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Special Resource Base For children on Autism Spectrum POLICY

Formally adopted by the Governing Body of:	Redcastle Family School
On:	
Signed by Chair of Governors: <i>Mrs M Eade</i>	
Last updated:	January 2024
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A warm welcome to our Special Resource Base at Redcastle Family School (RFS)

Introduction:

Our Resource Base is known as Moonbeam.

Moonbeam Special Resource base is part of the SEND Local Offer of support and provision made by Norfolk County Council for children on the Autistic Spectrum.

Autism is a spectrum disorder characterised by difficulties in four areas:

- Social Interaction
- Communication
- Flexibility of thought
- Sensory difficulties

(These areas are further detailed in Appendix 1)

Initial admissions from January 2021 will be available for children from years 1 to 5 inclusive.

Who is this pack for?

This pack has been written to try to answer some of the questions that you and your child may have about joining us at Redcastle Family School. We would be more than happy to answer any further questions you may think of, as we are keen to establish strong communications from the outset and fully respect your wishes to want the best for your child. We share that commitment. Our special resource base has been designed and is purpose-built for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. It is staffed by experienced staff who are committed to working to integrate your child into our school and also into the wider community.





We have provided a Contents page to assist you in finding relevant information. Please contact us should you need help with answering any further questions that you may have.

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Our school Library – we were successful in being awarded a Foyles Foundation grant of £5000 towards more fantastic books for our wonderful Library.

Admission Criteria

Your child’s current school should be the initial point of contact with ourselves at RFS should you wish your child to be considered for a place in Moonbeam. If your child is not in school, then your Education Health Care Plan Co-ordinator will make us aware of your interest in a place.

Your child’s home school will be aware of the key information required for completing an online referral for a place in a SRB. This information is likely to include their Education Health Care plan (if they have one), evidence of their current attainment and progress along with other specialist’s reports such as an Educational Psychologist’s report.

Norfolk Local Education Authority manages all admissions on our behalf to the SRB and can be contacted at:

Tel: 0344 800 8020

Email: admissions@norfolk.gov.uk

Website: Admissions at Norfolk County Council

All relevant SRB staff will attend regular Panel meetings across the county, chaired by a local authority officer. Each child referred to the panel for placement will be discussed in detail. The decisions from these meetings will be communicated by the SRB placements team once finalised, with yourselves and to both your child’s home school and their proposed SRB.

Visits

A warm welcome awaits you and your child, as we are always happy to show prospective parents and carers around our school. Visits help to get a feel of what our school is like – please call us to book a mutually convenient appointment on 01842 752239 where you will be directed to the SRB. Alternatively, we can be emailed at: office@rfs.norfolk.sch.uk

Should you wish to visit out of school hours we will be more than happy to try and accommodate such requests as we realise that this may be easier for your child to make an initial visit when the school is closed to other pupils and possibly a little quieter. We would advocate visits happen before the application is made.

We should be able to host any visits after November 1st 2020.



RFS: An Autism friendly school

Along with all RFS and Moonbeam staff championing the positive contribution that any children in Moonbeam can make to the wider school community, children across school will be given age appropriate guidance in understanding autism through assemblies and class discussions. RFS has a clear Anti-Bullying policy and will not accept bullying in any form. As we develop an understanding of your child and their needs, we will select other pupils as Autism Champions to buddy up for playtimes and other activities. We will also conduct autism competency audits to ensure that all staff are appropriately trained. It is our goal to make RFS Autism Friendly in its wider school environment. All staff have received training to upskill them in their understanding of Autism and will continue to receive appropriate training.



