact of the learning experience at Batchwood for the students, the governing body actively supports fund-raising and has supported the development of 'FAB' "Friends At Batchwood" which has raised funds for extra-curricular experiences for the students. It has also developed volunteer helpers who come to school on a regular basis to support particular students. For example, Alan Smith the ex Arsenal and England Footballer as well as Chris Ashton the Saracens and England rugby player comes into school to mentor students in and out of the classroom environment.
- From a very low and ever decreasing baseline, the students develop excellent personal and social skills. The school's ethos of recognising, rewarding and celebrating achievement is at the heart of this and has a marked impact on each student's self-esteem, behaviour and learning outcomes. This is supported by a programme of clubs, where students can transfer and extend their learning in a fun, activity based setting. Additionally, the students are able to engage with their mainstream and other special school peers through the TSA and organised activities.
- The health, well-being and safety of the students are excellent and, as a result, attendance is never below 90% overall. Innovative methods are employed to include absent students in learning for example, the use of my Maths, staff visiting students at home to enable a student to continue to be part of the learning experience and use of robust external provision.
- There are frequent and regular opportunities for all students to engage in physical activities both formal and informal. These are highly successful – as evidenced by the extensive number of awards and trophies earned by the football, athletics and dodge ball teams. Due to the high quality of provision and the commitment of the school staff, where students are reluctant, the school uses resources such as the gym and non-major sports to engage them
- Parental engagement and support is excellent, as evidenced by the consistently positive outcomes from the annual "Satisfaction Survey" carried out over the past four years (in addition to the more recent Ofsted 'Parent View' report which stated that 100% of parents would recommend the school to others.

- A commitment to supported transition into College: the next stage of their education is highly effective for both student and parent/carer. Batchwood has developed a model with Oaklands that was presented at the AoC National Conference as part of the national SEND pathfinders. The school also responds quickly to issues or concerns raised by parents/carers and regularly holds meetings to help them to develop strategies for managing their child at home.
- As part of DSPL we offer outreach support to mainstream schools, we have students from four mainstream schools doing a Btec in Hair and Beauty, they attend on a weekly basis from year 10. We also have had students from the hearing impaired school doing Design and Tech at Batchwood with their own teachers whilst their Design and Tech room was being upgraded. We offer a transition programme where Year 6 students have been identified for transfer to Batchwood at Year 7. This involves the student attending lessons at Batchwood in order to make friends with students who will transfer to the same school.
- The school curriculum is focused on developing essential basic skills. Within this, a wide range of practical and experiential opportunities are provided in order to engage the students in learning and enable them to optimize their skills and knowledge into the local and wider community. For example, we have links with Luton Hoo Estate where a group of students undertake horticultural activities. In addition, we have links with Oakland's College from Year 7 where the students experience a 'taster day' each term. In year 10 and 11, they can choose to spend an afternoon there to gain a City and Guilds qualification in a choice of vocational courses. This prepares them for their 'next steps' when they leave Batchwood. We offer support to the students once they go on to post 16 education. Some return to improve their English and Maths grades as well as coming as mentors for younger students. This has a positive impact on the engagement and progress of the current cohort.
- Three students have enrolled back into mainstream school this academic year with transition planning carried out with the mainstream school to ensure successful integration.

## **Commentary Monitoring**

Ofsted March 2014:

*"Systems for checking teaching and learning are very thorough and form part of effective arrangements for managing the personal and professional development of teachers and teaching assistants. All staff have access to high quality training which is linked to students' achievement, priorities identified in the school development plan and their own professional development. Any signs of deterioration in the quality of performance are quickly identified and immediately addressed with a bespoke package of support and challenge".*

The development activities carried out by the school are an outcome of a detailed analysis of the data collected throughout the school year. Consequently, each project is directly linked to the monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken by all leaders at every level across the whole school.

