

# Local Offer

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As a parent or carer we understand you will have plenty of questions when preparing for your child to enter our facility.

Our local offer attempts to answer many of these, but you can visit the rest of our website to find out more. We will also be happy to answer any questions over the phone or arrange for you and your child to visit the school, so please just get in touch.

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What is the school's approach to teaching and learning?

Before your child even starts at Launchpad KS3, we want to learn as much about your child as possible. We will speak to their mainstream school, you and your child and work hard to make sure that we understand what works for you and what you both want to achieve whilst at school. We want to learn about what your child enjoys, what their strengths are and what they are interested in.

On starting at Launchpad KS3 teachers will complete baseline assessments to find the level your child is working at as they enter the school. The results will help teachers to plan lessons and set achievable yet challenging targets for your child. We will continue to regularly assess your child during their time at Launchpad KS3 and we really enjoy celebrating pupil achievements and successes as they develop. Teachers will provide informal progress reports on a regular basis to you and tell you how your child is progressing and what they are doing well in.

Pupils are grouped with consideration given to year group, academic ability and group dynamics within the unit. As well as accessing the Key stage 3 curriculum, all pupils will attend a mentoring lesson every week where they focus on their personal behaviour and attendance over time and set and revise targets to support improvements in these areas. The curriculum is also enhanced by a higher proportion of personal, social and health education than that offered in many mainstream schools.

All of our staff have received training in strategies to help people with behavioural difficulties, social and communication difficulties and ADHD to support the learning and behaviour.

All our classes are small in size (max. 8), with at least one Teacher and one Senior Learning Assistant. There are also Senior Learning Assistants available throughout the school day should any young people need additional support outside the classroom.

If your child needs extra help to achieve their potential one to one sessions can be arranged to help reading or writing. Visual timetables or instructions can be produced to prevent over reliance on support staff and increase independence. Specialist resources can be provided if your child has a specific difficulty e.g. coloured overlays or paper can help pupils with dyslexia.

Your child will be allocated a keyworker, who will be your first point of contact. They will speak to you to report on your child's progress and you can contact them if you need to speak to them at any other time.

During the year your child will experience other off-site learning. They will have access to a variety of curriculum-based learning opportunities to enhance the topics being taught in class, amongst a host of other activities, which will help them to become more confident, healthy and active. Every half term pupils who have attended and behaved to an acceptable standard will also be invited on a reward outing.

Launchpad KS3 are committed to finding the most suitable onward placement for pupils and we will support parents and pupils as much as they need to ensure that the transition from Launchpad to the next placement is a success.

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### **How accessible is the school?**

Our building and surroundings offer a stimulating environment for our pupils to learn and enjoy their time at Launchpad KS3. The unit is accommodated in a single level building with ramp access and we also have disabled toilets which accommodate wheelchairs. We will always endeavour to support every child's need in ensuring they are able to access our buildings and classrooms as fully as possible.

At Launchpad KS3 we have a dedicated team who work closely with pupils and parents to ensure everyone is able to access the school in a fully supported and personalised manner. You can find information about the school and news of recent events on the website and in the welcome booklet. Information for pupils is displayed on a notice board in the pupil entrance area and on walls around the school and in all classrooms. Policies and procedures can be obtained from the school website or on request from school.

We know how daunting the first day of school can be for pupils and parents. You will be given a handbook prior to starting to help both of you learn about the routine of the school including timings for the day, lesson information and contact details. The handbook can be adapted for your child. For example, the font can be made larger if your child has a visual impairment.

If English is not the first language of your child we will provide specialist support for pupils alongside the English as an Additional Language team to support them in the classroom until your child can understand without support.

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### **How does the school review and evaluate outcomes?**

All pupils have targets set in each subject. You will be invited to review meetings to discuss the progress made by your child academically and socially and to discuss their targets going forward. Your child will be encouraged to attend and contribute to the meeting, with support if required, or alternatively they can prepare a presentation or report in the medium of their choice.

We make transition plans for pupils moving back to school and for those moving on to their next school, which include supported visits where possible, and appropriate handover of information to ensure that transition is as smooth as possible. We know that starting a new school is an anxious time and we aim to support this challenging time with care and empathy.

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## **How does the school keep pupils safe?**

Your child's safety and welfare is of the highest importance to us. When your child starts at Launchpad KS3, a decision will be made as to whether a personalised risk assessment based on all the information we have received needs to be in place.

Risk assessments can be produced for all areas and activities on and off-site. Risk assessments are completed from a school perspective, taking into account safety, communication and behavioural needs. Ongoing risk assessments will be carried out by all staff who work with your child. The risk assessment can be updated at any time.

Whenever your child goes off-site our staff will have obtained risk assessments for the activity and will complete their own risk assessment taking into account the location and the pupils going. Our approach to risk is 'risk beneficial, not risk adverse'. This means that our pupils are able to experience a range of activities, but are able to do so in a safe and controlled environment.

From the moment your child arrives at school to the time the school day finishes, your child will be well supervised and supported by our team of highly skilled and trained staff. If your child does not attend and we have not been contacted a call home will be made to make sure they are safe.

All school staff contribute to a whole school briefing at the beginning of each day and any information or messages regarding pupils are disseminated to staff so the school always operates with a high level of understanding about any issues or any changes to the individual needs of each child. There is also a further staff meeting after school every week.