Within Moonbeam are two Classrooms, a sensory room known as Tranquillity, and a shared teaching space Apollo. We have a further room, which can be accessed when necessary for your child to calm in called Orbit. Within Moonbeam, all of the children will use two different spaces, Sparkle and Stellar. There are toilets and also a shower room if required in the Resource Base. There is a playground area specially designated for Moonbeam to support your child with working on their gross and fine motor skills and to give them opportunities to use the additional outdoor learning space for sensory regulation activities, such as sensory circuits. Children also have access to the main playgrounds and large field spaces. Lunch is eaten at tables and may be eaten in designated rooms should the main dining hall be unsuitable for your child. Your child can have a dinner ordered and paid for through our online system, or bring in a packed lunch. Adults will sit with your child to model good table manners and to model appropriate social communication behaviour. Where appropriate some children may eat in the school dining hall. A sensory garden will be developed to encourage further interests and will be accessed by all in Moonbeam.

Tranquillity

Sometimes it may be that your child struggles to regulate their emotions and as such may need to spend some time in quiet spaces to regulate. Through an approach known as Zones of Regulation, we will be developing each child’s ability to indicate when they are becoming dysregulated including accessing Tranquillity’s relaxing space if needed.

Orbit

It is our responsibility to keep all children and staff safe. Should we become concerned that your child presents a risk to itself or to others then they may be supported in moving to this area. We appreciate the special difficulties experienced by some autistic pupils. In order to maintain the safety of all pupils and staff, staff working in Moonbeam are trained to use safe handling. Staff will if needed, support, de-escalate and use restrictive physical intervention in line with Norfolk Steps. Every effort is made to avoid this happening. We have on site Norfolk Steps Tutors to regularly review any safer handling that has taken place. Only staff approved to use Norfolk Steps will ever support children in this way. All instances will be recorded in a log.

No child will be left on their own. Discussions around how to make better choices will be part of the restorative approach before a child returns to the classroom. You will be informed if your child has needed to access Orbit.



Curriculum

Pupils who attend the SRB at Redcastle Family School will all have access to a broad, balanced curriculum differentiated for each child. Priority is given to Communication and Social Interaction Skills with explicit teaching of appropriate Social Behaviour and Life Skills.

Staff promote an atmosphere of trust and high expectations from their detailed knowledge of each child through assessment and careful observations. Staff are also experienced in working across the Primary age range and so are skilled at setting tasks with an appropriate degree of challenge.

Physical activity, including sensory diets, is promoted, as there is clear evidence of the particular benefit of this to pupils on the autistic spectrum. Pupils will have exercise routines tailored to their sensory needs. Access to a range of equipment such as trampolines will support your child's physical and sensory needs.

All of our classrooms and timetables are carefully organised to give a clear structure to the day, with teaching organised in different ways: sometimes 1:1; small group or whole class teaching within the Moonbeam rooms or in their respective year group classroom. Learning areas will be provided to enable your child to focus on their learning. We will support each child to gradually integrate into other classes, so that in time a significant part of their school day may be spent within mainstream classes. PE will generally be completed within your child's year group.

To support your child when they are working within other classes:

Children will have their own portable passport, which will include a visual timetable to try to minimise stress and promote learning. This will be reviewed daily to ensure that we respond quickly to any identified changes. In their portable passport, they will also have a Zones of Regulation chart to enable them to be able to indicate how they are feeling. Included within the passport will be their Personal Learning Plan, which will include their strengths, possible triggers for behaviour and targets in Maths, English and a personal target. These will be linked to our school curriculum progression and the Autism Progression Framework. Suggested phrases to help your child will also be recorded for other adults to share.

Swimming Lessons

Swimming is offered to children in Key stage 2 at the local Breckland Leisure Centre in Thetford. It would be our intention for your child to join their respective year group wherever possible. The arrangements for this will be reviewed at such a time as we return to swimming. (Covid restrictions currently prevent us from accessing a pool).



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

It is compulsory for RSE to be taught from September 2020, however we will be in discussion with you about what is right for your child so that we select resources for what is developmentally appropriate and will be happy to share the resources with you to achieve this.

Our Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) is available via the school website.

School Trips

We endeavour to bring our curriculum alive by taking the children on school trips. A risk assessment is completed for every school trip to ensure that your child can where possible join in with these valuable enrichment opportunities. In order to best prepare your child we will use photographs or video footage to help manage their expectations.

