



The Island Project School

**An independent special school dedicated to teaching pupils
with Autism aged 5-19**



Prospectus

Jerrings Hall Farm, Tanworth Lane, Shirley West Midlands, B90 4DX

Tel: 01675 442 588

www.theislandproject.co.uk

Carol Howe - Proprietor

Jacqui Walters-Hutton - Proprietor and Trustee

Sarah Gallagher - School Principal and Company Secretary

Welcome to The Island Project

Introduction

The Island Project School was established as a specialist independent school designed to provide an appropriate education for children and young adults diagnosed with autism and associated communication deficits. It is founded on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) with the pupils' needs at the centre of all planning. The School can provide education for pupils from age 5 to 19 years of age.

The Island Project School puts the needs of its pupils first. Our teaching approach is learner-centred, and our principal focus is enabling access to learning for those with difficulties associated with autism who cannot access traditional modes of education.

The School is currently based at Jerrings Hall Farm, Shirley and has access to one and a half acres of outdoor teaching space.

Who we are

One of the major benefits of The Island School is its specialist team. Our multidisciplinary team includes:

The Leadership Team

Our **Senior Leadership Team** is made up of the School Principal, Education Director, Welfare, Safeguarding and Safety Director and Project Director. Contact details can be found on our website.

The Education Team

Behaviour Analysts who work with pupils to identify behaviours, support planning for access to the curriculum and reduce barriers to learning.

Speech and language therapist (SaLT) who supports learners to develop their communication and social skills

Occupational therapist (OT) who helps pupils to manage sensory issues and develop functional life skills

Specialist Teaching Staff who work with pupils to ensure their curriculum (including communication targets and sensory diets) is delivered effectively and with specific focus on each pupils needs.

The Administrative Team

A dedicated **support and administrative team** ensure our School runs smoothly and is well resourced.

It is our priority that the team of adults around your child are the very best they can be. To achieve this we invest significantly in a wide range of training and continuing professional development for all staff.

Vision and Purpose

Our aim is to:

- teach pupils the knowledge and skills to build confidence and enable them to reach their full potential leading to as independent a life as possible;
- provide a safe learning environment together with a learning experience that is communication focused and offers stimulation and challenge. We have a strong focus on life and living skills, and teaching pupils' independence;
- provide a breadth of curriculum opportunities to develop the individual pupil's capabilities to the full;
- foster the ability of the individual to make relationships, to better communicate with a wide range of people and to encourage the ability to make personal choices; and
- maintain and improve each pupil's physical abilities and to develop their understanding and awareness of the world around them.

Ethos

The Island Project School believes that:

- All pupils should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Pupils diagnosed with autism can learn effectively if they are given appropriate structured programs which address their deficits and build upon their strengths.
- All pupils have the right to aspire to the highest standards attainable and that their achievements should be recognised and praised.
- All pupils should be helped to take responsibility for their own lives and be enabled to live as independently as possible.
- All pupils should be encouraged to make decisions and speak for themselves through any means of communication available to them.
- All pupils, irrespective of their disabilities, have the right to participate in the community in which they live.

We believe School should be a rewarding place of fun and learning where building good relationships and a sense of community is fostered. School should be a place where everyone is valued and has equal worth and where everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

Our Curriculum

Education Policy

The School aims to address the key areas of the National Curriculum incorporating AFLS.. Each pupil has an individualised core curriculum which includes

- English and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) including Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

The School employs a range of teaching strategies, ABA, PECS and as appropriate speech and language therapy, sensory diets, occupational therapy. Full use is made of any appropriate interventions or techniques to help individual pupils to communicate effectively, acquire knowledge, develop skills and access the curriculum. The stages of the pupils curriculum targets may not correlate with the pupils' age and pupils may have differing levels of ability across different subjects, individual curriculum planning will reflect this. Each curriculum plan will be devised by the School Education & Therapy Teams.

All pupils also have the opportunity to experience educational courses (including TUTE, ASDAN and topic specific external qualifications as appropriate) to achieve accreditations and qualifications.