A wide range of monitoring and evaluation activities take place each year - these include:

- Student achievement and progress;

- Teaching and learning;
- Moderation of student work and teaching plans;
- Attendance;
- Parent View

Formal reports on the outcomes of these evaluations are published and used to ensure that school improvement, performance management and staff development are closely targeted to need.

Additionally, external assessments and accreditations are incorporated into the monitoring cycle - including County Council Reviews and Quality Mark assessments. These include:

- Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of excellence (awarded 2015)
- Leading edge school (Status awarded 2015)
- Healthy Schools
- Anti bullying accreditation (to be re accredited)

Formal reports are written and distributed to stakeholders and targets for improvement are set accordingly. Consequently, the school and its stakeholders have an accurate picture of its strengths and development needs.

We have implemented a significant teaching and learning training programme in order to ensure that all teachers have the necessary skills to evaluate and improve their own teaching and its impact on the students' learning. Within this, teachers have taken part in bespoke training programme relating to developing literacy within the school as well as improving the quality of teaching. As a result, teachers have developed their ability to evaluate the strengths and development needs of their respective curriculum subject. At present the focus of the schools CPD continues to centre on developing "Leaders of Learning" across the whole school at every level. A new AfL structure has been embedded in the school during 2015-2016 to ensure consistency takes place across the school in marking as well.

### **Moderation**

Teaching and Learning moderation is held each term. Teachers have made links with another department in a mainstream or similar special school (Graded at least good) to ensure the achievement of individual students is tracked and moderated correctly.

The Head and Deputy meet with subject leaders to discuss students and whether they are on track to meet his/her challenging target. If they are not, remedial actions are put into place to support the student. For example, 1:1 literacy and numeracy sessions for targeted students to support them in their progress of key skills in literacy and numeracy.

Raiseonline and the Achievement Tables, as well as FFT are used to set targets.

The presentation of the School Development Plan has undergone several revisions over time in order to sharpen its focus on key issues for development. The current plan is categorised in terms of the Leadership functions of "Development" and "Monitoring" and is structured to communicate a clear link between the identified projects. As a result, all stakeholders are clear about the development needs of the school and the impact they will have on learning.

Batchwood School has invested considerable time and energy in developing its provision, curriculum and evaluation activities in order to ensure that all students irrespective of gender, race or disability have equal opportunities to succeed. The achievement of all students and minority cohorts is tracked and evaluated in order to ensure the effectiveness of our teaching in terms of impact on learning. The consistent application of the positive ethos and aims of the school in terms of recognising, rewarding and celebrating student achievement ensures that all students are fully engaged in all aspects of school life.

As a result of the wide range of monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken each year, the School Leadership Team is able to accurately identify and prioritise school development needs. Additionally, as part of our monitoring of teaching, an improvement target is set for all teachers. At the next observation progress towards the target is measured in relation to the impact that the development

has on teaching and learning. This is directly linked to rigorous performance management procedures, where targets are set in relation to student progress, professional development and professional effectiveness.

We are firmly committed to the principle that school improvement is best achieved through involvement in training. The impact of this training can be seen in the improvement in teaching and good student achievement (see separate progress reports).

Staff are encouraged to participate in a wide range of training opportunities relating to the wider curriculum. For example, training in Sweden for the development of Batchwood's Forest School and also training opportunities with the TSA as well as a full in house training. We are strongly committed to the importance and value of quality professional development for all. We are a member Alban Federation Teaching Schools Alliance.

Through this link we offer placements for under-graduate and trainee teachers, for example, we successfully support GTP teachers through to employment. This includes our Art and English teacher as well as two graduate trainees in Food Tech and Music who graduated in July 2014. Graduates in English and Maths graduated from the program in July 2015. In July 2016, Graduates in English, Music and History graduated with outstanding. Additionally, we offer block placements to under graduate students. We offer work experience opportunities to local college students and mainstream school students many of the current staff team started their interest in special education through this route. Additionally, through our links with the other schools both state and independent, we offer work experience opportunities to sixth form students. Two university students base their final dissertation on Batchwood School.

