



Saxon Mount School



For children and young people who have a range of Special Educational Needs

Welcome to Saxon Mount School



Foreword: Headteacher Amanda Jagot says....

It is a real pleasure to welcome you to Saxon Mount School, where we offer young people with a range of learning difficulties including autistic spectrum disorder and associated speech language and communication difficulties, a caring and secure educational environment. Our pupils enjoy coming to Saxon Mount and we work hard to ensure they receive all the support they need to be successful learners.

Our Vision

Our vision is to ensure that all of our pupils, regardless of their starting points or previous experiences, have opportunities to develop their independence, resilience and self-confidence to achieve, so that they are able to live happy and fulfilling lives both at Saxon Mount School and beyond.

Values

Our pupils are valued as individuals and given the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our personalised approach provides the right kind of care, support and intervention that enables learning and promotes independence.

Our belief is that our pupils come first. It is our job to ensure all our pupils have the tools to equip them for the next stage of their life at school or beyond. We strive to provide an exemplary educational experience and to be ‘more than a school’ for our pupils and their families. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and professionals because we know that this is the best way to ensure our pupils can be successful.

Raising aspirations

We expect all pupils to engage in learning and behave well, so that they are able to make the best possible progress in their learning. We aim to break down the barriers to learning that our pupils encounter and we support them by equipping them with the skills needed for an independent life beyond school. We are ambitious for what our pupils can achieve and we try to ensure they receive the best support possible.

Proud

All members of the school community are proud to be part of our school. Pupils are happy to be here and they make the most of the excellent opportunities available to them. Our school staff team are highly skilled, dedicated and passionate about educating pupils with a wide range of special needs. They are committed to ensuring the best opportunities and outcomes for each child. We believe this pride is demonstrated in everything we do and we are immensely proud to welcome visitors to our school to see and hear about the work that we do.

‘The Executive Headteacher and Headteacher lead with warmth, compassion and a relentless ambition for all pupils and staff. Their unwavering pursuit of the highest standard of education and welfare for all pupils has led to marked improvements across the school!’ OFSTED 2017.

‘The pupils at Saxon Mount exhibit excellent behaviour and attitude to the school, the staff, and their work. It would be easy for visitors to assume that this is simply a reflection on the pupils themselves, something which is undoubtedly true. However, a closer analysis of the experience and records of these pupils in their previous schools points to a wide range of serious issues:

- *Exceptionally poor attendance*
- *Very poor experiences*
- *Poor relationships with other pupils and staff*

Parents who in many aspects have given up hope of anything like a normal educational experience for their child.

What visitors, parents, pupils and teachers now see is pupils who are within an outstanding educational culture of support and development. This is one where pupils are able and encouraged to take ownership of their future. They enjoy a culture of care, commitment and a relentless pursuit to be the best they possibly can.’ EXTERNAL ADVISOR REPORT 2019.

Home school partnership

We recognise the importance of developing close partnerships with parents/ carers to ensure all pupils are able to achieve their full potential. We value the link between home and school and we work very hard to involve you in every step of your child’s learning and well-being. ClassDojo is used to connect teachers, students and parents. Tracking real-time updates on student progress and communicate classroom activities. We encourage parents/ carers to be as active as possible in supporting their child’s learning and we operate an ‘open door’ policy which welcomes parents/ carers at any time.

Pupils and their families are very well supported when they start at Saxon Mount, whether in Year 7 or during Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4. Although pupils often join us with low levels of prior attainment and often some difficult experiences in their education so far, we support them so that they can be happy and successful at school.

Get in touch

Please come and visit our school to meet our staff, see our facilities and experience the welcoming and supportive atmosphere that makes Saxon Mount such a special place to learn. I know you will be impressed by the quality of education and care we can offer your child, as well as the learning environment and resources available.



Executive Headteacher of Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust, Richard Preece, says.....

Welcome to our wonderful Trust.

Understanding

We are very proud of the work we do to support and challenge children and young people at Torfield and Saxon Mount to be the best that they can be. We understand the needs of our pupils and the difficulties they face, as well as the difficulties many parents and carers will have encountered in order to secure a place in a special school.

We also understand that a special school is not where some parents/carers want their child to be placed for the duration of their school career, and in these cases we always do our best to support and reassure the families with whom we work. We are always ambitious for our children and young people to become as independent as possible. Our aim is that our pupils will be as successful as possible in their learning, social and personal development.

Improving standards

We constantly strive to improve standards in everything we do and we aim to provide consistently high quality educational experiences for all of our children.