Tracking your child's progress

It is important to all of us that we support your child in making progress, this will consider academic targets but importantly will include targets around your child's social communication and interaction along with developing life skills.

- We will monitor progress in social communication areas by using the Autism Education Trust's Progression Framework along with the Norfolk Assessment Pathway.
- We will monitor academic achievements using the school's Skills Curriculum Progression Grids across all subjects along with formal assessments three times a year.
- In each area of learning, we will gauge children's understanding and establish their next steps and how to achieve these.
- We will additionally communicate informally through the Home –School Book and other agreed methods of communication such as phone calls.
- Each child will receive an annual report in the summer term along with two other updates.
- We will share outcomes of any Personal Learning Plans involving you and your child in their next learning steps.

We will develop your knowledge of the school's ethos and curriculum by:

- Providing regular updates
- Providing you with a parent -friendly prospectus (this booklet)
- Showing you and your child around our school
- Involving you in the life of our school through agreed access days

Requesting feedback on school procedures and practices by:

- Asking you through questionnaires, about different aspects of school life.

We believe it is important that your child recognise that they are part of a wider community, locally, nationally and internationally, and so we support various fundraising occasions such as Children in Need, Sports Relief and Comic Relief. We participate in events such as World Book day too. Examples of ways we have played our part in the community include planting trees and singing in a local Residential Home. We strive to include everyone as part of the Redcastle Family and we will also celebrate National Autism Month in April to continue to celebrate every child as unique and valued.

RFS behaviour policy (Please see the Behaviour Policy on school website for further details)

At RFS, we aim to:

- Enable every child to succeed as independent, enthusiastic learners.
- Create an atmosphere where each child is valued as an individual, enabling them to develop a positive self-image, self-discipline and respect for others.
- To provide a safe and secure learning environment, which enables children to continue to treat others with understanding and respect through a positive and consistently, applied approach to behaviour.

At RFS, we have four core vision statements that will achieve these aims:



Every child has the right to receive the best education for them and it is our vision that we should “give every child the skills and self-belief to succeed.” Our goal for all children at Redcastle Family School (RFS) is for them to become as independent as possible in the primary stages of their education. In order to achieve this, we recognise the importance of developing child-centred learning and varying our teaching for those children who will best thrive with an adjusted, more flexible approach in teaching. As parents and carers, you will have much to contribute towards your child’s



learning and the best strategies to achieve this. We have outlined some of the steps we may use within your child’s time at RFS to ensure that this is a happy time for them.

Our four core vision statements are underpinned by three very simple but all-encompassing rules. Each child will be supported in understanding our school rules so that they can have a safe, happy and successful experience at RFS.

Golden Rules

We aim to foster an environment in which everyone feels happy, safe and secure, with pupils being actively supported to become positive, responsible and increasingly independent members of the school and wider community.

Our Golden School Rules are:

- We always follow instructions.
- We take care of everyone and everything.
- We show good manners at all times.

A range of rewards is offered: children receive house points for meeting the four core visions and all contribute towards a house point competition. The houses are Pegasus (Blue), Dragon (Green), Griffin (Yellow) and Phoenix (Red).

Within Moonbeam, children will be further motivated to achieve their learning goals by ensuring that their activities are short focused tasks and that their personal interests are considered. Teachers enjoy giving well-earned verbal praise. Our weekly attendance rewards result in classes collecting £10 per class to save towards something of their agreed choice. We have weekly Head Teacher’s Awards acknowledging where children have excelled in the four core visions. We focus on praising effort in meeting personal targets and social skills. We love celebrating!

Challenging behaviour

It is important that we support all children in Moonbeam with learning strategies in order to regulate their own behaviour for them to enjoy a happy and safe life. Zones of Regulations will be our primary approach in achieving this. We clearly also have designated spaces within the classroom along with Tranquillity and Orbit spaces to support your child. We will be in regular contact with you to discuss any behaviour concerns that we may have. We will be pleased to share our work at school so that we can develop a consistent approach between home and school. (See Orbit p.5 for further details).