Wherever possible, we utilise in-house expertise as well as professional visitors to deliver quality training for example: phonics, assessment, autism, anti-bullying, Safeguarding, Prevent, attachment disorder as a result of trauma inset. In addition, we offer induction training to all new staff over a period in the Autumn term. In order to develop the skills and effectiveness of the non-teaching staff, we offer training opportunities to all.

Non-teaching staff also update and maintain the high quality displays that are to be found around the school. Additionally, the school is continually evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the paperwork associated with teaching. The aim is to ensure that the planning, record-keeping and reporting requirements are refined in order to reduce the burden on teachers while ensuring maximum impact on learning. For example, in line with Ofsted and HMI advice), the development of our planning for teaching has enabled us to integrate medium term plans with individual lesson plans to reduce the burden on teachers without reducing the impact on teaching and learning as duplication is eradicated.

As a result of the school's commitment to professional development coupled with the provision of excellent resources that have a marked impact on student achievement, the quality of teaching and learning is Outstanding.

The governing body therefore achieves excellent value for money.

## **Partnerships**

The school has developed very effective partnerships with a range of providers and schools. As a result, the students are able to benefit from a variety of high quality opportunities. The impact of these opportunities has been judged to be outstanding.

- As a school we have developed positive links with a number of local mainstream schools and as a result have been able to offer extended curriculum opportunities, within an inclusive environment, to most students. This link extends further into shared staff development and training thus ensuring our staff are at the forefront of educational change.
- Termly professional theatre experiences, delivering a wide range of literature and/or PSHCE themes, are offered to the students in order to support their learning, promote generalisation of learning skills and to encourage their enjoyment.
- We have well established links with a range of local agencies, clubs, charities and companies - such as FAB, Saracens, Arsenal, The Freemasons, Universal Music, The Wicked Cake Company, Gilberts Chartered Accountants, Dales Evans as well as the charity Happy Days. All of these links support the extended curriculum and impact positively on student achievement.

- The rigidity and inflexibility of the Hertfordshire transport policy means we have to pay for transport for the students to engage in after school clubs. We set aside a budget so that the students are able to generalise and extend their learning through activities such as Sport, Lego, Chess, Literacy and Numeracy, Music, Art and Food Tech as well as extra support in core subjects.
- Our involvement in the Sports with other schools has enabled us to offer each year a wide range of quality coaching to the students. The success of this can be seen in the continuing and regular success of our sports teams and the high quality contributions made to various tournaments.

With the school now being accredited with both the Centre of Excellence accolade and designated a Leading Edge school these links are begin to broaden with schools from next door Counties and London keen to establish links.

### **Governing Body**

The governors ensure that all of their work and energy is focused on the impact that teaching and learning has on student progress. They discuss teaching and learning and aspects such as Safeguarding and Child Protection with key personnel. Through this, they are fully involved and receive reports from the Head of Care about aspects of the school's work.

The Governing body meetings take place each term with the SIC (School improvement committee) and Resources sub-committees meeting and reporting back at the Full Governing Body meetings. Consequently, the governing body is well placed to discharge its responsibilities and act as a critical friend to the leadership team.

## **Safeguarding & Behaviour**

The Head, Deputy and a number of governors have successfully taken part in safeguarding and recruitment training. All staff have undertaken Prevent Training.

The Head of Care is the designated Child Protection (CP) teacher and has received relevant and regular refresher training. All staff have undertaken Child Protection training. There are comprehensive procedures in place for the reporting and management of CP related issues. The governing body has designated governors for both CP and 'Safe Recruitment'. The school has developed a Pastoral team this year which has been very successful in resolving issues with students and has had a positive impact.

Designated governors have completed the official safe recruitment training. All governors have received CP training.