Next steps

Finally, we aim to raise aspirations for children and young people, enabling them to be confident and successful in their next step in education or training and in their preparation for adulthood and we genuinely try to ‘go the extra mile’ to support these transitions. This is an area of our work of which I am most proud.

Welcome to Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust.

Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust

The Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust was established in October 2014 and is the accountable body for both Torfield School and Saxon Mount School. Both schools cater for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, including autism, language and communication difficulties and complex learning difficulties. Jointly the federation caters for around 250 pupils aged 4-17. The schools also support local mainstream schools and colleges in their work to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We have offered Outreach support and training to mainstream school staff, transition programmes for Year 12 students at local colleges and as a Trust, we aim to continue to build our reputation as a centre of excellence in our field.

Although Torfield and Saxon Mount work closely together in a number of areas by sharing resources, expertise and strategies, they remain separate schools with their own distinctive ethos and values.



School day: settling in

Children begin arriving on site from 8:45 and there are staff on duty in the playground at this time, to greet them and assist the transition to their tutor rooms. The school day starts at 9.00am. There is a morning break of 15 minutes and a lunch break at 12.45pm – 1.45pm. Our school day ends at 3.15pm.

Transport

The Local Authority may provide transport between your home and school. To ensure the safety of our pupils, escorts will travel on all minibuses and taxis. Where pupils are not eligible for Local Authority transport, the school may provide transport, if needed.

Uniform

The wearing of uniform is an essential part of being a pupil at Saxon Mount School. We want children to develop a sense of belonging to our School community. All children are expected to wear school uniform.

School meals

Children have the choice of either a hot nutritious meal from our school meals service, or bringing a healthy packed lunch into school. We are committed to ensuring that children eat healthily and a varied menu is provided, with vegetarian options. Salads are also available each day. For those children who are eligible, free school meals, including wraps and baguettes are provided. School staff can support parents and carers with information and in completing application forms.

Transition

Saxon Mount School has developed very effective practice in preparing pupils for transition to the school. Those joining in Year 7 receive a number of taster visits, supporting materials and opportunities for parents to meet with school staff and discuss their child. We also provide a summer school programme in the holiday prior to Year 7 starting. Those that join outside of September in Year 7, which can often happen, also receive an individually planned integration to school, with opportunities to visit and familiarise themselves with the school and to meet key members of staff.



What will I do in school?

You will study all the subjects in the National Curriculum.

As reading is so important, we make sure that you get lots of help, and we start most days off with reading activities.

We have small classes with about 10 pupils to a teacher. This means that there is always someone to help you. We make sure that all the work you do is planned especially for you.

We also reward you when you have tried hard, produced good work or behaved really well. You can earn reward points, and when you have enough, you will get a prize or could even be voted 'worker of the week'.



Confidence boosted

Nicola and Matt feel Saxon Mount has transformed their lives because Erin is now safe and happy at school. Nicola says: “We don’t have to worry about Erin every day now because we know she is being looked after well. We have watched her become more confident since starting at the school. She talks enthusiastically about her friends and what she’s been doing and we have had good reports about her from the staff.”

Primary school struggle

“Erin had attended a mainstream primary school where she struggled a lot because they couldn’t accommodate her needs. When I went in to ask for more help for her the head teacher would behave as though I was trying to get more than she needed,” Nicola says.

Falling behind

“We knew from when Erin was very young that she had things wrong with her medically. She had an EHCP plan before she

even started school. The school were given the funding for her but did not put in place everything she needed. When she started school, she was 18 months behind and when she left, she was three years behind. She missed a lot of school because of having to go into hospital frequently, but was not given enough help when she was at school.

Anxious time

“Eventually I had to take Erin out and home school her for about six months because she was being bullied by another child and it was not being dealt with effectively by the primary school. She was suffering from anxiety about going to school and I was at my wits end at times because she was unhappy.

Happy children

“We went to look round Saxon Mount as we knew she wouldn’t thrive in a mainstream secondary school. I was amazed at how calm the atmosphere was and how happy all the children were. I sat down with the head

Erin is learning at last and has become more confident thanks to the capable staff at Saxon Mount School

Nicola and Matt live in Hastings with their daughter, Erin, aged 12.

Erin has delayed speech and language and health issues that cause her to have prolonged stays in hospital, which has affected her education.

teacher and told her everything about Erin and she didn’t flinch once. By this stage Erin had zero confidence in her own abilities.