Working in Partnership with you and your child

At RFS, we are committed to involving parents and carers in your child’s development. We recognise that partnership working produces the best and most sustainable outcomes for your child, ensuring that we meet the needs of the whole child by providing a quality education and care. We are



supported by a strong Governing Body including a number of Governors with a background in Special Educational Needs.

Partnership with parents and carers

We aim to achieve the following through working in partnership with parents:

- Ensure that we develop good two-way channels of communication so that information is openly and appropriately shared in the interests of your child. We will agree on a mutually convenient time to share regular updates. We will further support this with a Home -School Communication book.
- To look for ways to enable parents and carers to visit the SRB to see their child in the setting (subject to restrictions such as Covid 19).
- To respect the voice of the child and their parents and carers in their expectations and aspirations. On starting at RFS, we will invite you and your child to share your views about your child’s interests, likes and dislikes, preferred approaches and your strategies.
- Ensure that we will keep you updated on educational matters and teaching approaches such as developing communication skills through Signalong or Picture Exchange system, Thrive, Zones of Self-Regulation, Forest Schools and Sensory Circuits.
- Liaise with other professionals who may be providing specialist support to your child such as the Occupational Health Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist and Children’s Services.
- Work with you and your child’s new school to transition your child towards Key stage 3 in their respective setting or other necessary school transfers.

How will we deliver this?

- By being friendly and approachable, returning calls and being available to see you.
- Contacting you promptly when we have any concerns about your child.
- Letting you know about any First Aid your child has received and contacting you about any significant injuries or those, which require monitoring such as Head Injuries.
- Trying to provide information in a parent-friendly way.
- Communicate a balanced view of your child’s progress in school –sharing achievements and any concerns.
- Keep you informed through newsletters, our school website, home-school books and text messages.



- Invite you to events such as school sports day and other events such as Reading Workshops.
- Support you when meeting with other professionals.
- We will be involving you in Education Health and Care Plan reviews and formal parent/ carer teacher reviews and recording and sharing information so that any agreed actions are followed through.
- Setting and reviewing individual targets linked to your child’s EHCP.
- Seek your permission to contact other agencies who could provide further support to your child.
- We will keep confidential records of medical needs and home circumstances and any special educational and emotional needs in connection with your child.
- Individual Care Plans will be agreed and regularly reviewed with you where necessary. When your child has needed help after any toileting accidents, you will be contacted to inform you by the agreed method.

Pupil Well-Being

- Our commitment to children’s well -being is demonstrated by our delivery of programmes such as Thrive, and Sensory Circuits. If you are concerned about your child, you are encouraged to contact the school office, who will direct you to the relevant person. Often this is likely to be the SRB Lead Class Teacher, who may need to call you back if they are teaching. Thrive promotes the mental health and well-being of children and a number of staff are trained to deliver this programme.

Transport

According to Local Authority guidelines, children attending our SRB should live within a suggested 45 minutes’ travel time by car.

Moonbeam pupils, because of their general need to travel further to school, will travel by taxi with an escort. They may share a taxi with some of the other pupils in Moonbeam; the Local Authority makes taxi arrangements. Moonbeam staff will meet and greet the taxis in the school playground and then guide your child into the Moonbeam area. Taxis are organised by the local authority but we will make every effort to develop relationships with drivers and escorts to make sure that journeys are running as smoothly as possible.

Morning snack and water bottles

Recognising that many of the children may have had a long journey to school, we will engage each child in sensory circuits on arrival and then offer an early morning snack. This will be done to respond to the fact that the children may have eaten breakfast very early and as an additional way of developing their social skills. This will be a light snack such as toast or fruit and will be shared in



Moonbeam. You are welcome to send a healthy snack in with your child if this is preferred. Unhealthy snacks cannot be consumed at school.

We ask you to provide a named water bottle for your child to drink from throughout the day.

Activities and clubs

We will provide some lunchtime activities to support your child’s development, on most days they will use their playground space for their break time. Should your child wish to attend after school clubs you will need to make your own arrangements to collect them at the required time. We will in discussion with yourselves arrange for members of Moonbeam team to support at after school activities.

