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# Sybil Elgar



## Title: Community Based Education

This guidance is to be read in conjunction with related National Autistic Society Policies

### Declaration

The Sybil Elgar School does not promote partisan political views.

The school will have regard for The Human Rights Act, 1998, The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, as amended by The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001, including new duties 2002, and The Principles of the New Code of Practice, 2001, with special focus on Student Empowerment, Parents in Partnership and Consultation and Joint Working initiatives.

In addition the school has regard for the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Policy lead (s)	Deputy Principals
Date of document	June 2014
Latest revision	April 2021
Signed Chloe Phillips Principal	

### COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION

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Community based education is an important aspect of teaching and learning for autistic students\*. It provides concrete and relevant opportunities for them to learn a range of skills and helps them to generalise these skills in different contexts. It is acknowledged that the development of independence skills, self-confidence, self-empowerment and access to a wide range of cultural opportunities are all developed through community based education. Links with local organisations offer opportunities for students to mix with a wide range of people.

## **Intent**

Community based education provides the opportunity to extend leisure skills and provides real experience for the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills across all curriculum subjects. Community based education is planned to reinforce information and skills relevant to the subjects being taught in the classroom.

Access to the community is part of a structured, extended curriculum offered to all students based on individual needs. All offsite activities are carefully risk assessed and, where appropriate, the use of rehearsal and role play along with structured teaching following the principles of SPELL are used to reduce anxiety and prepare autistic young people for new experiences. Social stories and personal targets are used to support where appropriate. Safety and safeguarding are key when taking students into the wider community.

Comprehensive Individual support plans and Individual Education and Care Plans ensure a consistent and positive approach when supporting young people across arrange of settings and promote positive community participation.

As part of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) all students have profiles that outline enjoyment, levels of independence and key risks when using the community.

**Safeguarding** is a key element of community education. All Alternative Providers (APs) need to have staff who are DBS checked. In addition they will be asked to provide their own Risk Assessments. Students from the school are never left with external staff unless a member of school staff is present.

The school also provides mentoring and/or training for Additional Providers.

The Sybil Elgar School has a very strong ethos and programme in place to support and safeguard all staff, students and families.

The school will have due regard to the need for everyone to **be** safe and **feel** safe.

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We will ensure that our students are overtly taught and have modelled for them the values of courtesy, honesty, tolerance kindness and respect for others, through a robust curriculum, clear and effective policies and well established procedures, practice and protocols. We will not tolerate abuse in any form, including peer on peer abuse and we will ensure that we: **inform prepare and respond**

- Inform (ensure students, staff and families know the risks, how they present and the potential support/outcomes)
- Prepare (ensure that students, staff and families can identify the risks, report and respond)
- Respond/Help (ensure that responses to reports of CSE are dealt with effectively, keeping children safe, helping those involved).

The school has an open culture and we encourage families/students and staff to talk about their concerns safely.

Our students are autistic and this presents clear and extra challenges. The majority of our student population have severe cognitive delay, highly complex needs and a lack of understanding about the impact of their behaviour on others. They may be perceived to be behaving without respect 'abusing' others without intent, both their peers and staff who work with them. The school will not tolerate instances of abuse, violence and harassment in any form. Instances of this from or between students will be dealt with following the NAS schools behaviour policy and school protocols.

Staff training and support is key to ensure that our students are supported sensitively and robustly to manage their difficulties in a positive way and to ensure that they are taught the skills to enable them have the best possible quality of life and enable them to live and work with others in their adult lives.

## **Implementation**

Detailed individual risk assessments outlining key risks for using the community are vital tools for ensuring provision and safe access. All students have individual Risk Assessments linked to their Individual Support plan. These are updated and evaluated regularly and particularly if there are changes in behaviour or circumstance. There are central risk assessments for all off site activities and locations. The Deputy Principal and Manager of Woodlands are responsible for managing and monitoring off site activities from school. Journey sheets are completed for every outing and include an evaluation section. During 2020 and 2021 community Links have been severely curtailed due to Covid 19 restrictions. Although physical contact has not been possible, school has maintained strong links with families and the local

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and wider community. This has also given an opportunity to develop virtual learning for students linked to key sites and experiences.