Great start

“We had a virtual tour of the school because of Covid 19 and Erin was amazed and excited when she saw all the playground equipment. She attended a summer holiday club at Saxon Mount and really enjoyed it and was perfectly calm when she got on the transport to go on her first day. She came home shattered, but was very positive and talked about the friends she had made.

Expert staff

“The children are taught in small classes by teachers equipped for everything, who can deal with anything. Saxon Mount has changed our lives dramatically because even if Erin has to go into school wearing a catheter, we know the school will be able to deal with it. All the staff are brilliant. Erin is now achieving a lot and coming home with certificates she has been given as rewards for

good work. It is such a relief to us as parents that she is finally in a place where she can be herself and be happy and I am finally starting to relax,” Nicola says.

Academic improvement

“Her speech and language have improved and she talks happily about what has happened during the school day and the banter she has had with the teachers. She used to get frustrated with Maths but now she can cope with it better. Her writing is improving and she enjoys doing Science, Cookery and PE. Words cannot express how grateful we are to the staff at Saxon Mount. Since Erin started at the school everything has changed for us as a family for the better.”

Children say

Erin says: “Going to Saxon Mount has made me more confident.”

Curriculum: confidence and independence

Promoting independence

One of our core values is that we aim for all of our pupils to be as independent as possible in their learning and development. For this reason, the school is organised in a carefully structured way that promotes independence, confidence and preparation for life beyond secondary school. For example, following transition into Year 7 we plan the curriculum so that a higher percentage of curriculum time is spent in Year 7 classroom bases. By the time pupil's move into Year 8 and 9, they are happy and confident enough to move independently around the school in order to access a wider range of teaching areas.

Smaller class groups

All of our classes are smaller than those found in mainstream schools and we have a higher number of staff available to support pupils. In addition to this, we have three smaller class groups for children with higher levels of learning difficulty and additional needs. Pupils based in these class groups have access to additional learning support. They are also able to join larger classes when it is appropriate for them. Sometimes pupils join the smaller class groups for a shorter period of time, depending on their needs.

‘Pupils are supported and stretched in a positive and caring environment. As a consequence, pupils want to be in school and parents / families know that their

children are safe and happy.’ External advisor report, 2017

Learning Skills

Learning at Saxon Mount is organised to meet the wide range of learning needs of our pupils. Our curriculum allows children to learn and to demonstrate progress over time. All of our pupils leave Year 11 with high quality, relevant qualifications which allow them to access a wide range of courses and opportunities when they leave Saxon Mount. Our aim is that pupils are well prepared to build upon their achievements at school when they enter college, training or employment as they approach adulthood.

In KS3, all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Our staff deliver this to pupils using a range of strategies and resources to ensure all of our pupils’ can learn effectively.

Our personalised curriculum in KS4 is designed to reflect the needs and interests of the pupils. Therefore our offer varies each year. Our dedicated staff team ensure that we deliver high quality qualifications at a range of levels to ensure all pupils are well catered for.

Key Stage 3 curriculum overview

Maths, English, Science, Art and Design, Drama, Computing, PSHE, PE, History, Geography, Music, RE, Design and Technology, Food Technology, Citizenship and Careers.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Overview

The Core Curriculum:

- English, Maths, Science, Computing, RE, PE, Citizenship and Careers Education.

With opportunities to take the following qualifications:

- GCSE: English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Combined Science
- Entry level: Science, English, Mathematics
- Digital Literacy

The Optional Curriculum includes:

- GCSE: Geography, History, Art, PE
- BTEC: Hospitality, Sports Award, Construction, Creative Media, Performing Arts, Life Skills, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Arts Award and Health and Social Care.

‘Pupils benefit from a carefully developed curriculum that meets all aspects of their educational needs. Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum regularly to ensure that it is always best suited to the needs and interests of the pupils currently in the school. As a result, pupils enjoy their work in lessons and make strong progress academically, socially and emotionally.’ OFSTED 2017.



Developing communication

We know that all of our pupils experience difficulties with communication. This can impact on interaction and learning so opportunities to develop skills are provided throughout our curriculum. Makaton is used, where appropriate and visual supports are provided around the school. All pupils are supported and staff work closely with Speech and Language Therapists to develop resources to support pupils’ communication.

‘The extremely positive relationships between pupils and staff reinforce the culture and ethos of the school. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Almost without exception, in classes and around the school, pupils display exemplary conduct. They are well mannered, respectful and considerate to each other, staff and visitors.’ OFSTED 2017.