The school is fully compliant with the regulations concerning the maintenance of a central CRB/DBS record. As a result, the school's recruitment procedures have been consistently audited as fully compliant with regulations and recommendations. The County DSP makes regular visits to Batchwood to ensure the school is compliant with its duties to Safeguarding students. Staff attend refresher training at school during the beginning of the Autumn term on an annual basis.

The school has comprehensive risk assessments in place and the the Governors responsible for Health and Safety carries out a twice annual Health and Safety audit with the designated H&S coordinator. Outcomes from this audit are acted upon accordingly. The school was audited for Health and Safety by Hertfordshire at the end of summer 2015 receiving an Outstanding grading. The Resources Committee receive and discuss termly reports relating to premises and H&S issues. Appropriate actions are agreed and put in place.

Students are well supported in their personal development through the effective use of the House system and the role of the form tutor as well as the curriculum that promotes British Values and SMSC as well as making students aware of the dangers of radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

The majority of the students have attended at least 3 schools before Batchwood with some attending 8 schools. Teaching effectively caters for different learning styles and individual needs of the students. The students enjoy the activities and want to learn.

Student attitude and participation during formal lessons, informal play opportunities and in enrichment activities such as the clubs, trips, theatre visits etc. are very good because teaching ensures that the students make good progress by matching the curriculum, learning activities and resources to individual needs and learning styles. This is reflected in the achievement/progress results and external accreditations.

Parent View consistently reports that the students enjoy coming to school. Where parents/carers identify an area for improvement, action points are incorporated into the school development cycle. Student self- review and lesson observations show that students enjoy learning and, as a result, attendance is consistently high. All absences are closely monitored by the middle leader responsible for monitoring attendance and alternative provision. Since 2011, attendance has never dipped below 90%. In 2009 when the Head took over, the attendance was at 69%. A formal analysis of attendance is published each year and targets for action are set. Where there are difficulties with persistent absence, the AIO is actively involved.

Innovative methods are employed to engage students in learning if they are absent for example, the use of home visits, email contact and telephone contact with parents to monitor learning.

As a consequence, all students enjoy their education because:

- Training for staff ensures that all students receive good quality of teaching;
- The kinaesthetic, practical activities used to deliver the curriculum coupled with the structured whole school reward system ensure that the students achieve well, experience fun and enjoyment and, as a result, develop a positive self-esteem;

- Friday afternoon enrichment ensures that all students can celebrate achievement. Students often bring work to the SLT or Head of House to share their successes in learning.
- There are extensive opportunities for all students to engage in enrichment and community based activities and the attendance registers show very good and long term commitment/enjoyment. From September 2015, the year 7 and some elder students go to Challenger Troop CIC each week which led to accredited qualifications and supported the students' interpersonal skills and behaviour. This also involved an overnight camp.

Behaviour is outstanding "Ofsted March 2014" because of the consistent application of the school's positive ethos. There is a wide range of highly effective provision for managing the behaviour of students including support plans, rewards, and the learning centre. As a result, our monitoring shows that, consistently over time, lessons are less interrupted by behaviour than previously. However, when needed, effective systems are in place in order to ensure that any issues are quickly dealt with.

The excellent use of the staff to support individual students is very effective in managing behaviour and facilitates immediate and effective action. As a result, students are taught to take responsibility for their own behaviours including making choices and consequences and a range of methods are used to ensure a positive outcome (such as; Reward systems, mentoring and 1:1 support as well as access to 2 counsellors and a psychiatric nurse).

The management of student behaviour at home is supported through the creation and provision of reward schemes. Where appropriate, the school supports parents/carers in their dealings with outside agencies (such as CAMHs and Health). Indeed the school sees this as vitally important and has therefore employed the services of a psychiatric nurse who works one day a week supporting the most vulnerable students and families.

All subjects have a code of conduct devised and agreed by the students themselves. In addition, they are encouraged to develop their understanding of rules and regulations through a range of formal and informal activities such as PSHCE, house competitions and activities, lessons, sports activities, assemblies, music, visiting theatre groups. Through these activities, the students are taught to respect each other and other people's property. We are regularly told that the students, when in the community, are very well behaved and a credit to the school (for example, on a residential trip to PGL, Saracens training, Pantomime and in the local community).