Bullying is not allowed at Launchpad KS3 and even minor incidences will be dealt with promptly. If your child feels they have been bullied they can tell any staff member but there are also posters/leaflets around the school with information about who they can talk to in confidence. We sometimes have assemblies about bullying, especially during anti-bullying week and address bullying in PSHE lessons on a regular basis. The staff use restorative justice approaches to deal quickly and effectively with any issues that do arise.

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## **How do we support medical needs in school?**

Any child with an EHCP will have their health information kept in their file so the staff working with your child are aware of their needs and if they have any medication requirements. Before your child starts at Launchpad KS3 we will talk with you and ensure we have all the relevant health information from you.

If your child is unwell during their time at school we will communicate with you and ensure that your child is well looked after and receives the correct medical support, if required.

If your child needs to take medication at school our staff will make sure they are given the right amount at the right time. They keep it safely locked in a secure cupboard and make sure they record the medication, the amount and the time it was given to your child by signing and countersigning the record sheet.

The emotional wellbeing of all of our pupils is considered in all areas of our school's activity.

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## **How does the school communicate with parents?**

From the moment that we know that your child will be coming to our school we will begin to communicate and liaise with you to ensure that we develop the strongest relationship with you and the best understanding of your child possible. Before your child starts we will meet with you and answer any questions or address any concerns that you or your child may have.

You will receive a phone call every day to let you know about your child's day to make sure you are fully informed about their progress. You are also very welcome to call us at any time if there is anything you wish to discuss.

If your child is absent we will contact you to make sure they are safe.

We will arrange review meetings on a regular basis to update you on your child's progress and plan their next steps. If your child is dual registered a member of staff from their mainstream school will also attend. If you require, we can communicate via email. If you need to speak to anyone in the school you can ring the main school number. If the person you want is teaching or in a meeting they will return the call as soon as they can. You can make an appointment to speak to specific staff, but we also operate an open door policy and so you can call in if you have a general enquiry at any time.

We value the thoughts and opinions of our pupils and their parents and carers, even if it is about an issue that you feel that we have not dealt with well. When your child joins the school we will make you aware of our complaints procedure and let you know how we will respond to any complaints you may have. You can also give verbal feedback to the school at any time.

We conduct regular parental surveys to understand what we are doing well and what areas we can improve. We want to ensure that you are able to share your views and help us deliver the highest possible standards of education, care and support for you and your child.

We understand the importance of confidentiality and operate to the highest standards possible to ensure that we communicate with you in an appropriate, considerate and confidential manner around all aspects of your child's education and care.

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## **How does the school promote working together?**

The continued success of our school is in many ways down to our commitment to work closely with our pupils, parents and their schools. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and play their part in making our school the best it can be. By working together and understanding every individual child's needs, we will be in the best position possible to meet and exceed the objectives for your child as detailed in their reviews.

Pupils are able to complete questionnaires about school life and their views and feedback will be taken into account at their review meetings, or through the pupils' voice feedback forms. All pupils attend our weekly community meeting where they are consulted on a variety of aspects of school life and are able to put their views forward in a safe and controlled environment.

Our staff will work with other people involved in your child's care. Sometimes external agencies such as health workers, social workers, Priority Families, CAMHs and other agency leaders need to meet with school staff. They are invited to meetings to share their ideas which can be arranged at school. The school also hold termly multiagency

planning and consultation meetings to enable further support to be accessed from services such as LASCs and the Educational Psychology Service.

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### **What help and support does the school offer to families?**

We understand that to achieve the best outcomes for your child we will also need to work closely and offer support and help to you and your family. We offer many different types of practical help and resources for you to support your child outside of school.

We will communicate with you regularly so we are aware of the help you need and find out how to obtain it. It might be help to improve your child's behaviour, health, independence, school placement considerations or activities outside school.

If you are planning for a change in your child's future educational placement we can provide guidance and support, arranging school visits if needed.

Referrals can also be made to a variety of external agencies to support you with any areas of difficulty you or your child may need additional support with.

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### **How does the school support new pupils and school leavers?**

Before your child starts at Launchpad KS3 we will meet you and your child and really get to know both of you. We want to make sure that you all feel as comfortable as possible and are able to look forward to starting at Launchpad KS3

We will gather information from your child's school to ascertain your child's academic levels and behavioural information. You and your child will be invited to an initial planning meeting, along with a member of staff from the referring school and any other appropriate professionals. This is a good opportunity to find out about the daily structure of the school and ask any questions you may have about the referral and the placement.

When it is time for your child to move back to school or on to a new placement we will support them with transition sessions if necessary. We work very closely with schools to devise personalised reintegration packages to suit every individual and their specific needs. Your child is central to this process and their thoughts and feelings inform the plans made.

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### **What extra-curricular activities does the school offer?**

Children are supported in fitness and social activities at breaktimes and staff aim to develop social skills and opportunities for making friends at lunch and breaks. Staff can offer after school clubs in activities that the current cohort are interested in, including arts and crafts and baking.

Homework is provided to all pupils (dependent upon individual circumstances) and focuses on Literacy, Numeracy and Science.

If you have further questions or you would like to arrange to visit the school, please contact Rachel Guyer, on 01744 677187 or [rachelguyer@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:rachelguyer@sthelens.gov.uk)