Spiritual, moral, social, cultural education (SMSC) and Citizenship

SMSC education and Citizenship is evident in all areas of our broad and inclusive curriculum. The opportunities we provide at Saxon Mount, ensure that pupils are well prepared to positively engage with life in modern Britain. We have a responsibility to encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We take this responsibility seriously and we recognise that sometimes our pupils can face particular difficulties related to their special educational needs.

‘Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key priority for leaders. Pupils show respect and tolerance for each other, especially through the range of opportunities that they have to experience different faiths and cultures.’ OFSTED 2017.

Work related learning, enterprise and careers education

WRL, enterprise and careers education are embedded into the curriculum throughout the school. This allows pupils to explore a range of career options and has supported pupils in making sensible choices post 16.

Work experience opportunities are available for all pupils in Year 11 who would benefit from this opportunity. This has had a significant positive impact on pupils’ views on employment.

‘The school ensures that career and work related activities are embedded into the curriculum. Saxon Mount School is fully meeting the Quality in Careers Standard, through Investor in Careers and everyone involved in the CEIAG programme should feel proud of the contribution they have made to its success’ Investors in Careers Assessor 2022.

Home learning and support

Home learning is considered to be an integral part of teaching/learning activities at school and this extends opportunities for pupils to practice their newly learned skills. So that parents are aware of the homework that is set, the school uses a web based Portal Satchel. This allows parents to receive notifications of homework set and when it is due to be handed in.

Help offered

Please always ask if you need help with home learning. Our staff are available to provide on-going individual support in all aspects of home learning including support to ensure your child is safe on the internet.

Sport and Physical Activity

Pupils enjoy a wide variety of sporting activities, games and clubs. We aim to develop agility, physical co-ordination, fitness, confidence, enjoyment and participation through physical activities. The school encourages all children to participate in some form of sport or physical activity in order to develop an appreciation of teamwork, a respect of and tolerance of the abilities of others and an awareness of opportunities to enjoy fulfilling leisure activities. Importantly we want to encourage pupils to make healthy choices and develop habits that will help them to live healthy and fulfilling lives as adults.

Specialist support

Appropriate interventions, including curriculum support, social and communication and speech and language support are offered to pupils who would benefit from it. This may be in-class support, small group work or intensive individual programmes delivered in blocks of time. Pupils who require Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy or Occupational Therapy as part of their statement or EHCP may receive this on site from NHS staff

or trained school staff. School staff work collaboratively with visiting therapists to ensure best practice is embedded in supporting pupils in class. Regular training is provided so that school staff can deliver therapy programmes effectively.

The National Autistic Society (NAS) accreditation (2016) observed ‘a whole-school approach in providing an excellent ASD friendly environment and for teaching strategies to be employed that are highly effective for all pupils.’

Moving on

By the time our young people leave school, they are able to achieve in a number of areas, ranging from GCSE and equivalent qualifications and vocational qualifications, to life skills awards which demonstrate increased independence. Young people also have opportunities to participate in work related learning and they are well prepared to make the transition into education, employment or training when they leave Saxon Mount. We have an excellent track record at transition in preparing children to move successfully into FE colleges, apprenticeship and training. We recognise that the transition to adulthood can be another significant challenge for our pupils and their families. Parents, carers and pupils often maintain contact with the school after their children have left us. We are really proud of the achievements of our pupils beyond their time at Saxon Mount and will always offer support to past pupils if necessary.

Enriched curriculum: trips and visits

Learning outside of the classroom

At Saxon Mount School, learning outside of the classroom is recognised as an essential way of bringing teaching and learning alive across all areas of the curriculum. Our own experience and wider research tells us that learning in a wide variety of settings increases pupils' levels of academic, personal and social achievement, motivation and their ability to transfer learning from school to the wider world. Of course, we are also keen to promote participation in the wider community and to support our pupils in their preparedness for life outside of school.

The pupils at Saxon Mount gain a huge amount from these experiences, which have included visits to:

- The Science Museum in London.
- The De La Warr Pavilion.
- Winchelsea Church.
- Summerfield's Sports Centre.
- Canterbury Cathedral.
- The Brighton and Hove Albion training ground and Amex stadium.
- Battle Abbey.

School Residential Trips

Pupils have four opportunities to participate in residential trips during their time at Saxon Mount. These are extremely popular and motivating trips, which support developing independence and encourage pupils to participate in a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities with their friends.

Visitors

Although we actively encourage opportunities to learn off site, we also ensure that learning opportunities come to us at school. A range of visitors are invited into school to support our curriculum, for example: Community Police Liaison Officers; My Future Starts Here; Youth Employability Service; National Citizen Service; Young Enterprise Advisor; local employers; religious leaders, musicians and artists.