Both sites make full use of the local and wider community. Shops, parks, swimming pools, libraries, museums, places of worship, cafes, restaurants, bowling alleys and the cinema are regularly visited as part of a planned curriculum. Regular trips to museums, theatres and art galleries in London using public transport are planned with groups and individuals. Local community members are invited into school including the Fire Service, Police, Religious Community Leaders, Careers officers, Researchers (Complete short term projects: ethics committee of NAS approved)

In addition the school has regular trips to the following which link particularly closely with the PE, Science and wellbeing (PSHCE) curriculum and enable even our youngest and most vulnerable students to participate fully.

Hounslow urban farm, Bushy Park nature watching, Thomley and Thames Valley SEN Sensory Centres, Snakes and Ladders Syon Park, RAF Museum Hendon, Our Barn in Osterley Park.

The school makes full use of the outdoor garden, which extends learning throughout the year.

Drama and Dance Students from the 16- 22 site have represented NAS regularly at Fundraising events

Leisure activities at break times are organised to meet the needs of autistic young people. Students are supported to make informed choices and decisions.

The School has access to a wide range of amenities and environments in the surrounding areas in Ealing, Acton and Southall.

16-22 provision students, where appropriate, attend local Tertiary Colleges covering a wide range of courses as appropriate for individual needs.

Shopping trips to local shops and larger shopping complexes provide not only opportunities to reinforce appropriate behaviour skills, social interaction, self confidence, money handling skills, making choices and self advocacy skills, but the variety of journeys provide opportunities for teaching a range of independence and safety skills. These form a regular part of the school week.

As part of the physical curriculum swimming, cycling, and planned hikes and cross country walking form part of community links. The school has shared use of Swift Road a local physical education facility. There are a number of country parks and many footpaths, which provide opportunities for physical activity in the countryside. Such parks

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provide an environment which often allows a considerable amount of freedom to walk without the worry of motor traffic.

The school makes good use of proximity to the city of London and trips to the Natural History and Science museums, Tate gallery, Horniman Museum, Kew gardens and other sites of historical and cultural interest regularly enrich the curriculum.

Theatre trips take place regularly and include The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, Musicals, Dance and Ice Skating. These are a rich source of experience for our young people.

Where it is not possible to access the theatre off site, companies are booked to come into school and these have included interactive drumming workshops, story tellers, dance troupes brass ensembles and community theatre groups.

The school does have the use of minibuses that are essential for the promotion of community links. Where possible, however, public transport is used, to develop independence and mobility and parents are invited to take part in outings if appropriate.

The school has built up links with The British Museum, The Horniman Museum and Tate Britain, Osterley House and Hampton Court as well as many London Theatres.

## **Impact**

Community links form an integral part of all curriculum areas and is particularly relevant to support the physical curriculum, citizenship and Personal, Social and Health education. (PSHCE). Skills developed are assessed using internal assessment linked to individual EHCP targets and key targets in core subjects.

Accredited schemes, for example ASDAN and OCR along with the school modular PSHCE curriculum provide a framework for a developmental community links programme. Community based education provides opportunities for appropriate learning and generalisation of skills; it often also provides motivation and a sense of challenge and achievement, fostering independence, confidence and autonomy for our young people. The curriculum timetable is designed to allow some flexibility to ensure that groups or individuals who need it have extra time to access the community.

Care is taken to ensure that all students have access to community-based education relevant to their needs and equality of opportunity is key when planning activities.

Outside bodies who have links with the school offer opportunities to extend the experiences of our students and students (e.g. fire service, police, local places of worship, careers officers, college tutors, community leaders); such links also offer opportunities for the school to educate the local community and programmes of training and

support have taken place, notably in Hammersmith and West London College.

**\*For the purposes of this policy and for fluency the term 'student' is used to describe all learners from the Early Years through to the 16-22 Provision**

### **Related Policies**

Sports Recreation and Leisure Policy

TEACCH Policy

PSHCE policy

Studio III Policy includes the whole person approach, which promotes amongst other elements person centred planning and using the community.

Physical Education Policy

NAS Educational Visits Policy

### **This policy was written with reference to:**

Teaching about relationships, sex and health (DFEE) Published: 24 September 2020 last updated: 16 March 2021,  
Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)

- Respectful School Communities: Self-Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)

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- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools