

# Theale C of E Primary School Autism Resource

Age Range: FS – Year 6



## Overview

Theale Primary's Autism Resource opened in 2005 and we moved to our new school in September 2020. The Resource aims to enable pupils with Autism and related challenges to access mainstream education alongside their peers. At Theale we put the pupils first, supporting them to achieve the best they can in all aspects of their education. We strive to identify their talents and support them to develop these alongside their peers so that they become ambitious, resilient individuals embracing their Autism and having a positive outlook.

In line with our school vision, we strive to provide the best academic, creative, spiritual and emotional education for the pupils in our care. We support both pupils and their families so that everyone has the opportunity to grow spiritually, socially, morally and culturally and has the courage to act in a principled way.

## Eligibility Criteria

The Resource caters for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism which has a significant impact on the pupil's learning and development, and which requires specialist adult support in order to access the curriculum, and for the pupil to make academic and developmental progress.

Theale Primary's Autism Resource can cater for pupils who

- *Meet the LA's statutory assessment criteria for an Education, Health and Care Plan with a Primary Need of Autism*
- *Have an Autism diagnosis which has a significant impact on learning and development*
- *Have difficulties associated with an Autism diagnosis which affects access to the curriculum and requires specialist teaching and support – for example, pupils might experience a high level of anxiety, extreme lack of flexibility, significant difficulties with social communication, or a high level of sensory integration difficulties*
- *Have a level of ability within the range expected in a mainstream school*

- *Have sufficient language ability to access the mainstream curriculum*
- *Can access the mainstream curriculum, but may need it presented in a highly specialised and flexible way and with opportunities for consolidation, including pre-learning and over learning*
- *Requires intensive, specialist teaching and support to achieve the outcomes identified within their EHC Plan, this includes*
  - *A highly personalised programme to support needs associated with an Autism diagnosis within a flexible approach to adapt to the needs of the individual*
  - *Access to a high level of support from teachers experienced in working with pupils with Autism*
  - *Access to appropriate advice and support from speech and language therapy and occupational therapy*
  - *A high level of support across the curriculum to include appropriate individual intervention*
  - *The possibility of access to an alternative curriculum*
  - *An environment and ethos of awareness of the needs of pupils with an Autism diagnosis within the wider school, and where staff have had relevant training*

## How much time does a child spend in mainstream classes?

Whilst we aim for pupils to be included in all aspects of academic and extra-curricular activities including school trips, this process is very flexible and individualised, depending on the needs of the pupil. Some require a gradual transition from individualised teaching to small group work before joining peers for favoured lessons and building up time gradually. We would expect pupils, as they progress, to spend 80% or more of their time in their mainstream class



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## What support is provided specifically by the provision and how is this organised?

The resource coordinates the best support and provision to achieve the outcomes of the EHC Plan, allowing pupils to make the best possible progress with regard to their academic, social, moral, cultural and emotional education and well-being.

## What qualifications/experience do staff in the provision have?

The Resource is led by a qualified teacher with many years experience in primary education. In addition to the Teacher in Charge, there is an HLTA and a team of Learning Support Assistants who are trained and have experience in providing 1:1 learning support.

## What training and support are offered to mainstream staff?

Support and training are ongoing and are dependent on the needs of individual pupils and staff. Visiting health and education professionals also provide training as required. The Resource also provides a range of resources to enable access to classes and to support achievement and progress, such as sloping desks, wobble cushions, sensory integration support, fidget resources and a calm space when needed.

## Are parents/carers charged for the provision?

There is no charge, the provision is funded by an EHCP plan.

## How do I apply for a place?

All places at the Resource are allocated by the SEN Panel, not via school admissions. Parents and carers of potential pupils living in West Berkshire are welcome to contact the school to arrange a convenient time to visit. We offer a visit day once a half term. If a place in the Resource is requested, the request would be considered by the SEN panel and a decision would be made in line with the Code of Practice. If a placement is agreed it will be named on your pupil's EHCP plan.

### Contact details:

Teacher in Charge: Cathy Pullan  
Theale C of E Primary School,  
Englefield Road,  
Theale, RG7 5AS

Tel: 0118 930 2239

Email: [cpullan@theale.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:cpullan@theale.w-berks.sch.uk)

Further information can be found at:

[www.thealeprimary.co.uk](http://www.thealeprimary.co.uk)

Or Via the West Berkshire Local Offer: <https://directory.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/directory/service.page?id=B4b0GBIzbFo&localofferchannel=4>

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *What does a resource offer that mainstream can't?*

The Resource offers extra support in addition to that provided by a mainstream school, which may include a calm environment that can be accessed whenever it is needed, access to therapies to support sensory integration, anxiety and self-regulation. Experienced and trained staff can support each pupil individually according to their needs. Therapies include weekly horse riding at Newbury's Riding for the Disabled, Attention Autism 'Bucket Time' in addition to bespoke speech and language, occupational and sensory integration therapies as recommended.

### *Will my child stay here or go back to their previous school eventually?*

Once a pupil has been admitted to the Resource, it is likely that they will complete their primary education at Theale. This provision is reviewed annually and changes in placement are discussed if appropriate. At the end of their primary education, pupils move on to a suitable setting in relation to their needs.

### *What transition process do you have?*

Once a pupil has been accepted for a place in the Resource, the Resource staff will begin admission arrangements including liaison with the feeder school, parents/carers and other professionals involved. A transition will be drawn up and shared with parents and the current school. A transition book is provided, which is a social story explaining the transition process and addressing questions of concern, including photos of significant people and places. For those children moving on, a similar process will be implemented with the new school.

### *How do you manage behaviours that challenge?*

As all pupils are individuals, bespoke support is given in regard to difficult behaviours. At Theale, we use a therapeutic approach when supporting pupils at difficult times with the aim of empowering them to manage and achieve their best in terms of their choices and behaviours in line with school policies. The Resource provides space and resources, and experienced, trained staff who can help individuals to understand and develop the skills needed for successful learning, emotional regulation and social interaction. This ensures that they can take part fully in all aspects of school life and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

### *Won't they miss their friends?*

In the Resource, we are very much a family looking after each other. Pupils are supported to develop social skills, shared play skills and friendships within the resource initially. As they join their peers, with adult support, for social times and learning opportunities, we facilitate playground games and encourage a wider circle of friends who understand them and their needs, accepting them for who they are.