Liam's life has been turned round since starting at Saxon Mount School thanks to the attention he has received from the caring staff

Gemma and Robbie live in St Leonards with their children, Megan, aged 21, Brandon, aged 17, Liam, aged 12, and twins, Dexter and Preston, aged seven.

Liam has learning difficulties and sensory processing disorder. He joined Saxon Mount in 2020.

Happy at school

Gemma and Robbie have seen an amazing transformation in Liam since he started at Saxon Mount. "Almost immediately he was like a different child," Gemma says. "We have been reassured that he is making good academic progress and as a family we have all seen the progress he has made in other ways since starting. Now, when he comes home, he talks about school willingly and he will read to us, which he never did when he was at primary school."

Intimidating environment

Liam had attended a mainstream primary school and was in a class of 32. Gemma says: "Although the school tried their hardest, they just could not cope with Liam's additional needs. Because his social skills weren't very advanced, he struggled to mix with the other children and he found the level of noise really intimidating. He could tell the other pupils were doing different things from him and this definitely affected his confidence.

Summer School fun

"When he started at Saxon Mount in Year Seven, the teachers said he was at the Year Two level in his education. We had sometimes felt when he was at his primary school that he was going backwards rather than making progress. Fortunately, he had a good transition from primary school to secondary school because he attended a summer school at Saxon Mount for three days, which he really enjoyed.

Brighter mornings

"Life is now so different for us as a family because Liam is happy at school at last. We used to have a struggle to get him out of the house each morning to attend his primary school, but he is now happy to go off in his taxi to Saxon Mount. He enjoys going to two afterschool clubs now he is at Saxon Mount and he would never go to any when he was at his old school. He now enjoys the school dinners, but he wouldn't have them at his old school, mainly because he couldn't stand the noise in the hall.

Loving learning

"Liam's social skills have improved and we have been told he is a popular child at school. He has so much more confidence in his own ability now, which is lovely to see. He gets much more attention from teaching staff now and so he is finally learning and making progress. He says he loves all the lessons. He will even join in with PE, when he wouldn't do it at his primary school.

Fantastic progress

"He enjoys art and has really taken to cookery. He loves to bring things home for us to try. It is wonderful for us to see the progress he is making. It is a massive relief because he was so unhappy before. Our family life and home life are much better now. It used to be really upsetting for us all to see Liam looking so sad when he came home from his primary school," Gemma says.

Brilliant staff

"We can tell he is flourishing at Saxon Mount. He is already asking if he can go to the school's holiday club. The staff are all amazing and I can tell how good they are with the children when I go to pick Liam up from the afterschool clubs. It is lovely to see how well they interact with the children. I would wholeheartedly recommend Saxon Mount School to other families."

Children say

Liam says: "My favourite things about Saxon Mount are cooking and playing with my friends."

Facilities and accreditations

Fantastic facilities

Every classroom and teaching area is well equipped with electronic whiteboards and PCs. Banks of laptops are available to support pupils. We take pride in providing a well decorated, bright and appealing environment, which is aimed at being ASD friendly and to support pupils in feeling valued. In addition to this we have some fantastic specialist facilities to support learning, including:

- A learning resource centre to support with interventions and homework
- A 'Blue Room' where interventions are provided as well as support for pupils at break and lunchtimes
- 2 IT suites and a number of laptop trolleys
- A Year 7 supported learning area
- A Year 11 area to promote independence

Outdoors

We have provided superb outdoor resources to promote learning and independence. These include an adventure play area, a well equipped, covered outdoor gym, multi use games areas, an all weather table tennis facility, a garden area as well as an extensive playing field.

Nationally Recognised

We have received many awards over the years, reflecting the high expectations we have of our own provision, with the latest examples being:

East Sussex Careers Hub

In recognition of our excellent careers education advice and guidance program, we are a lead school in the East Sussex Careers Hub. This enables us to support pupils across the county and beyond - as well as ensuring that our pupils have the very best support and guidance available to them.

ArtsMark Silver Award

In 2018, the school achieved the ArtsMark Award, reflecting the commitment we have to arts and creative education. Our pupils enjoy learning about the arts. They achieve well in this subject and they are also often interested in college and employment routes that involve arts and the creative curriculum.

Healthy School 2022

We are dedicated to promoting the well-being and vitality of every student. Offering nutritious meals and regular physical activity. Students are encouraged to make healthy choices in conjunction with health education in various subjects.