Positive behaviour is celebrated through the school reward system. A significant success factor within this is that the students frequently demonstrate that they are able to enjoy and celebrate the achievements of others as well as themselves. A range of support aids/techniques - such as the House system, volunteer and peer mentoring, encourage the students to develop empathy for each other.

Students are encouraged to express their views, both in formal lessons - such as PSHCE and House meetings - and informal activities, such as at lunchtime or in a 1:1 session with a member of staff or volunteer. Monitoring data indicates that parents feel that the school has been very successful in developing their child's self-esteem and relationships with others. The school House system is an effective vehicle for developing this and most students are keen to represent their class. As a result, the students are able to

consider and evaluate ideas, issues or concerns and many of their suggestions have been implemented - such as the provision of school anti bullying wrist bands with a competition for the best logo chosen by the students.

A range of formal behaviour logs are maintained - for example, in relation to Racial Incidents, Bullying and Physical Intervention. These are monitored by the Head and Deputy. Appropriate action taken wherever necessary. Where student behaviour is considered by school or parent/carer to be an issue, then a formal meeting is held to agree the actions to be taken. As a result of this approach, the student is helped to alter his/her behaviour through a united and consistent approach to the management of it.

### **Personal Development**

The fitness and healthy life styles of the students at Batchwood School has always been a high priority. All students engage in physical activities each week. In addition to timetabled activities (such as PE and swimming) all students are given opportunities throughout the school day to participate in a range of physical activities including Forest schools and gardening. Many students engage in Football during lunchtime as well as matches and tournaments with other special schools. Students go swimming at Harpenden pool throughout the year. The school supports this involvement with a range of achievement awards in order to promote the development of a positive self-esteem through sport and leisure including the Sports Leadership Award in KS4. Additionally, students can participate in a range of activities during Fridays enrichment sessions as well as a termly fishing day organised by the freemasons.

The school kitchen has historically followed a healthy eating programme, which caters for a wide range of dietary needs. Although for budgetary reasons, some pre-prepared food is occasionally offered, most food is fresh and prepared onsite. The students also learn about healthy eating through their food tech curriculum - such as making, smelling and tasting foods from other faiths/lands. The implementation of a poly tunnel over the summer will allow for a more extensive range of foods to be grown on site adding to the already excellent raised garden areas.

The SLT and the majority of staff (on rota) eat their lunch with the students and use this time to promote the benefits of following healthy life styles, as well as talking about hobbies, events and any concerns. As a result, most students have developed their willingness to try new foods in order to widen their restricted diet with healthy options.

For those who elect to have a packed lunch, parents and students are encouraged to ensure that the food is based on a healthy diet. Where it appears that student has an unhealthy packed lunch, wherever possible, staff discuss the contents of the lunch box with the student as they eat lunch. In addition to the above, all students participate in formal PSHCE slots at tutor time that promote the concepts involved within healthy lifestyles. This is extended by enrichment activities - such as the theatre groups - who perform plays that explore issues such as bullying and staying safe. As a result, the students:

- Develop more positive relationships and an understanding to know how to interact appropriately
- Develop an understanding of the importance of rules and the impact of not following them
- Develop an understanding of how their behaviour can have an effect on the feelings of others and that each action has a consequence that they must take responsibility for
- Develop an understanding of the use and misuse of drugs including medication, illegal substances, smoking and alcohol

- Develop an understanding of issues to do with sex and relationships through formal talks and presentations with the school nurse and informal discussions with staff.

All students participate in formal Food Technology lessons. Planning for such lessons utilises a cross curricular approach in order to promote and extend the students understanding of issues concerning:

- Healthy life styles and balanced diets;
- Risk assessment and personal safety;
- The importance of hygiene;
- Personal well- being.

