



TreeHouse School

Staff Survival Guide

Making the ordinary possible



Welcome to TreeHouse

Kerry Sternstein, Headteacher, says:

I am very pleased to be welcoming you to our wonderful school.

Our mission

TreeHouse school exists to help children and young people with autism to learn, thrive and achieve.

Our Vision

TreeHouse school is ambitious for children and young people with autism. Our vision is to make the ordinary possible.

Our Values

Our values underpin everything that we do at TreeHouse school and provide the foundation for our approach to teaching and learning. Effective education has the power to transform the lives of children and young people with autism and we understand and respond to each young person's individual talents, interests and potential.

Headteacher says:

All of our young people have a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and care plan. Through this, they receive individual and personalised learning and behavioural support from our highly-skilled, specialist staff team. I am very proud that in December 2017 we were able to maintain our outstanding Ofsted rating. We strive to make the ordinary possible for our pupils.



Poonam Stevens says:

TreeHouse School is a place like no other. The passion and drive the staff have here is very rare and that is what makes it such a special place to work. Everyday is different and there are many opportunities for staff to learn and develop. The pupils are given every opportunity to do the best that they can and they are at the heart of all we do.

CLASS TEACHER



Jessica Aviles says:

The pupils and staff at TreeHouse School are uniquely special. It is through my daily interactions with them that I get to experience joy, community, humility, happiness, perseverance, love, learning and a sense of belonging every single day.

ASSISTANT HEAD



Millie Backhouse says:

Working at TreeHouse is fun, challenging and very rewarding. I always learn something new everyday from the amazing pupils and staff I work with.

CLASS TEACHER



Michelle Lambourne says:

I was never meant to stay at TreeHouse beyond a year – the fact I have for over 5 years already is thanks to our amazing pupils and my fantastic colleagues. Our pupils are a joy to watch as they learn and grow, and to even be a small part of their journey is so fulfilling; they're simply the best.

SEN OFFICER



Nicola Hodges says:

The best thing about working at TreeHouse is having the best colleagues! Working so closely with each other every day really brings everyone together and I have made some lifelong friends!

The best thing about being a Behaviour Consultant at TreeHouse is having lots of variety in my day, including working with our amazing pupils, providing training, holding parent meetings and problem solving learning and behaviour to support progress.

BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANT

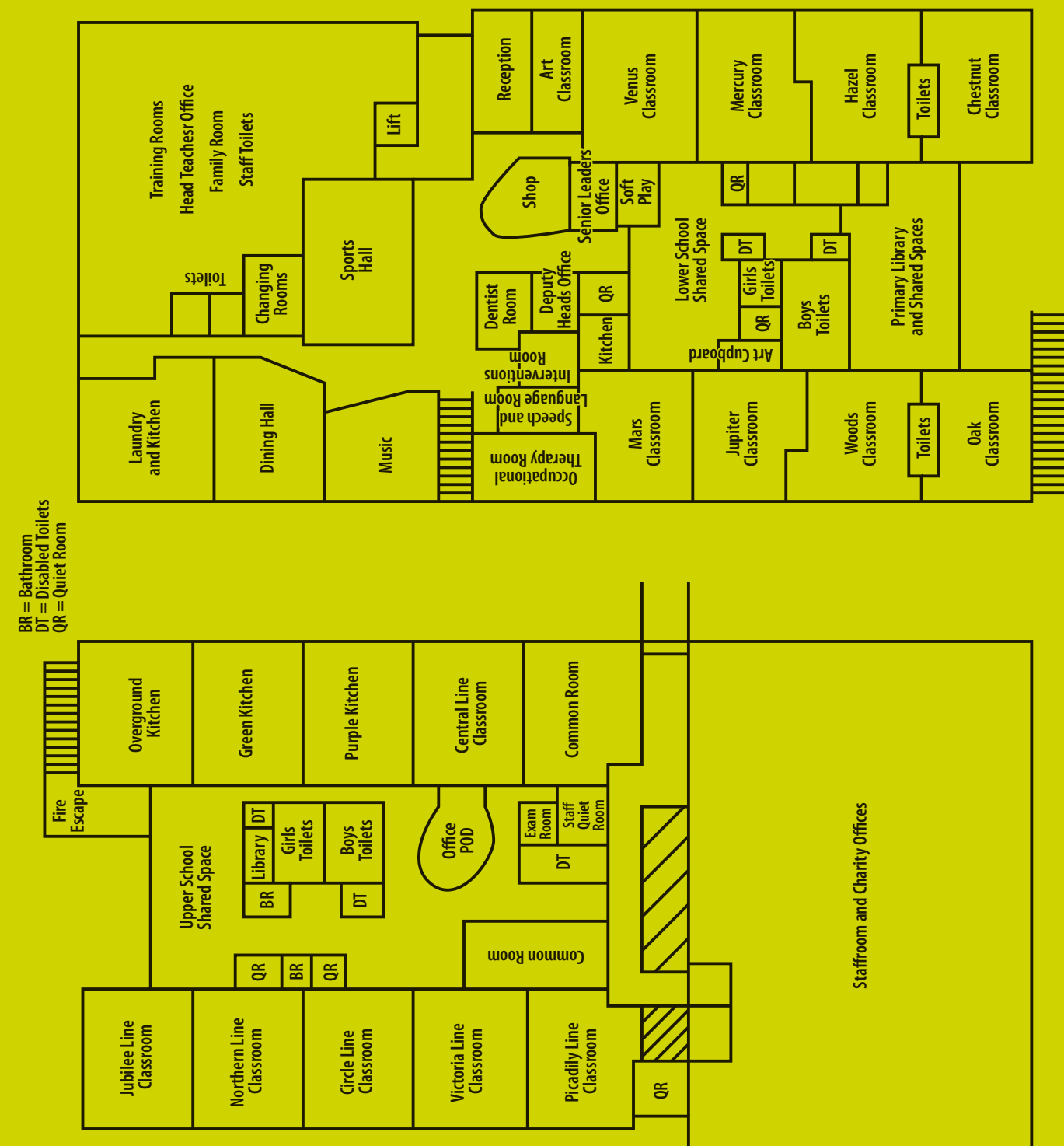


Rachel Weaver says:

TreeHouse is such a unique place to work and every day is different. TreeHouse has helped me develop as a person, experience new things and make new friends. I constantly have the opportunity to learn and help our pupils to learn too which is the most rewarding part!