Quality in Careers Standards

In July 2022 we were re-accredited as part of the Investors in Careers programme. The assessor could not speak highly enough of the provision made in preparing pupils for the world of work and of the excellent engagement of our pupils and of the lengths the school staff go to in supporting them. We fully meet the Quality in Careers Standards (June 2019).

RE Quality Mark

In the Summer of 2016 we were assessed to achieve the RE Quality Mark. Key school staff and governors supported this process which helps us to evaluate and recognise the strengths of the RE provision made at Saxon Mount.



Asten's life has been transformed and he is now enjoying his education in the happy atmosphere of Saxon Mount School

Lorraine lives in Hailsham with her children, Callum, aged 16, Fi, aged 14, and Asten, aged 12.

Asten was diagnosed with autism when he was nine.

New friends

Lorraine has seen a big difference in Asten since he started at Saxon Mount School last September. Lorraine says: "Asten is now finally happy at school. He has made some friends and is catching up academically. For me, it is real progress that he is in school every day and able to interact with his peers."

Out of classroom

Lorraine began to have concerns about Asten when he was at nursery. She says: "They did some assessments but just said he was a bit behind. By the time he got to Year Two things had got a lot worse. The school would often call me at work to say Asten was having problems. He used to have one to one support in the classroom, but would also work in a room away from his classmates. Eventually, he wasn't able to attend school full time and was accessing learning for about two hours a day. He moved to another primary school, which worked very hard to meet his needs, but he still wasn't able to attend full time,

although it was a big improvement.

Considering needs

"I made the decision when Asten was due to start at secondary school that he wouldn't go to a mainstream school like my older children. I couldn't see him thriving in that sort of environment. I looked at local special needs secondary schools, but thought Saxon Mount seemed the best, even though it is about 45 minutes away.

Fresh start

"When we went to look round Saxon Mount, I thought it had a nice feel and that the head teacher and staff were lovely. I asked Asten what he thought and he said it was the school he preferred, compared to others we had seen. He did a couple of taster days, which went well, and started in September. Since then, he has never once said, 'I don't want to go to school.'"

Adapting well

"A minibus picks him up at half past seven in the morning and takes him to school and brings him back again in the afternoon at about half past four. It is a long day bearing in mind Asten had not been attending primary school full time, but he coped well with the change and settled in quickly.

School trips

"One of the biggest changes for Asten is that he has made some friends, whereas when he was at primary school his only friends were children much younger than him. He was limited in what he was allowed to join in with on trips at primary school, but he is now looking forward to going on a residential trip and staying away from home with his friends at Saxon Mount.

Sense of belonging

"He was behind academically because he had missed so much school, but is catching up now. His writing has improved and he got all his spellings right at the last test. He

has really come on socially and emotionally, mixing with similar children, even though they all have different needs. He no longer feels he's the odd one out.

Small classes

"He is benefiting from being in a class of 12, whereas he would have been in a much bigger class at a mainstream secondary school. He is pleased they all have their own space. It's helping him make progress and catch up academically. He now loves cookery and has developed a big interest in electronics and enjoys doing research about different Apple products," Lorraine says.

Parents matter

"I like the way staff at Saxon Mount are considerate towards the parents. If I ring the office with a query someone will get back to me quickly. The school is a very inclusive environment and I wouldn't want Asten to be anywhere else right now."

Children say

Asten says: "Saxon Mount is a happy place."

Clubs

Weekly clubs

Pupils are given opportunities to take part in a wide range of clubs and enrichment activities throughout the week. These include music, art, sport, life skills and learning support and are planned to provide engaging ways to meet pupils' needs and interests.



Happy at school

Catherine is delighted that after less than a year at Saxon Mount, Ciwan is making good progress and is happier and more confident than before. Catherine says: "All the staff are amazing and really understand Ciwan. We know that the Headteacher, the teachers and the TAs all really care about him."

Complex needs

Ciwan was a very premature baby and had to be ventilated for two months and have emergency operations. He was left with a serious hearing problem and chronic lung disease. Catherine says: "Ciwan attended a primary school with a hearing support facility and had a one-to-one teaching assistant, but he was in a class of 30 and the school didn't seem to understand his needs. When he was finally diagnosed with autism, I took a letter into the school from one of the top consultants in the country to show them and Ciwan's teacher seemed surprised by the diagnosis. I always felt I had to justify my

concerns and take letters in with me as proof.

Caring staff

"I had set my heart on a different secondary school for Ciwan, but I went to visit Saxon Mount anyway to see what it was like. I was completely blown away. I was really impressed to see the Headteacher interacting with the children. All the children are very different but the dedicated staff understand them all and their individual issues and nurture them.

Confidence boosted

"Ciwan is now more confident in his own abilities and more independent. He is in a class of 12 and they have been taught to all look out for each other. He doesn't talk spontaneously, unless it is about something he is interested in, such as trains, cars and food, and he doesn't enunciate well, but he has improved massively since starting at Saxon Mount.

Therapy on site

"Ciwan is able to have speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy at school, away from the classroom. He is more settled and calmer now because he's not having to struggle every day, like at his previous school. He used to come home shattered.

Loving learning

"Ciwan is always very keen to get to school each morning. The staff sometimes send pictures of them learning and the other day I received one of Ciwan in the science lab using a Bunsen burner and wearing goggles. He was absolutely loving it. Ciwan now knows British Sign Language and Makaton and can understand both me and the staff if we sign to him. , but he won't sign back unless he really wants something, such as chocolate.

Academic progress

"He now enjoys cooking and has become good at Maths. He learnt to read some time

Ciwan is finally making good progress in the caring environment of Saxon Mount School

Catherine lives with her son, Ciwan, aged 12, in St Leonard's on Sea.

Ciwan has delayed speech and a hearing problem and has been diagnosed as autistic. He joined Saxon Mount in 2020.



ago but suddenly stopped wanting me to read stories to him. Now he is at Saxon Mount he has become more interested in reading again. We are due to have an annual review with the school soon and for once I am not going in with a list of things I need to bring up. I don't have to explain everything to the staff at Saxon Mount because they all really understand Ciwan," Catherine says.

Support for parents

"The school have given me every possible support as a parent. When I was recently poorly and couldn't take him to school, they offered Ciwan the chance to use the minibus service. Saxon Mount has exceeded my expectations and I feel very lucky to have such a good school close by."

Children say

Ciwan says: "I like the play area at Saxon Mount and all the friends I have made there."

Behaviour and self-development: social skills for life after school

High standards

Staff have high expectations of both pupil behaviour and work. The school provides a safe and secure environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. Our staff are role models for the pupils and offer a high standard of commitment, communication and consistency in managing behaviour. Our staff give clear instructions and directions so that pupils have a clear understanding of the classroom rules and the warning systems which are displayed in all classrooms:

- Arrive at lessons on time.
- Enter and leave the classroom quietly.
- Listen to what others have to say.
- Avoid shouting out.
- Use polite language.
- Follow all instructions.
- Avoid walking around class.

The way in which the school promotes the emotional well-being of pupils is an area of strength. Pupils are positively supported to develop confidence, self-esteem and self-management through a wide range of strategies. (NAS 2016)

Rewards and sanctions

Celebration assembly

Each Friday there is a whole school Celebration Assembly, in which certificates and prizes for Merit Scores, Stars of the Week, Golden Tickets, Silver Stars and other certificates are presented. It also includes the highly coveted Headteacher's Worker of the Week Award which is nominated by and voted for by all staff. Examples of work are shown and celebrated. This public recognition of good behaviour and effort made is highly motivational and enjoyed by all.

Merit Points

These are awarded for good work and behaviour in lessons. Individual Merit scores and Tutor Group Merit scores will be given recognition and rewarded in Tutor Time and higher value prizes and certificates are presented at our Celebration Assembly each Friday. Certificates and prizes are issued for 100, 200, 300, 400 and 500 merits with prizes rising in value. Pupils are encouraged to be financially aware by being offered the chance to 'bank' a smaller number of points. By banking the points, the pupil could save them up for a larger reward such as a voucher or Super Prize £15 Argos item, thus giving them an even greater sense of ownership over their rewards. We find our reward system to be highly successful in promoting positive behaviour and engagement in learning.

Star of the Week

All tutors and class TAs are invited to nominate pupils for a Star of the Week Certificate to be presented at our assembly on Friday. Pupils will be nominated for particular good work or demonstrating positive behaviour. There is usually one nomination per class. Each member of staff has a supply of Silver Stars in class and whilst on duty. These are presented to pupils as a reward for particular good or helpful behaviour. Silver Stars are given for acts of kindness and helpfulness, once totals are provided at the end of each term, prizes are awarded.

Golden Tickets

All students who complete a piece of homework will be issued with a Golden Ticket. The students can choose when they wish to enter their ticket/s in a weekly prize draw in Friday's assembly. The Winning ticket drawn out earns the student 500 merits.