As a result, the students are aware of the importance of personal hygiene in keeping them healthy. In addition to regular hand washing, the students develop their understanding through activities such as showering after swimming. Students are aware of the importance of wearing appropriate clothing for specific activities. They understand the need to wear aprons, changing for P.E. and swimming etc.

Batchwood has invested significant time and money in developing its environment in relation to the students' safety. The site is surrounded by secure fencing and the door to the main school has security key pads to control access. The school promotes a positive ethos in relation to behaviour, relationships and equal opportunities. As a result, students are able to feel secure and safe from bullying and racial incidence. Feedback from parents tells us that they feel the school offers a safe and secure environment for their children. The student: adult ratio at the school enables staff to immediately pick up and appropriately deal with any issues. In addition, the consistent use of risk assessments and support plans, House system and the pastoral support ensures that all students are effectively supported and consequently able to demonstrate their understanding of the importance of adopting safe practices, through a wide variety of practical and leisure activities across the curriculum. For example:

- The use of House assemblies enables students to explore issues re behaviour, social interaction etc. Individual House representatives can then take any concerns to the House meetings and discuss actions.
- Staff have been appropriately trained in relation to the promotion of British Values and an audit of each department's promotion of British Values has been carried out to ensure each department incorporates them into their planning
  - There is a successful uniformed approach by staff to Prevent, anti- radicalisation, sexual exploitation, racism, ethnic diversity and multi-cultural education, physical intervention, child protection and, as a result, ' . Any concerns are immediately investigated and effectively dealt with.
  - Assembly and lessons such PSHCE are effectively used to develop the students' understanding of Prevent, British Values, social relationships, multi-cultural and racism issues to living in a multi-cultural and diverse world.

A commitment to equal opportunities underpins the school's ethos and day to day work. Students are taught in mixed gender groups. However, where necessary, students are grouped differently in order to maximise learning and personal development. For example, ability grouping for English and Maths. In relation to the safe use of new technologies, the school uses the Hertfordshire intranet firewall in order to ensure that all undesirable websites are blocked. Students are taught about internet safety through the curriculum. Parents are advised about appropriate websites and issues re internet dangers through the school, newsletters, website and consultation meetings. At all stages of the school, students are able to develop their understanding of community including their place and role within it through taking part in a wide range of communal activities according to their ability and needs. For example, students know that there are people less fortunate than themselves through involvement in regular charity work. For example students regularly raise money for 'Red Nose Day', MIND and Cancer research.

The school has two minibuses which are used on a weekly basis for educational visits in order to support and generalise their learning across the curriculum. In addition, the students regularly visit the local community by participating in visits to Harpenden swimming pool, local parks and Garden Centres, other schools (mainstream and special). Activities include PE and sporting events and workshops. As a result, they develop effective social interaction and communication skills and are able to transfer the skills learnt in school into the wider community.

The school has a well-established and highly respected record of including students with extremely challenging behaviour who would have been transferred directly to an SEMH independent school. 3 students on roll were from another SEMH school in the County. They all successfully transferred to College from Batchwood post 16. In addition, we successfully integrate students who have been accessing a few hours of education a week before coming to Batchwood. Batchwood have also re integrated 3 students back into mainstream education during 2015-2016.

Through the persistency and consistency of the work we do with these challenging students, they begin to learn effective interaction, communication and skills which enable them to make good progress in their personal development and learning. As a result, they develop the appropriate social interaction communication and work skills that they need to successfully succeed in the school and in their 'next steps' once they leave Batchwood for College or apprenticeships. The students' awareness of the wider world is developed through the formal curriculum. The students are therefore aware of the world and the different cultures within it. They know that different countries often speak a different language. In addition to the formal and informal activities above, the students develop their understanding of British Values, SMSC matters through participation subject areas and through assemblies. Within this, the school meets formally four times a week: Once as a whole school, once KS3, once KS4 and once as a House. Students develop their understanding of a diverse community through these opportunities and, as a result, they have good understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural community.

A wide range of clubs are open to all the students after school irrespective of their ability. Their impact on learning has been recognised and celebrated via the Inclusion Mark with the school being awarded the Centre of Excellence, the Healthy Schools Award and being invited to become a Leading Edge school.

At break times, the students are supported in order to encourage them to interact positively together with a particular emphasis placed on learning team skills such as following rules, taking turns and sharing resources and activities. The older years encourage and support the younger years.

Through its participation in the Schools Sports Partnership, the school has well developed links with mainstream schools and community based resources.

Parents are encouraged to enrol their child in local community groups, such as: cadets, scouts and sporting and drama clubs. Only a few students participate in these. When they do participate, these activities have a marked impact on the personal development. The school's charity 'FAB' and a charity called 'Happy Days' financially support the activities outside school through fundraising.

All students are encouraged to develop the necessary skills to work within a team or small groups. For example, in addition to traditional team activities such as sport/table games etc. being offered, group and whole class teaching is employed in all subjects in order to develop and extend each students' ability to cooperate with others.

All students are encouraged to work independently specialist resources (such as symbols, word books etc.). They engage in work related learning through a range of activities.

All students participate in a variety of school visits from short trips to a restaurant, through to residential trips which enable them to develop and optimize their independence and social skills in the community. These are supported by 'FAB' and 'Happy Days'.

The students participate in a variety of opportunities to develop their ability to follow direction, take turns and make positive choices. For example, Year 7 have a Tea party in the second part of the Autumn term and they have to invite guests and write a letter to whom they want to invite including their old school.

They sell cakes and photography in order to raise funds for a charity or for the school. They operate the in-school Christmas postal service every year.

In Careers, students explore what is involved in a variety of jobs and apprenticeships. They develop a range of skills and understanding about the world and the workplace.

As part of a sustainable environment project, the students recycle paper, cardboard, plastic and garden waste. As a result, they are conscious of the importance of looking after the environment and effectively engage in re-cycling and some engage in gardening activities through land based studies.

As part of the transition preparation for each stage of the students' education, a number of opportunities are delivered outside of the class structure. For example:

- at the end of KS3 Youth Connexions work individually with each student to get a sense of what they would like to study at College
- at the end of KS4 Youth Connexions and the Middle leader discuss the courses available at College for the students for the 'next step'
- Some students in year 10 and 11 go to college one afternoon a week to follow a qualification and to prepare them for the 'next steps',
- some students in KS4 follow an alternative pathway if they will not cope in the formal classroom setting. This is monitored closely by the Middle Leader to ensure they will achieve their chosen qualifications

### **Curriculum**

As a result of effective review and development, the curriculum offered at Batchwood meets all statutory requirements and is fully inclusive because it is carefully matched to the needs and abilities of all the students. Within this, high quality staff development ensures the effectiveness of our curriculum development work where the impact is a curriculum that is structured and 'fine tuned' to the needs of the students.

The primary purpose of the Batchwood curriculum is to develop the ability of each individual student to become a full member of society. Within this, the school aims to give each student the necessary knowledge and skills needed to gain and sustain appropriate employment after their school career. Consequently, all students participate in a wide range of activities that help to develop key skills such as communication, teamwork, decision making, independence as well as Numeracy and Literacy skills.

The curriculum focuses very successfully on Literacy, Numeracy and Personal Development and, as a result, student achievement and progress are consistently good (for further details see Achievement reports).

Curriculum delivery is carefully planned and builds on prior. The school has invested in the outdoor curriculum which has had a positive impact on learning . The grounds have the first Medieval Roundhouse in St Albans to develop Bushcraft skills and resilience amongst the students. In 2016-2017 all subject areas are going to be encouraged to use the outdoors for some lessons within their department.

Planning results in excellent learning, because it ensures that all students irrespective of gender, race or ability successfully engage in relevant and integrated learning opportunities appropriate to their needs, aspirations and interests.

Because the curriculum is focused on individual need, it very effectively supports the personal development of every student. As a result, the students are able to successfully demonstrate their understanding of healthy life styles. For example, all students enthusiastically engage in a range of physical activities every day and drink water. Formal lessons such as PE, Science and PSHCE extend the students' understanding of the concepts involved in healthy living. Because learning activities are effectively assessed for risk (and, where appropriate, significant control measures are put in place to ensure that students remain safe) all students are able to successfully take risks, make decisions and communicate choices within a safe environment. The school's ethos of celebrating achievement reinforces this sense of accomplishment and, as a result, the students feel successful, safe and secure and the negative attitude that they often have in relation to learning caused by repeated failure is reversed.

The curriculum successfully ensures that all students are encouraged to develop the necessary skills to work within a team or small groups. For example, in addition to traditional team activities such as sport, group and whole class teaching is employed in order to develop and extend each student's ability to cooperate with others. Within this, the individual needs of students are effectively addressed via the highly skilled support staff.

Students successfully participate in work related learning through a range of cross curricular activities. For example,

- The curriculum develops students' understanding and use of money via practical experiences such as how much school trips cost and how long it would take to earn the money to pay for them. Once on the trip, they can have the opportunity to spend a minimal amount of money.
  - More able readers take less able readers and listen to them read.
- Fund raising activities are fully integrated into the school and enable the students to develop a range of skills and understanding about the world.

The above bullet points have a significant impact on the students' ability to gain knowledge and skills. In addition, a range of enrichment activities effectively support the development of key skills as well as sporting, creative and technology skills.

Registers of attendance show that the students enjoy participating in enrichment activities and clubs and the positive impact of the activities can be judged in relation to the outstanding progress that the students make.

The school utilises the local and wider community to support learning through the use of educational visits as well as visits from experts such as Firefighters, Police, Doctors, Army, Professional Sportsman, TV presenters, Business and Music industry visits.

Students also effectively extend their learning through visits to a range of local and wider community resources including Cathedrals and churches, Synagogues, Mosques, parks, restaurants, garden centres, Forests, London, Universal Music, residential and day trips, fishing, sporting tournaments, theatre, theme parks, trips to London

Through the above, the students develop an excellent awareness of the community and their place within it.

Each term, the students enjoy having visitors in school such as theatre groups, farm visits, dancers and musicians from Africa as well as teachers, graduates and college placements. Students are enabled to participate in national events such as Red Nose day, Sports Relief in order to extend their awareness of themselves within the wider community.

As a result, the students have a clearer understanding of the wider community. Despite the complexity of their challenging Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties, the students make outstanding progress.

The exciting new development for the school is the Outdoor Curriculum. The school has built the Medieval Roundhouse in the school grounds as well as the poly tunnel to develop the students' love of the natural environment. This was a whole school project involving all students and staff in conjunction with Ecovril, Knebworth Estate and the woods and volunteer group close to the school.

The continued strong vision for the future development of the school is that students leave Batchwood with firmly established positive values and foundations for subsequent learning and are therefore well prepared for the next stage of their education regardless of whether they enter the school in the phonics phase or they enter being able to aspire to Progress 8.

In summary from the above, the Leadership and Management of Batchwood is outstanding because it constantly develops new leaders and continually thinks outside the box in order to develop and sustain an outstanding school in what can sometimes be extremely challenging day to day circumstances. Practice in all key areas does not stand still.

The new Deputy has developed an outstanding tracking system to monitor attainment and progress addressing 'life without levels'. New outstanding systems have been developed to monitor departments' teaching and learning by the Head and Deputy. In addition to this, a new approach to Pastoral Care has been developed by creating a clear Pastoral Team that will report to the Head and Deputy.

The future of Batchwood in 2016-2017 is exciting under new Leadership to build upon the developments of 2015-2016.