

Somerset School

SEND Report 2019-20



This report is designed to inform you of the types of support available for your child at Somerset School. It will help you understand who can help and how this help can be accessed.

Cambian Somerset School is an independent, DfE-registered, co-educational day school, providing specialist education for up to 40 students, aged 10-18 years.

Somerset School is a community which promotes respect for others and celebrates diversity. We have a strong Safeguarding culture to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all.

We strive to ensure that every student is supported and inspired to achieve through a specialist, safe and engaging learning environment. We recognise students for their uniqueness and seek to nurture their individual abilities. Personal aspirations are fostered, helping students transition in to a successful adulthood where they are equipped to make a confident and positive contribution to society. We support students to manage their additional needs, develop coping strategies, improve their social and communication skills and increase their independence.

Our aim is to ensure that students leave Somerset School having reached their academic potential. We want all students to become well-rounded, confident, resilient young people, ready for their next step in learning and life. We will achieve this by individual needs being identified and met, leading to exceptional personal achievements both socially and emotionally.

All staff are committed to the concept of unconditional positive regard for all students. We strongly believe that forming positive relationships and excellent teaching strategies are key to student success. It is about modelling high levels of resilience and containment. It is our belief that it is important that staff consistently demonstrate ways in which we manage our own stress and anxiety, whilst routinely demonstrating good decision-making and sophisticated emotional intelligence. By adopting this approach we can support students to develop these valuable life skills. Somerset School staff persistently aspire to be the best they can be and it is this positive culture of learning and improvement which enables Somerset School to be an inclusive high achieving community.

Prior to entry to the school, we liaise with key staff from your child's previous educational setting, as well as professionals who have contributed to the EHCP process, in order to gain essential information that allows us to understand and plan for your child's needs. This information, along with the EHCP and associated appendices, is used to develop a Pen Portrait which is then shared with all staff and professionals who will be working with your child. A Student Learning Plan will be drawn up detailing any additional support that we feel your child will need beyond that of our core offer.

How will Somerset School support my child?

- The Pen Portrait completed prior to entry will be shared with all staff and planning will be adjusted according to specific needs, strengths and preferences outlined by the teachers working with your child.
- Within one month of entry, a Student Learning Plan will be written. Within this document, key data will be recorded based on completed assessments, along with a summary of key



information and key needs (taken from the EHCP). A series of personal outcomes to be achieved will also be established which will be linked to your child's EHCP. These outcomes will be used to inform teachers' planning and will be the focus of regular tutor group discussions and reflections.

- When a child is struggling to regulate their emotions, staff will employ de-escalation strategies in the first instance, using such interventions as Thrive, PACE and sensory regulation. As a last resort, 'MAPA' techniques will be used to physically intervene in order to keep your child and others safe.
- If your child has specific needs where staff need additional training and guidance, this will be offered and external professionals will be involved when required.
- Regular meetings are held whereby the needs of individuals are discussed as necessary and plans implemented to address any emerging difficulties. Actions are communicated to all relevant staff.

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

- All students are taught in small class groups or 1:1 by specialist teachers and teaching assistants.
- Our philosophy is to provide a holistic and individualised approach designed and tailored to support students to fulfil their potential. Staff are experts in their field and are consistently challenging both students and themselves in order to overcome barriers to success and provide students with the tools they require to thrive.
- We aim to embed a nurturing strategy throughout the school as we realise that effective learning will take place when lessons are outstanding, staff are confident and students have high self-esteem and feel safe in their learning environment.
- Throughout their time at Somerset School, Student Learning Plans will inform teachers of strengths and learning preferences and offer clear guidance in the form of personalised outcomes that target key areas for development.
- We recognise that social and emotional development, including the development of social communication skills, are a crucial part of learning for all of our students. We have an Emotional Wellbeing Team to support students and we use the 'Thrive' and 'Trauma Informed' approach to assess their level of social and emotional development, identify key areas for development and track progress against these.
- We also acknowledge the importance of applying practical, physical approaches to enhance learning and social development. In addition to class based learning, students are given the opportunity to use the outdoor environment to develop their independence, problem-solving and social skills.

How will I know how my child is doing?

- All of the students at Somerset School have an EHCP. This means that every year you will be invited to an Annual Review meeting where their educational provision can be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), their tutor and where appropriate, professionals working with your child and the educational professionals around your child. At this meeting, you will be able to share your views, your child's views and hear the views of those working with your child and share in the process of planning for the next year.

- Data progress reports will be disseminated each half term along with a final written report at the end of the year. In addition to this Academic Mentoring Days are arranged at the end of Autumn Term 2 to discuss progress made and targets for the rest of the academic year. Further opportunities to discuss next steps and student progress are available around key transitions such as Key Stage 4 Options and Post 16 transition.
- Above all, we feel it is essential that we maintain regular contact and a positive, supportive partnership with you as parents and carers. To this end, tutors will keep in regular contact to update you on your child's school experience and our Emotional Wellbeing Team are always available to talk to you about any concerns you have about your child's wellbeing both at school and at home.

What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

- Somerset School embraces the 'Thrive' approach which provides nurture support and develops emotional resilience. We have a licensed Thrive practitioner and in collaboration with your child's tutor, the Emotional Wellbeing Team and other educational professionals, they will carry out an assessment to establish your child's stage of emotional development and key needs. They will also be able to develop an action plan to support your child's emotional development and meet their needs.
- As a nurturing school, the role of the tutor is essential. Your child will have timetabled sessions which will enable them to foster a positive relationship. The tutor acts as one of the emotionally available adults for your child but it is important that the tutor is one of a group of staff that are available to your child.
- We recognise that a number of our students will benefit from alternative therapeutic input to support them in addressing their emotional needs. To this end, we have a number of staff who are trained to deliver a range of sensory integration activities, mental health and wellbeing support and mentoring/outdoor education. Alongside this, Somerset School has its own therapy dog, who supports interventions in social and emotional development.

What specialist services and expertise are available at Somerset School?

- In our school, we have staff with specialist knowledge in Autism, ASC, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Attachment Disorder, Dyslexia, Sensory Processing, PACE, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Outdoor Education, Trauma Informed Approaches, PDA, and a licensed Thrive practitioner.
- There is also access to an Educational Psychologist, specialist Dyslexia teachers through the Learning Support Service, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and other therapeutic services.
- The introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans have identified a greater emphasis on specialist services from Health Care being involved and communicating a joint approach to working with and supporting young people.

What training have the staff supporting my child received?



At Somerset School, your child will benefit from the support of a specialist staff team who receive ongoing specialist training that supports them in meeting their developmental and educational needs. We follow a robust training programme which covers all of the statutory training expected of an education establishment such as Safeguarding and First Aid etc...

In addition to this most recently, the staff team has engaged in the following training courses:

- Sensory Processing
- MAPA
- PDA Awareness
- Autism Awareness
- Trauma Informed Training
- PACE
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

Staff receive a weekly reading list in addition to the CPD courses to ensure that we keep up to date with the latest research, approaches and interventions available.

How will my child be included in activities outside of school, including school trips?

- As part of the ongoing support of your child Somerset School complete a risk assessments for all activities both onsite and offsite. Staff will assess the risk for your child based on their identified needs. We operate an inclusive policy to ensure access for all children.
- Risk assessments are completed wherever necessary in order that approaches can be adjusted to facilitate their inclusion in planned activities.
- Through this approach, we are able to offer a wide range of outdoor and offsite activities and experiences to your child.

How accessible is the school environment?

- Somerset School is set within a historic Paper Mill. It has been adapted to be accessible to students, parents and carers with physical limitations and/or mobility impairments, by way of an elevator.
- Outside the school there are designated disabled parking spaces from which the building can be easily accessed.
- There is one accessible toilet in the reception area and one accessible toilet/shower room situated on the middle floor.

How will the school support my child during transition?

- Prior to entry, you will be invited, with your child, to visit the school where you will be given a tour of the site and facilities by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. There will also be the opportunity to meet key staff and ask any questions you may have about the provision we offer at Somerset School.
- Our Emotional Wellbeing Team will also arrange to visit you and your child at home to support you and gather additional information.

- We will liaise with key staff from your child's previous setting to develop a Pen Portrait and transition plan. Each plan is bespoke to the child and will involve taster days and a phased introduction. The transition plan will best ease your child's integration into Somerset School.
- Our drive to support transition into Post 16 education begins at the beginning of Key Stage 4 when our Year 10 students will begin to discuss their options for their futures.
- Somerset School has excellent links with colleges across the authority and many of our Year 10 and 11 students access largely vocational college placements which begins a long and considered process of your child's transition into a Post 16 setting.
- There will also be numerous opportunities over Key Stage 4 for your child to meet with staff to consider the options available on the basis of interests and academic goals and future planning will present a key focus for consideration during Annual Reviews.
- Following transition, wherever possible, we maintain contact with the students and we always ensure there is a thorough process of data sharing and discussion with the receiving institution.
- For some of our students there is an option to remain at Somerset School into Sixth Form. This is discussed with the placing Local Authority along with all stakeholders involved.

How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved?

- From the moment Somerset School has been named as part of your child's EHCP, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be in contact to talk you through the transition process and all relevant paperwork. Whilst your child is on roll with us, our Emotional Wellbeing team and your child's tutor will be keen to help you; by signposting support agencies, supporting with health appointments, helping you seek support and advice with your child's education, providing a direct connection to the school, accompanying you to meetings and supporting you with Housing Support issues should they arise.
- Staff regularly monitor attendance to support you in ensuring your child attends school regularly in order that they are equipped to fulfil their potential.
- As previously mentioned, the relationship between student and tutor is essential and we recognise that an integral element of this relationship is close contact between the tutor and home. Your child's tutor will contact you at least once a week.
- Every term, opportunities are available for you to attend events held at school. These are celebratory events and really help to build the sense of family in our learning community.
- If you feel you would like to contribute more actively, please do contact us for details about how you could become a link Governor in certain key areas of the school. In addition we have a parent forum who meet to discuss developments across the School.

Who can I contact for more information?

Please contact the School office and speak to any member of the School Leadership Team on 01823 443133 or email somersetschooloffice@cambiangroup.com.