Headteacher's Achievement Award

The student is nominated as a result of improved behaviour, attitude to learning, positive interaction with peers and staff, and making progress in all areas over a sustained period of time. Where a pupil has made exceptional achievement, they are awarded with a choice of either lunch out with the Headteacher, a voucher or a prize chosen from a catalogue; individual prizes can be agreed.

Annual Rewards

Teachers are invited to choose a pupil for their annual End of School Year Subject Award and a 'Good Citizenship' prize will also be awarded annually to one pupil per year group. These awards will be presented near the end of Term 6.

Sanctions

When applying sanctions such as warnings, restorative actions, detentions etc., we use a visually supported traffic light warning system. This system includes issuing coloured cards with Makaton symbols to represent first and second warnings prior to issuing the final sanction of a Red Slip. Many of our children benefit from a visual sanction system. Some children, due to levels of anxiety, agitation, excitability or language processing and communication difficulties and ASD, are not able to absorb or comprehend when they are being given a first and second verbal warning prior to being issued with a Red Slip without visual support. This is particularly relevant for periods of time when children are not class based; break and lunch times can be equally as significant as time within the classroom. Instant Red Slips may be issued in the event of racist or homophobic or highly discriminatory comments and for unprovoked verbally or physically aggressive or destructive behaviour of a serious nature targeted or directed at another person or property. The nature of the pupils needs are considered carefully when applying sanctions for behaviour.

Admissions

Admissions to Saxon Mount are arranged in partnership with the Local Authority. All pupils who attend Saxon Mount have an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP). If you wish to find out more about Saxon Mount School because your child is undergoing a statutory assessment but does not yet have an EHCP, please ensure that you seek advice from the SEN department at County Hall prior to arranging a visit to the school.

Alternatively, if your child already has an EHCP but is currently on the roll of a mainstream school, please also seek advice from the SEN department at County Hall prior to arranging a visit. If you are unsure of your child's status with regard to SEN our office staff will try to help identify who would be best placed to help you. We are always happy to offer advice and guidance to prospective parents.

Applications to attend Saxon Mount School are made through the East Sussex Council application process. As a parent of a child or young person with an Educational Health & Care Plan you can state a preference for the school you would like your child to attend and East Sussex Children's Services will try to meet your wishes. Recommendations made at the Annual Review stage of the EHCP also play an important part in forming the decision made by East Sussex Council.



Applications

Applications are made online at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions. If you are not able to apply online, you should contact the Admissions and Transport team at the address below for a paper application.

For general enquiries you can contact: Admissions, Transport & Free School Meals Team County Hall St Anne's Crescent Lewes East Sussex BN7 1SG 0300 33 09 472 admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Who can help?

- East Sussex Children's Services: PO Box 4 County Hall St Anne's Crescent LEWES East Sussex BN7 1SG Assessment & Planning (SEN) Team Telephone: 01273 336740 Email: SEN.casworkassistants@eastsussex.gov.uk.
- Information for Families: (formerly Parentlink) Confidential helpline: 0345 60 80 192 Email: informationforfamilies@eastsussex.gov.uk Admissions.
- Transport & Free School Meals Team Telephone 0300 33 09 472. Email admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk Specialist Transport Officer: Telephone: 0300 33 09. Email: sentransport@eastsussex.gov.uk or freeschoolmeals@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Governorship

The Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust is governed by a Board of Directors, supported by an Academy Advisory Board. The directors have a wide range of skills and experience. Advisory Board members are appointed from the Torfield and Saxon Mount community. Together these groups work with the Executive Headteacher to strategically develop the organisation, provision and resources to provide high quality education for our pupils. The Board of Directors is the accountable body for Torfield and Saxon Mount and has a responsibility to agree the vision for the Trust, monitor and hold the schools to account for educational performance, and oversee financial performance.



We will strive to

Promote independence and preparation for life after school

Promote inclusion and equality of opportunity

Provide accessible, meaningful and challenging activities to promote learning and personal development

Promote and develop communication and social skills

Provide opportunities to learn about and practise empathy, respect, kindness, trust and collaborative working

Provide opportunities to develop self-esteem and self-worth

Develop moral, spiritual and cultural awareness

Provide a caring, supportive, safe and stable learning environment

Work effectively as a staff team, constantly striving for improvement

Celebrate achievements in all aspects of development

Provide pupils with opportunities to fulfil their potential

Promote enjoyment and pride in learning and achieving

Clearly share our values with parents, carers and other stakeholders

Manage our resources effectively to ensure maximum benefit to learners



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