Staffing ratio of 1:1 and the space provided by the School building allows for the construction of highly specific programs of work to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. The aim is to build on the strengths of each individual pupil and address their deficits in the most effective manner. Continual monitoring enables parents to receive regular feedback on the pupil's

progress and receive advice on maintaining consistency between school and home.

The core teaching method on a 1:1 ratio is designed to ensure that pupils are working effectively and retaining the knowledge they acquire, whilst increasing the opportunities for working in pairs and small groups. A wide range of activities, appropriately differentiated and specifically aimed at developing social interaction and the ability to cooperate with peers are offered. Emphasis is placed on activities which develop and acquire information in a group situation and respond accordingly. These opportunities are also used to deliver aspects of the curriculum such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside general topic work in a way that is meaningful to children with social and communication differences.

We work to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world in a way that is comprehensible to them. This is achieved by modifying the subject matter embodied in the National Curriculum and applying various teaching strategies which are proven to motivate and stimulate pupils with autism. All strategies are supported by a full range of visual aids and prompts specifically designed to enable a pupil to structure their learning and perceive their own progress.

The School produces teaching materials which allow teaching to be delivered and differentiated for pupils based on their specific needs. A range of IT is available to assist in teaching and learning, including access to computers, tablets, augmented communication and other devices.

A full range of creative subjects are offered across topic sessions covering History, Science, Geography, art and Music.

The School building has been chosen to provide good space and facilities for physical activities both indoors and outside.

The convenient access to the local facilities and countryside, offers scope for outdoor work as well as access to the local community.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The Island Project School does not have any religious affiliations and will welcome pupils of all faiths and all ethnic groups. The entry criteria reflects the School's focus and area of expertise and therefore the only requirement for a prospective pupil's special education needs is a primary diagnosis of Autism.

The School creates an environment where pupils understand right and wrong and differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The School promotes an understanding of responsibilities to others and to society.

Careful preparation, communication focus and constant appropriate reinforcement to convey these concepts are fundamental. The Education Team makes use of a variety of media and means of communication to develop awareness of social and cultural practices; this includes visits to libraries, cinemas, concerts, places of worship and historical sites.

Access to the local community is a key part of preparing for adulthood. We believe that every pupil should have the chance to leave the classroom and experience enriching opportunities in the world outside. In this way, they learn the vital social skills needed to become active and responsible members of society by:

- meaningful learning through real-life, hands-on activities

- improving pupils' capacity and motivation to learn
- developing vital social skills in the community
- improving qualities such as resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

Whilst most community visits are funded by the School, a small charge may be made for larger trips. Visits to any venue will be arranged with careful preparation and detailed consultation to ensure that the pupils can access the visit in a safe and appropriate manner.

Consent for community visits will be requested annually.



Educational and Welfare Provision

All staff members are trained on a wide range of areas and issues which may arise from a diagnosis of Autism. There is a programme of continual staff development and on-going training. The School aims to be knowledgeable in topics, which have a bearing on improving the education and well-being of pupils with autism. This involves extensive in house and external training, attendance at conferences, holding seminars, using the internet to access worldwide information and sharing our knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Supervision and assessment in the School, together with the high pupil/staff ratio, ensures that the development and progress of pupils is under constant review. Consistent daily monitoring allows any areas of concern or problems to be picked up quickly and addressed.

Parents have access to appropriate staff members and to information about their child. Parents are asked to contribute to regular discussions concerning their child. The School believes it is essential that parents are closely involved in their child's education programme and they contribute information from home to assist in target setting.



Language and Communication

The School's pupil group are children with a diagnosis of autism, many with significant language and communication difficulties. All staff are required to undertake Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) training and attend regular monitoring sessions, alongside a range of Speech and Language led strategies and training.

Improving language and communication is a major focus of the School. It is recognised that the pupils within the School will have a range of language and communication ability. This is reflected in individual education plans, careful assessment and the development of communication strategies for each individual pupil.



High staff ratios mean that in 1:1 sessions new communication strategies can be implemented and new vocabulary can be introduced. In group work the differentiation of topics will include the pupils' communication on an individual basis.