SENIOR TEACHING AND BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

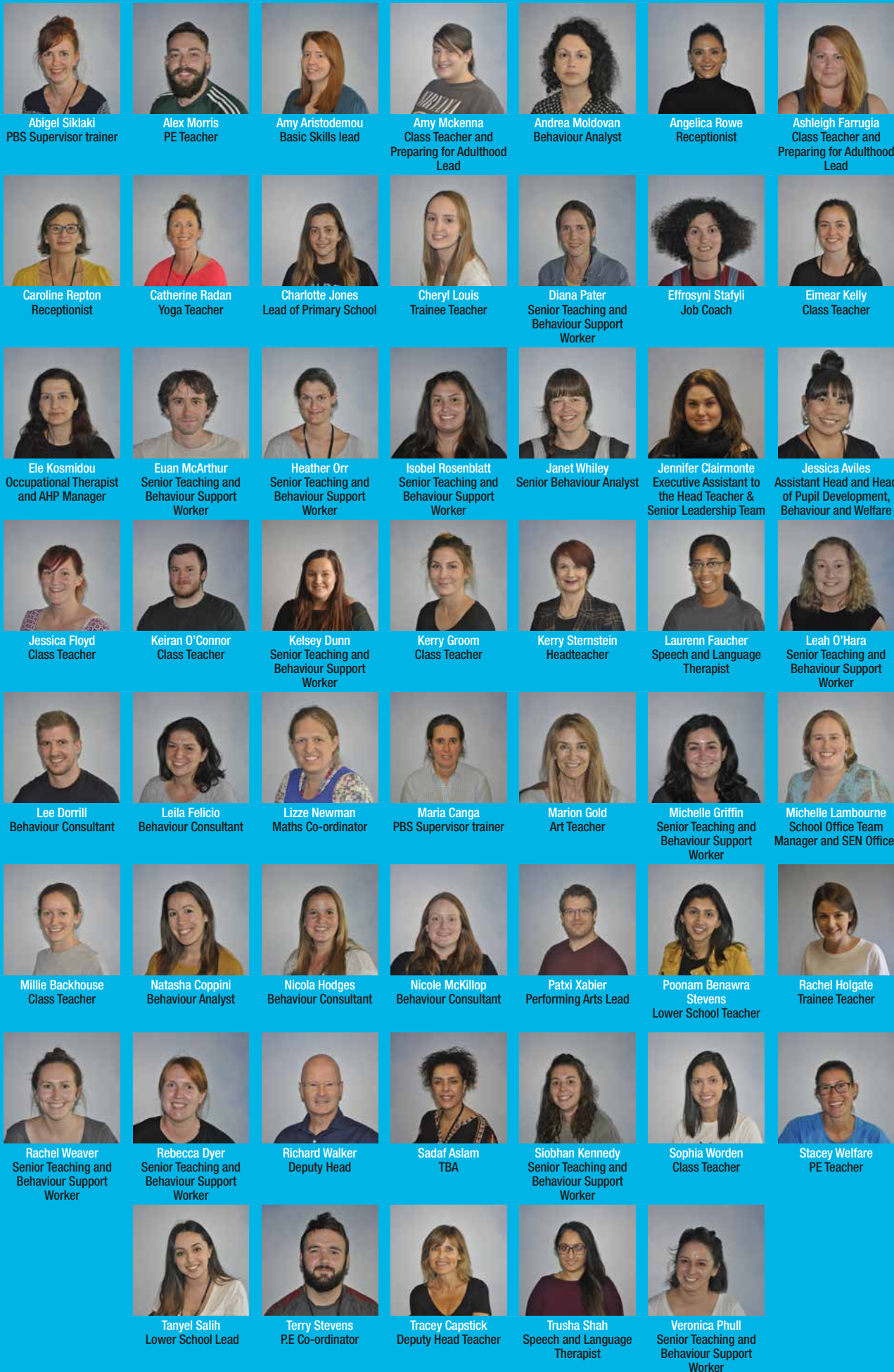
School Map



The Pears National Centre for Autism Education Woodside Avenue, London, N10 3JA
Tel: 020 8815 5444

You can find a virtual tour of TreeHouse School on our website:
<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/who-we-are/contact-us>

Staff structure



Useful information

Induction

During your first week, you will take part in a 3 day induction training programme. This will cover safeguarding, SW-PBS, trans-disciplinary working, AET level 1 and general school information. You will also receive HR information.

There are several policies you need to read in your first few weeks of joining TreeHouse. Time to do this will be incorporated in the induction. You can find all policies on the main drive, under General Resources. Policies you should ensure you read and understand within your first week are:

- Safeguarding (Including Child Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding, Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism, Whistleblowing)
- Code of Conduct
- Data protection and Data security
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety

Your probation period lasts for 6 months, and in that time you'll have reviews with your line manager to ensure everything is running smoothly, and that you're on track with your induction. There are core induction modules that everyone in the organisation has to complete before passing their probation:

- HR and payroll
- Health and Safety (tour around the building and an online module)
- Online Safeguarding
- Online Prevent
- Intro to autism- AET Level 1/2
- Online Data Protection & Information Security
- Online Equality and Diversity
- Meet our Executive Leadership Team- Strategy and Values

Many of these will be covered during your first week. You'll be sent emails with links to the online training modules, and receive invites through Outlook for the other face to face training sessions. If you miss a session for any reason, make sure you find out when the next one that you can attend is being held.

Morning briefing and staff meetings

Morning briefings take place in the sports hall on Monday and Friday mornings at 8.45am. You are expected to be in school ready to work at 8.45 am. TABS and trainee training takes place on a Wednesdays at 4pm. This is where you will learn about the specialised approach employed at TreeHouse School. Pupil progress Review meetings take place fortnightly between 4-5pm.

School day

The school day begins with the pupils transport arriving between 8.45-9. You will collect your key pupils from the transport and then registration will begin. Registration is taken through Sims or a paper register. These must be completed by 10am and 2pm.

School day

Registration – 9.00-9.45

Period 1 – 9.45-11

Period 2 – 11-12

Pupils Lunch – 12-1

Period 3 – 1-1.30

Period 4 – 1.30-14.00

Period 5 – 14.00-15.00

Home time routine – 15.00-15.30

Teaching and Behavioural specialist's (TABS) break

You will be allocated a 50 minute breaks between 11am and 2pm. It may be different each day, according to pupils needs.

Teacher's lunches and BAs

Teachers/ Class Leads lunches are 12-1

Staff working day

Staff

Teachers, BA's and Senior TABS

Days

Monday – Thursday 8.30am-5.00pm
Friday – 8.30am – 4.00pm

TABS

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
8.45 – 5.00pm.

There is an optional to finish at 4pm on Tuesday if all duties are complete.

Registration, registers and absences

Registration is the opportunity to do the following:

- Complete register
- PSHE
- Check the wellbeing of the student
- Collect any messages from home school books
- Follow up
- Morning movement

The Sims system is to be used to register the students, if your class has opted for a paper register they can be found by the reception in green folders. The register needs to be completed twice a day, in the morning and straight after lunch. It is the Class Lead/ Teacher's legal responsibility to ensure these are done. Both the register and Sims have a key of codes so that any absences or lateness are marked correctly.

Staff health and sickness

All appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. should be in school holidays or out of school time. If you have a hospital appointment, please bring the appointment card with the date and time for a member of senior leadership to see.

If you are sick and cannot attend work they you must inform school by phoning the staffing phone between 7.30-7.40. You will require a doctor's note and confirmation that you are fit to return if you have been off for more than a week. On your return from illness you will have a return to work interview. This will allow the school to make sure that the necessary support and provide you with an update of any events or incidences that have taken place in your absence. If you are poorly and should be attending a course then you must speak to your line manager and then senior leadership that you cannot attend. If you are unwell at school you must inform a member of the SLT that you are too poorly to continue work and that you are going home or to see a medical professional.

Communication

Bulletins are sent out after briefings on a Monday and a Friday. Your personal calendar and the school calendar can be found alongside your emails. To add to the Calendar, speak to your line manager and they can approve or add where appropriate. Diaries are available for all staff at reception.

Useful contact details/numbers

School telephone number – 02088155484

Staffing phone (including calling in sick or late) - 07522210761

Tannoy - *3307

First aider – *3306

Facilities (dial from internal phone) - 203/204

Duties

All staff members are expected to be part of a Team teach walkie rota. This is to support the health and wellbeing of all our stuff and pupils. All staff are expected to support with personal care.

The staff room

The staff room is a shared space with AAA organisation. There are lockers for small personal items and spaces to store coats and bags. Each class has a pigeonhole for important communications and there a number of hot desks for working. There is cereal, milk, butter, sugar, water, tea and coffee all provided as complimentary

Staff meals

Lunch is not provided for staff, nor is there an option to purchase a school lunch. Any lunches brought onto the school premises will need to be consumed in the staff room. Fridges and microwaves are available for staff use.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SW-PBS)

Many of our pupils present behaviours that challenge. At TreeHouse School we work within a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SW-PBS) framework that is evidence-based and multi-tiered to help reduce behaviours that challenge and teach positive replacement behaviours that increases autonomy and improves the pupils' quality of the life. We teach our pupils to understand and regulate their emotions and help them find more positive ways to express them. This is done by creating responsive environments and developing individualised and integrated behaviour support plans to meet the needs of the individual. The primary use of principles and procedures derive from behaviour analysis is to assess, design and monitor these teaching and support strategies. This is reviewed and monitored on a daily basis and modified, as appropriate, in line with our behaviour policy. All interventions are agreed with the pupil, parents and carers before they are implemented with the aim of generalising these strategies to support the pupil in their home and community.

Positive Behaviour Support:

In TreeHouse School the method of intervention we use to support learning is Positive Behavioural Support (PBS). PBS is a holistic approach to learning that incorporates a variety of evidence-based strategies that are selectively employed on the basis of an individual's needs, characteristics and preferences. PBS is used to enable young people to overcome patterns of challenging or socially isolating behaviours and supports them to acquire behaviours which enable them to achieve their long term goals and aspirations. If you're not familiar with PBS, there is a useful introduction you can watch here: <http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/positive-behaviour-support/capbs/pbsinformation/introduction-to-pbs/>

Positive Handling Plans

TreeHouse School uses the term 'positive handling' to describe a range of risk reduction strategies, which include nonverbal, verbal and — where absolutely necessary — physical interventions. We use a positive handling package called Team Teach. This is a holistic approach to behavioural support and intervention. When appropriate, we will write a positive handling plan to provide an assessment of the risks that may be present and how we will work with the pupil to overcome these risks. This document is used to explain the planned and agreed strategies that will be used to provide the pupil with security, safety and a feeling of acceptance. All staff are trained in this area and interventions are carefully supervised, monitored and reviewed at all levels of the school. Team Teach is externally accredited.

Playtimes, toilets and Lunchtimes

Our pupils can have access to the playground (either primary or secondary depending on their age) at any time throughout the day. Some of our pupils need frequent breaks and as their staff member you will know their routine.

The toilets are always available to our students either on request or as part of their routine/programme.

Lunch time is at 12.00 and students will either eat in the lunch hall or in their classrooms.

Pupils should always be with an adult in the school building or playground.

Assemblies

School Assemblies are termly and are divided by Key stage group. Adults must be proactive in assembly praising children who are setting a good example, by modelling appropriate behaviour and being part of the group praise for the pupil receiving an award.

Presentation of work

All books and loose pieces of work should be named and dated. All pieces of work should be stuck into their books as soon as possible.

Pupils should be encouraged to take pride in their work and therefore there should not be any graffiti on the book covers.

Many of our pupils are working on their mark making skills and therefore only pencils should be used.

English

English and literacy at TreeHouse School offers pupils the ability to shine regardless of their academic ability. We use Bag Books, multi-sensory stories and story massages to captivate our pupils and encourage them to experience a book through their senses. Additionally, where appropriate, we run a wide-ranging reading, writing and comprehension programme to enable our pupils to become readers. Our programme encourages pupils to develop their phonological awareness so that they can begin blending and reading words. We aim to instil a lifelong passion for reading in our young people by having daily story times, celebrating narratives from around the world and having surprise readers visit us occasionally. One of our biggest celebrations is World Book Day, when staff and pupils dress up and share their favourite stories or poems.

Maths

Maths can provide pupils with powerful ways of exploring, investigating and understanding the world; for example, the skills of making comparisons, identifying differences, investigating relationships and establishing connections — important skills that extend across the entire curriculum. At TreeHouse School, we believe that maths can help us to make sense of things around us through developing the ability to calculate, reason and solve problems. At the earliest stages of development, where thinking centres around concrete situations and events, pupils are supported to make sense of experiences and sensations through learning to recognise changes in patterns, quantity, space and time. Maths is a tool that all people need in their day-to-day lives. Without an understanding of numbers and their many varied applications, such as money and time, large areas of adult life would be closed or incomprehensible. As well as a life skill, maths is also a useful language — a worldwide system of communication. It has special signs, symbols and patterns and teaches our young people to handle numbers and concepts. We encourage pupils to develop these key and fundamental skills as their knowledge and understanding of the world grows.

P.E

Physical education (PE) is delivered by our experienced team of specialist teachers, allowing learners to thrive on an outstanding curriculum which delivers a broad range of sporting and physical activities. It promotes the development of fundamental movement skills, agility, balance and coordination and as the children progress, they begin to apply these and may develop basic tactics for gameplay/competition as well as improve their understanding of healthy living. Alongside the PE curriculum and sporting fixtures, the department leads an extensive community sport programme where learners access activities including swimming, bowling, gym, skiing, horse riding, squash, tennis, cycling and ice skating. In all PE and community lessons there is a focus on embedding Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets and developing group skills for a thorough cross-curricular approach.

TreeHouse in the Community

All classes across TreeHouse School access the community at least once a week, these trips can be from exploring the local area to specific sports trips with individualised targets. All trips are designed to have meaningful outcomes for all of the pupils/young people attending.

Community trips are only attended by pupils whose parents/carers have signed a permission letter that is sent home at least a week prior to the trip going ahead. In the instance that the trip will be reoccurring permission must be obtained for the duration of that trip.

Risk Assessments are completed by the teacher in charge and read, approved and signed by the Headteacher at least a week prior to the trip taking place. The risk assessment is read and signed by everyone attending the trip and once again by the Headteacher before leaving site. All staff attending should have a mobile phone, the details of the school's emergency contact, phone number of the teacher in charge of the trip and the phone numbers of other staff on the trip.

Music

Music is a powerful and unique form of communication and, for some children, it is one of crucial importance. At TreeHouse School, everyone has an opportunity to develop their musicianship and forge a lasting relationship with music, regardless of natural ability. Learning within the performing arts underlines key values and can be a meaningful gateway towards future integration in community groups. Music can also be a key part of a pupil's heritage and therefore an integral part of building an identity as a learner, citizen and human being. Weekly music lessons with a specialist teacher are supplemented through regular in-school workshops and concerts, weekly drumming lessons, group music-making, end-of-term productions and educational trips as appropriate to each child's targets, interests and abilities.

Art

Pupils at TreeHouse School are encouraged to explore visual expression as a means of understanding themselves and communicating about the world around them. There is also a strong focus on supporting the development of skills linked to creative and imaginative thinking. Art underpins lifelong learning, flexibility, problem-solving and communication and is supported at each key stage by qualified teachers and specialist art teachers. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole-school art activities and gallery visits and to work with visiting artists as part of the artist residencies programme. The artwork produced by our pupils is highly celebrated and valued as a meaningful connection to pupil voice in the school.

Personal, social and health education Personal, social and health education

(PSHE) is at the centre of the TreeHouse School mission to respond to the unique needs of each pupil and ensure that, regardless of ability, they are all supported to be physically, emotionally and socially healthy. We provide a safe learning environment for pupils so that they can gain the maximum enjoyment and achievement. In addition to this, there is a PSHE curriculum which is delivered to all pupils and explicitly explores specific topics such as sex and relationships, staying safe and understanding different cultures and customs. Pupils also take part in Pride Patrol where they take turns to keep the environment safe, clean and tidy. This ties into our core values by encouraging responsible choices and fostering a desire to do their best.

Work-related learning (14–19 years)

Work-related learning can be defined as a planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding around employment. Work-related learning occurs through work simulations and mock interviews, work experience or enterprise activities and through vocational contexts in subjects. Our aim is to enable young people to develop career awareness and employability skills. Furthermore, we provide the opportunity to 'learn by doing' and encourage positive attitudes to lifelong learning.

Medication, First aid and Welfare

First aid boxes, epi-pens (if prescribed for a specific students) and information are situated in the medical room, dentist room, reception and the staffroom. All medication is kept in a secure place in the medical room. The school's qualified First Aiders, TABS or Class teacher Supervisors or a designated person is responsible for administering it. This must always be witnessed by an additional member of staff. Time, dosage and any comments are recorded in the medication book. Information about individual pupils is situated in their classrooms, folders and one page profiles. Children who possess an asthma pump must have access to it, this is usually found in a medicine bag worn by their member of staff.

Fire exits and safety

Located in front of Treehouse school, are rectangular boxes with a number from 2 – 12. These boxes are our safety points and are referred to as Master Points. In the event of a fire or if we are required to exit the building please

ensure that you remain with the pupil you are working with and bring them to their Master Point, please remain with a TreeHouse staff member with a black lanyard. If you are on lunch or not with a pupil then make your way to Master Point 7.

