

Leo's Den

Vision

Every child possesses unique skills, talents, and abilities, and as a school, we are committed to helping each pupil develop these to their fullest potential.

Leo's Den provides a nurturing and supportive learning environment designed to meet the individual needs and strengths of pupils with communication and interaction difficulties. The provision enables pupils to develop independence, access learning that is appropriately matched to their developmental stage, and make meaningful progress and positive outcomes.

This is a dedicated learning environment that promotes hands-on, experiential learning through a curiosity-led approach. The SCERTS framework will be used to guide assessment, support and provision, ensuring that pupils' communication needs are effectively met and that opportunities for social connection and interaction are fostered. The provision aims to support pupils in developing self-regulation skills, enabling them to engage confidently and successfully in learning.

Implementation

Curriculum

Learning within Leo's Den will be delivered through engaging thematic topics designed to stimulate pupils' curiosity and interest. These themes will promote increased communication, exposure to a broad and meaningful vocabulary, and the development of social interaction skills. A hands-on, multisensory approach will be used, with carefully planned activities structured around each theme to support engagement and progression.

Entry Criteria

Pupils who regularly access Leo's Den will be on the school's SEND register and will have identified communication and interaction needs. Decisions regarding access to the provision will be made through discussions between class teachers, support staff, the SENDCo and the Headteacher. Ongoing monitoring, observations and assessments will inform planning and ensure that provision is appropriately matched to individual need and that relevant learning opportunities are provided.

Organisation

Pupils will follow a structured plan outlining their access to the enriched, skills-based curriculum. Most pupils will attend scheduled sessions within Leo's Den alongside continued access to their mainstream classroom, with the amount of time spent in the provision tailored to individual needs.

A range of visual supports, including visual timetables, now and next boards, timers, five-point scales and communication boards, will be used to support communication, reduce anxiety and promote self-regulation. Learning will have a clear purpose, with adults modelling language and social interaction throughout. In addition, daily adult-led group activities will support the development of key communication and interaction skills, including attention and listening activities, music and rhyme sessions, language development groups, circle time and story sessions.

Staffing

Leo's Den will be staffed by teaching assistants throughout the school day and overseen by the SENDCo and Headteacher. A designated teaching assistant will be responsible for the daily preparation and organisation of the provision and will liaise with class teachers regarding learning objectives and pupil progress.

Individual Support Plans and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) will be accessible to all staff working within the provision. These will include SMART targets to ensure that progress is clearly planned, monitored and achieved.

Impact

The intended impact of Leo's Den is to ensure that pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and develop a strong sense of belonging and emotional wellbeing. Through targeted support for communication and language development, pupils will experience success, take pride in their achievements and grow in confidence as communicators.

Their academic needs will be supported alongside their sensory, emotional and social needs through a holistic and integrated approach to provision. Individual strengths will be recognised and celebrated, helping to promote high self-esteem and self-confidence. Where appropriate, pupils will also be supported to access and integrate into the mainstream classroom, enabling full participation in wider school life.