Post 14 and Post 16 provision has an emphasis on preparation for adulthood and offers opportunities for pupils to attain accreditation or qualifications on an individualised basis.

The School aims to support all pupils for whom English is not their primary language.

Keeping our pupils safe

All staff at The Island Project School have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of our pupils.

We take seriously our responsibility to safeguard young people at risk. We have designated safeguarding leads and robust practices in place to ensure pupil safety.

The Island Project School has two designated safeguarding leads: our School Principal and our Welfare, Safeguarding and Safety Director.

All of our safeguarding policies can be found on our website.

Operation Encompass

The School participates in Operation Encompass which is a project run jointly between schools in the West Midlands, and West Midlands Police

Under the terms of Operation Encompass, West Midlands Police will report to schools, prior to 10am on the next school day, when a child or young person has been exposed to, or involved in, any domestic incident

Operation Encompass will ensure that a member of the School staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to receive the information and liaise with the police. The information is supplied in confidence and

enables the School to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children or their families, who have been involved in, or exposed to, a domestic incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils and we believe this will be extremely beneficial for those involved. The Key Adult for the purposes of Operation Encompass, is the School Principal.

Health & Safety

Island Project School gives the highest priority to health and safety matters, including security of the building. All external doors are fitted with security locks and a visitors identification procedure is in place. Every effort is made to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils.

Staff members are appropriately first aid trained and there is a designated medical/sick room. Parents must provide contact details for emergencies and will be alerted immediately if a member of staff has any concerns about a pupil's health.

Parents will be asked to provide the School with medical history for each child and keep the School informed of any concerns they have about their child's health or well-being.



Parent and carer support

We are keen to support parents and carers and encourage communication directly with School to discuss any issues, or concerns, share information or to speak about your child's or family needs.

If our pupils are to make good progress socially and academically, parental participation and engagement are essential. There are frequent formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to feel supported and engage with us as a school community.

These include:

Evidence for Learning is updated weekly and provides parents with a snapshot of their child's learning and engagement across the week.

Annual review This formal review of the pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan is an opportunity to review progress towards the outcomes set out in the plan and set new targets for the year ahead.

A visual Learning Journey will support our termly progress reports.

Celebratory events where parents and carers are invited to celebrate the achievements of our pupils, e.g. Christmas Enterprise, School Open days



Admissions

To be eligible for admission to The Island Project School pupils must:

- Have a primary diagnosis of Autism
- Have an Education, Health & Care Plan (or “EHCP”)
- Have an agreement from their Local Authority. All places are Local Authority placements, The Island Project cannot offer places except in consultation with the Local Authority.
- Be of the appropriate age with the appropriate skills and behaviour profile to fill the available place.

Prospective parents may send a copy of their child’s EHC Plan to the School if they need advice on the likelihood of admission.

If a child meets all the criteria, parents will be advised. They should then contact their relevant local authority to request placement.

Any approach for placement has to be made by the relevant Local Authority. Upon formal consultation, the School will review the current pupil cohort to look at whether:

- a space is available with the relevant cohort
- the impact on existing pupils

If it is felt that placement may be suitable, the School would respond to the Local Authority confirming that a space may be available, but any such placement would be subject to assessment. If the local authority agrees to the assessment, the Education team will carry out an assessment prior to agreement for a formal offer of placement with the local authority.

If the local authority agrees to placement, pupils can be admitted at any point during the academic year.