Uniform

In order to integrate your child with the rest of the school we will ask you to purchase a uniform, which matches each year group.

Years 1-5 inclusive all wear a royal blue RFS logo sweatshirt or cardigan. Year 6, wear Navy blue school logo sweatshirts. Other required uniform includes PE T-shirts in the colour of your designated house. We hold a stock of uniform at RFS. The office team will discuss the necessary items with you. Our school holds a stock of uniform and items such as Book Bags.

Any sensory clothing issues can be discussed with us prior to starting so that we agree on clothing that your child is comfortable to wear.



Outdoor learning

We believe in the benefit of fresh air so please ensure that your child always has a waterproof coat in school. We are proud to have on site a trained member of staff who leads Forest Schools.



When participating in Forest Schools we will ask that your child wear old warm clothes with plenty of layers under a waterproof coat along with wellies or old boots. (They each have a locker to store personal items in).

Homework Policy

We recognise that many of the children that attend Moonbeam will have an additional journey time from home to school, along with often finding the school day challenging. We will ask that you read

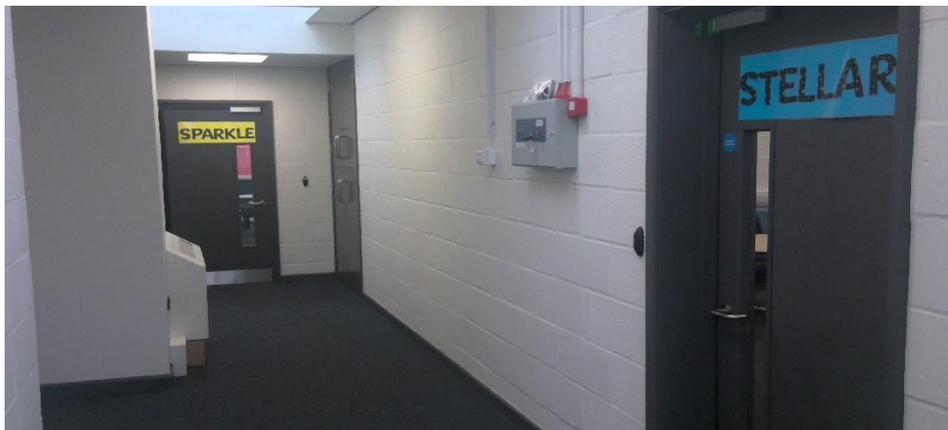


with your child where possible for which they will receive house points but all other homework can be agreed with yourselves. We also realise that you have specific routines and activities that you will be sharing with your child and see these of real value in supporting the development of their social skills. A project that you are working on together at home counts as homework.

Children not completing homework will not receive any sanctions.

Feedback to develop our expertise

The SRB Terms and conditions of placement can be accessed via the Norfolk schools’ website. By being open to suggestions and feedback from you and your child, we will continually strive to provide each child at RFS with the best possible outcomes. Any concerns that you may have about Moonbeam Resource Base should be made in the first instance to the SRB Lead Teacher, or to a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the school. Mrs Denty is the Deputy Head and is also responsible for ensuring that children’s Special Needs and Disabilities are met. There is a member of the Governing Body dedicated to ensuring children’s Special Needs are met and if necessary, they will investigate any complaint further. Mr W. Smith is the governor named as responsible for Special Needs at Redcastle Family School for all pupils including those in Moonbeam SRB.



Summary of characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Appendix 1

Summary of Autism Spectrum Disorder Spectrum Disorder or simply ‘autism’ is widely understood to be a ‘social order’ disorder or disability. Its features include limited social, emotional and communication skills, and a tendency to engage in obsessive and repetitive behaviour. Other features may include cognitive delays, rigid behaviour and Sensory Processing Disorder, which will be

discussed later. Individuals differ widely in terms of how the characteristics of ASD are presented. The origins of ASD are not clearly understood.

Difficulties in Social Interaction

Autistic people can seem indifferent to other people. They can have difficulty in developing relationships and in understanding and reacting appropriately to other people’s feelings or behaviours.

Communication difficulties

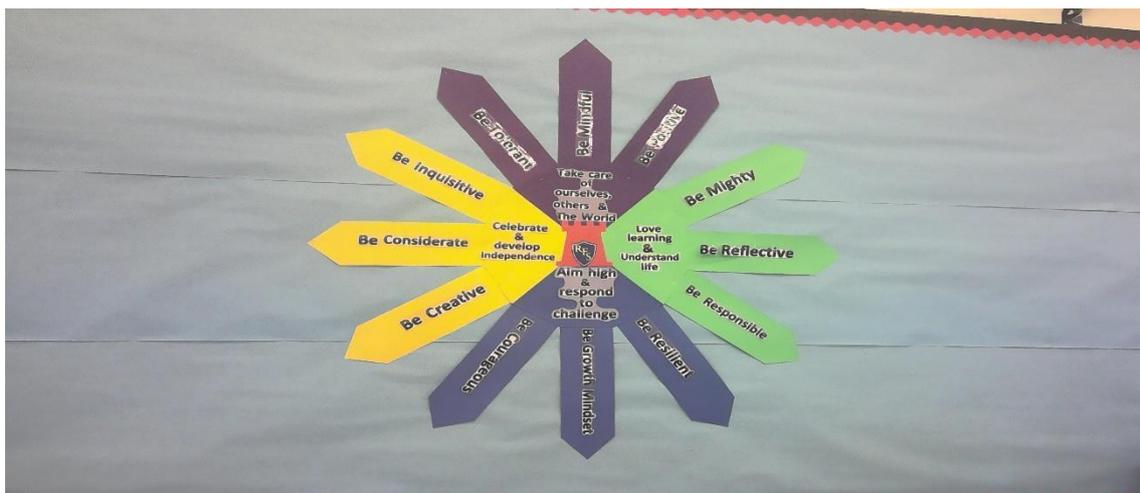
Autistic people may have difficulty in understanding the nature of two-way communication. For some children speech may be slow to develop and some never acquire it. Autistic children can find it hard to understand verbal and non-verbal communication. They can have difficulties in expressive language.

Difficulties in thought and imagination

Autistic people may be rigid in their thinking and have difficulties in imagining another point of view. As a result, they can find the world an unpredictable and scary place. They can become obsessed with particular objects or interests at the exclusion of everything else.

Sensory Difficulties

Autistic people can experience intense sensory difficulties. Examples of which can include some pupils finding noise a particular difficulty and can become distressed when in a noisy environment. Other pupils may have visual difficulties when the environment around them is very visually stimulating. Typical difficulties include hypersensitivity to touch and the feel of certain material, aversion to certain smells and aversions to certain tastes and textures of food.



Our core values are constantly referred to, as we believe strongly that a child’s attitude to their learning makes a considerable difference in how successful a child is.



Appendix 2

Our policies are available through the school website, which can be found at www.redcastleschool.org.uk

You may be particularly interested in some of these policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 3

Operational routines

Quality of Education

<u>Impact</u>	<u>Next steps</u>	<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Expectations are shared with all staff, local schools and community	Best practice promulgated to Mainstream colleagues such as Zones of Regulation training ,sensory breaks.	Summer 2024 Ongoing	SLT, SRB Lead Teachers
	SRB Lead daily briefings, sets staff weekly objectives including monitoring training needs and progress. Review daily outcomes.	Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers
	Mainstream staff to complete sessions to familiarise themselves with children and practices eg shorter input and chunked input. (Moonbeam staff to cover in Mainstream to release staff whilst we have additional staff.	Summer 2024	SLT
	Expectations of SRB children are shared with all staff including TAS working in classes.	Ongoing	SRB Leads Phase lead Teachers



	Moderation of SRB children’s books to be made against peer’s learning, NAP evidence supports evaluation of each child where not accessing mainstream environments/NFER term;ly assessments.	Easter 2024 Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers
	Monday calling activities and PE specifically are reviewed to ensure that the sessions are pitched for the appropriate children.		