TreeHouse staff **will** administer medicine in the following cases:

- When a pupil requires a prescribed medicine for a long-term medical problem, such as allergies, asthma, epilepsy or diabetes. A consent form must be signed.
- When a pupil requires a prescribed medicine, such as antibiotics, for a short-term condition. A consent form must be signed.
- When a pupil who has been injured causing a minor skin abrasion requires antiseptic cream Antiseptic can only be administered if the children have their own antiseptic and if written parental consent has been given.
- When a pupil requires an adrenaline injection, or EpiPen, due to anaphylaxis.

Prescribed medicines can only be given with the written consent of a parent/ guardian. Antiseptic cream can only be applied to pupils whose parents/ guardians have signed a general consent form allowing this and who have provided the antiseptic cream.

TreeHouse staff **will not** administer medicine in the following cases:

- when the pupil requires over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup or Calpol, paracetamol unless prescribed by the pupil's G.P.
- when prescribed medicines do not have the name of the pupil, expiry date and dosage on the label (or if the label has come off the bottle).
- if we do not have written consent from the parent/ guardian.
- when the medicine can effectively be administered outside of school hours.
- when medication is to be administered rectally except in specific life threatening circumstances.
- if it is felt that the pupil is too distressed. In this case, parents will be contacted to come in and administer the medicine.

If staff feel a pupil is not well enough to be at school they will inform the parents that he or she needs to be collected.

Any pupil who has diarrhoea or is vomiting must be collected from school to avoid risk of contamination/ spreading. In these circumstances the pupil should remain at home for at least a further 24 hours after the last episode.

The trained first-aiders will apply plasters if the pupil has a consent from parents.

Parents are telephoned when pupils receive injuries and an accident form is completed (see accidents and incidents).

Emergency procedures

Health and safety training will be provided when you begin working on site.

Letters

Under no circumstances are letters to be sent from school without approval of the Senior Leadership Team. A copy must be sent to the office for filing.

Class newsletters

These must go out on every half-term. It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher/ Lead to email this document to the office. Class newsletters must include photos and be up to date.

School uniform

There are no uniforms but pupils must wear appropriate and comfortable clothing..

What should staff wear?

TreeHouse is a busy school, it is recommend that you wear comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the workplace. Many of our staff wear zipped hoodies during the school day.

Staff must wear

- flat comfortable shoes.

- modest dress is required eg. No low cut tops or short skirts or shorts.

- have hair must be tied back at all times

Taking care of pupils property

We ask that parents ensure that their young people do not bring any valuable possessions. However if possessions are brought in then they will need to be locked away in a secure place until the end of the school day. Students cannot have access to these devices during the school day. Any valuable possession brought into school is at the young persons and their families risk. We will not replace items broken or lost at school.

Welcome to TreeHouse School, please remember we are here to help, if you are concerned and unsure about anything, ask. There will always be someone who will listen and help.

School Diary

All staff will be provided with a school diary at the beginning of the new academic year.

Staff will be given an email address, this will be your first initial and surname with no-space:

XXXXXXXXXXXX@treehouseschool.org.uk

It is your responsibility to look in the diary for advance notice. Do not book events without first consulting the diary. If you are booking an event that parents/children need to know about, please speak to senior leadership to ensure that it is a suitable date.

Staff meetings and insets

Staff Meetings, Year group meetings, TPRMs and inset days are in the diary, the topics can change so check regularly. Attendance at the meetings is compulsory for the staff it is intended for. All staff must attend staff briefings.

Parent's evenings

Parent evenings are from 16.00 till 19.00 time take place every term. All staff are encouraged to stay for parents evening.

Schemes of work

The leads of Math and English have developed curriculum planning. These plans can be used as a guide to plan for your class specifically. All books and resources relating to the topic will have been ordered before the term begins. All plans and SOW need to be saved in the shared space. All plans and SOW will be monitored by senior leadership.

Monitoring of school/classroom performance

Senior leadership will conduct weekly learning walks and concerns will be brought to the Class Teacher/ Leads attention. Senior leadership are line managers to class leads and co-ordinators. Class Teachers/Leads and TABS (S) act as line managers to TABS. Your line manager is responsible for helping you with returns to works, monitoring your attendance and conducting your professional development meetings and general one to one catch up sessions.

Reports and data

Data about the pupil's progression is collected every day in every session.

Information is collated to form a RAG rating every term. A traffic light system is calculated to identify how well the pupil is progressing.

A BPI rating is calculated every term.

TreeHouse School uses Classroom monitor for teachers and SLT to track students progression through our I CAN statements. This programme allows teachers to attach photos and add any additional information.

Staff development

At TreeHouse school we encourage everyone to continue learning. We offer a wide range of internal trainings. If you would like to attend external additional training you can speak to your line manage who can show you how to apply for these. All training will have to be approved by SLT.

Governor visits

It may be that a governor will visit your class with an agreed agenda. This agenda will always be linked with school policies. Governors will only be there to see that the policy/ polices are being followed. They do not have a role in the performance management process or reviewing your teaching and learning.

Always make governors welcome as they have a difficult role to play in the monitoring the functions of the school. They will be looking to see that the Head Teacher says is happening in classrooms or around school is actually happening. If you have any concerns about the way governors work or visited your classroom then the correct procedure is to speak to the head teacher or your governor representative. The matter can be brought to the attention of the governing body.

SAFEGUARDING

Child protection

Ambitious about Autism is committed to the prevention of and protection from abuse and neglect of all children who come into contact with the organisation through its staff, volunteers or representatives, in whatever capacity that contact occurs. It is essential that we as staff communicate any concerns.

Treehouse School's first priority is the welfare of our pupils. We are committed to the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the children and young people entrusted to our care at all times.

We are committed to taking all necessary steps to stop abuse happening, whether that abuse is perpetrated by staff, volunteers, family members of children, members of the public or other children or young people. If there are concerns about staff or volunteers perpetrating abuse, it will facilitate any action required to address this without delay. This will include actions required to address abusive behaviours and attitudes. On occasions when staff have been dismissed because of concerns about abuse or neglect they will be referred by Ambitious about Autism to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and / or relevant professional bodies.

Any safeguarding concerns need to be reported as soon as possible to the designated safe guarding lead. Our head teacher, Kerry Sternstein is the DSL and should be contacted if you have any safeguarding concerns.

As part of our safeguarding and child protection staff must not bring their phones or devices into the classroom or areas where pupils can access them. Staff must not take photographs of themselves at school. Staff must never take photographs of students on their personal devices or post pictures of students on social media.

Monitoring a pupil

Effective monitoring and recording is vital in cases where there is no direct disclosure of abuse or when the child has communication problems. Classroom Teachers/ Leads, TABS (S) and TABS play a valuable role due to their closeness to the pupils and the regular contact they have with them. Good records can be valuable contributions to children protection conferences.

Consider these elements when there is a concern for a child

- patterns of attendance
- changes in mood
- changes in attitude
- changes in social groups
- new or more extreme behaviours
- changes in relationships with peers and staff
- Appearance
- Changes in family situations
- Responses to swimming or changing

- Parental comments in home school diaries

Dealing with disclosures

- It is vital to offer the child time to talk
- Don't judge or express horror
- Only use open ended questions eg. Can you tell me what happened?
- Never promise confidentiality
- Never use leading questions eg. Was it that it you?
- Record what the child is saying using the actual words they are using. Note any questions that child raises. Make notes as soon as possible.
- These notes must be secure and confidently
- If possible use a silent witness (someone close by) to listen and record clearly and to clarify.
- Check the notes with the pupil
- Always sign and date the notes
- Show to the safeguarding lead as soon as possible

Never

- Take photographs
- Attempt a medical judgement
- Remove clothing
- Tape record an interview

Fundamental principles for protecting yourself

Always treat the young person with dignity and respect

Look after the young person in the same way in which you expect to be looked after

Use the same rules you would in any situation

If someone does go wrong then tell some one

Be as public as you can

Always avoid unnecessary physical contact

Do not bring your mobile phone into class

Any valuable possessions brought into school including mobile phones are done so at your own risk, the school will not replace lost, broken or stole items.

Do not post any pictures of yourself at school or students on social media

Do not ever take photos of students on your personal devices

Be careful of what and where you post private photos on social medial as some pupils or staff may be able to access your private photographs or information.

Teacher Case Studies

Terry Stevens

PE teacher and Co-ordinator Terry Stevens has worked at TreeHouse School for nearly 8 years. With experience in both mainstream and SEN settings, it is at TreeHouse he feels he has found his true vocation and he is passionate about his role as an educator and facilitator for children and young people who have additional needs.

Rewarding

"I took the job at Treehouse because I saw it as stepping stone after university, but before long I realised how rewarding it was to work with autistic children. As a child, I had myself been challenging and it was my PE teacher who greatly helped me to focus and to channel my personal problems into something positive. I know how valuable physical activity is in many ways for every child, but those benefits are even more valuable for children with special educational needs and I am so glad to be able to bring my particular skillset into their lives."

A holistic approach

The physical health benefits of sport and PE are of course widely established, but Terry strongly believes that the additional social skills they offer are particularly important to children with autism. "Taking part in physical activity, whether individually or as part of a team, promotes confidence, independence, self-esteem and communication skills, all of which will stand these children in good stead in later life. Some children with autism have difficulty with their fine and gross motor skills and at Treehouse we offer a huge range of activities to address this. Swimming, yoga, tennis, team sports, cycling are just some of the ways we encourage their holistic development and on a personal level, I have been amazed at the difference it can make to so many children."

Life-changing and rewarding

Terry's enthusiasm for his work does not disguise the fact that the work can be challenging at times, and he acknowledges that progress with some children may be very slow. However, the rewards are, he says, immensely satisfying.

A close and supportive relationship

Working with children on the autistic spectrum may not be for everyone, believes Terry, but for those who, like him, want to make a difference, TreeHouse is a fantastic setting. "The collaborative relationship amongst the staff members is second to none, and we all work very closely to support the children and each other. We all want the very best for the children and are aware that the best way to achieve this is by working as a close-knit team."

Opportunities

"TreeHouse is an outstanding school. It not only has the best interests of the children at heart but is very supportive of its staff. There are many opportunities for career development for those who may wish to move on – I was able to achieve QTS via the Assessment Only route whilst working here as an unqualified PE teacher

Leila Felicio

Leila Felicio has worked at TreeHouse School for six years. With a background in Applied Behavioural Analysis, she is currently a Behavioural Consultant.

Amazing human beings

There is no doubt that Leila is absolutely passionate about her job, and about TreeHouse School itself. "I was always particularly interested in working with children and young people in the special needs sector and upon completing my postgraduate studies I wanted to have some practical experience working with young people with special needs before pursuing a Masters degree.

In 2012 I decided to move to London and because I had heard really good things about TreeHouse School from a friend who used to work here, I decided to apply for a tutor position that was being advertised. Since joining I have never regretted for a moment my decision to come to TreeHouse; the young people with whom I work are all amazing human beings and I have immense respect for each young person I have had the privilege of working with as well as their families."

Getting to know each and every child

Just like any other child, a young person on the autistic spectrum has their own distinct personality and intellectual ability, and Leila enjoys getting to know each one and find the best way to bring out their strengths, and to help them manage their own behaviour. "Many of the pupils at TreeHouse are non-verbal and some find the only way to communicate is through engaging in maladaptive behaviours such as self-injurious behaviour, and aggression brought on by frustration. We aim to show them different ways to express themselves, acknowledging their desire to communicate and teaching them a more appropriate and effective way to communicate. We help them to replace these maladaptive behaviours in a manner which teaches them to self-regulate and respect their autonomy, but which does not compromise their safety or that of others.

A skilled and expert approach

In the years that Leila has been at TreeHouse she says she has rarely if ever come across a young person who has not gained greatly from the skilled and expert approach of the school staff. "We work extremely well together as a team and everyone genuinely has the best interests of the pupils at heart."

Children as educators

Although already highly qualified and experienced in her field, Leila acknowledges that she has learned a great deal in the last six years, not only because of the hands-on and varied nature of the job but from the children and her colleagues, too. "I believe I have grown as a person. I thought I was quite empathetic before I started this job, but my ability to empathise with the needs and challenges of others has grown tenfold since working at TreeHouse. I admire and respect every young person I work with, and I am grateful to work in an environment where my colleagues have the same caring attitude. We have the best time with the kids here, teaching in a fun and positive way.

Making a difference

"Working with young people like those at TreeHouse can be hard work and demanding but it is extremely rewarding, and knowing that you are making a profound difference to their lives feels like a privilege.

Term Dates 2018/19

Spring 2019

Mon 07 January
Tue 08 January
Fri 15 Feb
Mon 18 - Fri 22 February
Mon 25 February
Tue 26 February
Fri 05 April
Mon 08 April - Thu 18 April
Fri 19 April
Mon 22 April

INSET Day
School Starts
Last day of Term
HALF TERM
INSET DAY
School starts
Last day of Term
EASTER HOLIDAY
Good Friday Bank Holiday
Bank Holiday

Summer 2019

Tue 23 April
Mon 6 May
Fri 24 May
Mon 27 May
Tue 28 May – Fri 31 May
Mon 03 June
Fri 28 June
Thu 01 Aug
Fri 02 Aug

School Starts
Bank Holiday
Last day of Term
Bank Holiday
HALF TERM
School Starts
INSET DAY
School Ends for Summer
INSET Day

Autumn 2019

Mon 02 Sept
Tue 03 September

INSET Day
School Starts



► We are ambitious

We invest in our people and aim high to make sure our work has the biggest impact for children and young people with autism and their families.

► We value difference

We know that creating equal opportunity does not mean one size fits all.

We aim to make ourselves accessible to children and young people with autism across the spectrum, from all communities and backgrounds.

► We are open

We strive to be open – open to new ideas, open in how we work and open in how we make decisions.

► We are team players

Collaborative working and building strong partnerships are essential if we are to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism.

► We are experts

We respect and develop the expertise of our talented staff and make sure that we are evidence-based, rigorous and accountable in everything we do.

TreeHouse School

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**TreeHouse
School**