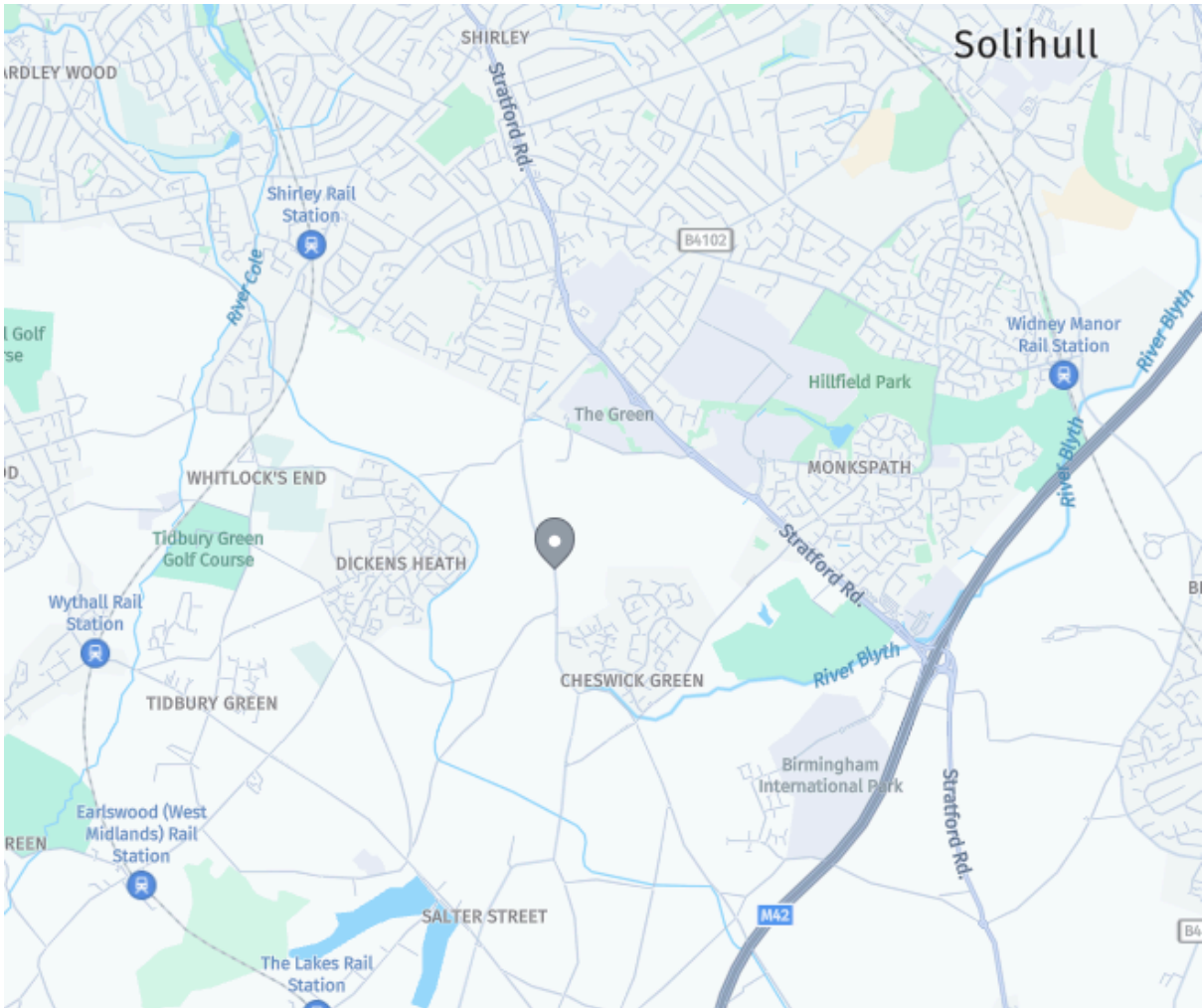
Following confirmation of placement by the Local Authority, a transition plan will be drawn up. This is based entirely on the needs of the pupil to ensure that access is successful. Transition is usually planned on a phased introduction to school over a number of weeks or months, dependent upon the individual pupil.

Access to Information

Copies of all the School’s policy documents and supporting information are available on the website or on request.

Parents are able to view all information held on their child at any time. Arrangements should be made with the School Principal to access this information.

School website www.theislandproject.co.uk



Contact us

The Island Project
Jerrings Hall Farm, Shirley,
West Midlands B90 4DX

Tel: 01675 442 588

Email: admin@ipschool.co.uk

Website: www.theislandproject.co.uk

How to find us

Bus

There are direct transport links from Solihull town Centre.

Bus routes that serve Jerrings Hall are A8, A4, A5, A7.

Train

Our nearest train station is Whitlocks End which is approximately 2 miles away

Travelling by car

We have an on-site car park for staff and visitors.