<u>Impact</u>	<u>Next steps</u>	<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Feedback is actively sought to measure impact of interventions from parents ,mainstream staff	Continue to establish dialogue with parents and Carers re needs eg massage course. Support families with ways to improve home support for learners .	Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers LA
	Survey designed to seek feedback from families and children.	Summer 2	SLT/SRB Lead Teachers
	Activities and learning opportunities are designed so that staff are available to conduct 1:1 interventions.	Easter 2024	SRB Lead Teachers.
	AET baselining , along with all other baselining, is in place showing the importance of social and academic progression .Evidence exists that this informs ILPs and interventions being put in place.	Easter 2024	SRB Lead Teachers



	This involves children and parents and progress is shared.		
	Teaching is reviewed to ensure appropriate adjustments are made eg Colourful Semantics, Maths Laptop provision, scribing .	Easter 2024	SRB Lead Teacher

MILESTONES

Measurement impact of Interventions

- Relevant interventions are pursued by SRB Lead teacher such as Drawing for Talking which will have a positive impact on our learners and request necessary funding from the LA.
- Sessions are created to enable seamless support and cover :eg Sensory Circuits/ Thrive etc Explore Thrive in detail to establish resources with greatest impact and create a library of interventions .
- Assessment is used to inform planning (including social skills) and happens on a routine basis ,AET/ Norfolk Assessment Pathway .
- Survey is developed and feedback analysed.

Development and training of staff

<u>Impact</u>	<u>Next steps</u>	<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
SRB staff are trained for maximum benefit of the children	Continue to liaise with LA to influence a menu of development resources for SEN staff to support children and ensure that these are as cost effective as possible to allow for staff growth/turnover eg videos /self help packs .	Ongoing	SLT /SRB Lead teachers
	All interventions are clearly summarised for staff with clear directions to implement with any child.	Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers



	Create a training and development log for all staff as needs become more complex and also to assist with identifying refresher needs etc Factor in safe handling (Norfolk steps) as part of SRB /Bases model .	Easter 2024 - log	SRB Lead Teacher
	Parental feedback is reflected upon to highlight any areas of staff development . The survey is analysed for further information.	Summer 2024 Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers
Specific training needs	Coaching on the production of social stories for more staff to produce.	Easter 2024 Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers
	Management of behaviour and restorative approaches for all staff to be developed further . Richard Smith Senior EP to advise empathetic approaches to staff.	Ongoing Summer 1	SRB Lead Teachers EPSS
	Review current Moonbeam timetable to incorporate Moonbeam based children into wider school curriculum and train staff as needed for these subject areas.	Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers
		Ongoing	SRB Lead Teachers /SLT

MILESTONES

- Expectations are agreed,monitored and evaluated by SLT and Lead Teachers.
- Interventions are monitored using Baseline and progress reviews for all areas : Norfolk assessment Pathway ; Autism Education Trust ; Thrive; Talkabout ; Speech and Language.
- Reduced incidents on Eduspot are noted .
- Staff are clear regarding expectations and confident in the delivery of interventions and learning .



Quality First Teaching as a focus :

Quality first teaching is the key way to make a difference to Moonbeam children’s attainment levels	SRB Leads to ensure all requirements of SRB roles enable them to focus on teaching where possible -pastoral care to be passed to other key workers where possible - administrative tasks are passed on where possible	Ongoing	SRB Leads /SLT Pastoral Care Manager Office team
	SRB Leads to model small group teaching to ensure appropriate support is provided.	Ongoing	SRB Leads/SLT
	SRB Leads to ensure that marking and feedback follows wider school approaches and informs next steps for learning .	Ongoing	SRB Leads/SLT

- Front line staff are equipped to communicate placements available. Impact considered on support staff as SRB /Base needs grow and contact with necessary agencies increase:eg taxi,transport, EHCP coordinators, and enquiries.
- Pastoral support is requested where necessary.