



**TOR VIEW**

**Intensive  
Support Centre  
(ISC)  
Brochure**

# Intensive Support Centre (ISC)

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## THE VISION

The Intensive Support Centre (ISC) was developed in 2005 to provide specialist county-wide provision for learners with autism and other communication difficulties who exhibit severe challenging conduct. The majority of students educated within the ISC are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The ISC provides a safe and stimulating educational environment and an individualised approach to teaching and learning.

Many different approaches are used, including aspects of: Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communications Handicapped Children (TEACCH); Structure, Positive ethos, Empathetic, Low Arousal and Links (SPELL); Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) and Promoting Early Interactive Communications-Dorset (PEIC-D).



## RATIONALE

The main aims for the broad and balanced curriculum provided within the ISC are to enhance communication skills, develop appropriate behaviour and improve self-regulation and self-control. Within the ISC there is greater scope to develop learner knowledge facilitating stability, continuity, consistency, care and control.

The primary aim for all the learners educated in the ISC is to develop the widest range of skills possible to sustain inclusion in the mainstream part of the school with minimal support. The ISC specialises in working with parents or carers to develop creative solutions to holistically develop the young person. We also specialise in accessing the community appropriately alongside members of the public.

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## A BRIEF HISTORY

The foundations for the Intensive Support Centre (ISC) lie in our previous success with a learner diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and severe challenging conduct. Having been out of education for a year due to his behaviour, and with no suitable placement to meet his needs the ISC was created. Progressively the learner developed better communication skills and increased self control, leading to improved learning and participation. The learner was included into the main school. This proved, and continues to be, a huge success! This learner has progressed significantly over the years so that now he no longer requires 1:1 support and currently has a place at a residential college that doesn't have facilities for challenging behaviour.

## FACILITIES

The ISC is a standalone building with a range of specialist facilities. Each classroom is tailored to the needs of the learners, offering opportunities for social interaction and individual target work. A variety of spaces allow the learners in need of time out from the classroom the option to choose appropriately.



The centre offers access to play, creative and leisure facilities which are well resourced with activities that are perfectly matched to the learner's cognitive development and age range. For example, there are musical instruments and a wide range of other equipment to stimulate imagination and teach the learners to play. A life skills kitchen and sensory intervention environment room support each learner's holistic development.

## STAFFING

The ISC caters for up to twelve learners and is highly staff-intensive, providing 1:1 Teaching Assistants (TAs) plus an Additional Needs Teaching Assistant Level 3, two Learning Mentors and a Lead Teacher.

The high staff ratio within the ISC enables it to flow smoothly, effectively managing conduct and providing a safe support system. Within the Centre, the TAs are allocated to an individual learner in the role of a Key Worker. The Key Worker's function



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is to work closely with their learner. However, all TAs are timetabled to work with all ISC learners within their class. This strategy helps the learner to generalise skills as they work with a range of adults.

The Key Worker's knowledge of the learner is essential when accompanying them outside the ISC environment and to facilitate inclusion into the main school curriculum. The Teacher works closely with parents/guardians, ensuring communication between school and home occurs on a daily basis.

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum provided in the ISC is based around a 'person-centred' approach to meet the needs of each learner. It focuses on developing communication, social, personal and self-help skills, including learning to learn skills. Communication takes place in many forms within the Centre, including, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Makaton, gesture and oral communication. The Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS) is also used to assess and develop communication.



The syllabus consists of individual 1:1 sessions, group communication lessons, inclusion within the main school, functional life skills, sensory interaction, community sessions and physical exercise.

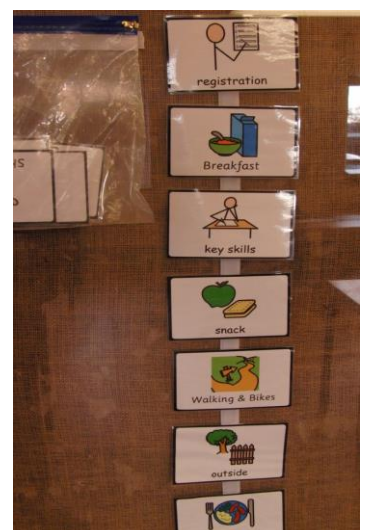
## TYPICAL LESSONS IN THE ISC

### Registration

Learners enter the classroom and sit at their own table. When all learners have entered the classroom, the allocated learner collects the register and brings it back to the classroom. Learners sit in a group and say good morning / hello appropriately, using 'Big Macs', Makaton, PECS or verbally. Learners then establish the day and the weather outlook.



Learners (individually) access their own timetable. Some learners have a visual timetable that is presented one subject at a time: other learners are presented with the entire day's events as appropriate. Other learners can be informed in a written or verbal form.



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## Physical Exercise

Physical exercise is also of great importance to ISC learners, it provides an opportunity to release excess energy, stimulates the mind and enhances concentration skills. It is therefore very important that the exercise occurs on a daily basis and is part of the morning routine, creating a positive foundation for the day ahead. Physical exercise is also considered across the curriculum including community studies sessions where learners often have access to local park areas, outdoor gym equipment and other physical activities that can be completed in the local community.



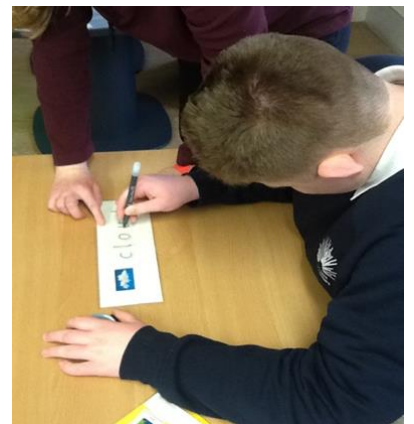
All learners also have access to the school bike track where they can walk, run or use equipment to travel around the track. Learners use different types of bicycles depending on their ability and have a full session of exercise.

## Individual Target Sessions

Learners work through a range of different individual targets during target sessions. Targets address a wide range of areas of development; these are discussed with parents and other professionals at the Annual Review and Planning Meetings.

Individual target sessions occur on a daily basis and tend to be short sessions for the individual learner. A list of current and future targets is maintained in the learner's Individual Targets File. Individual learners are taken to a distraction free area to work 1:1 with their TA or class teacher.

All successes are celebrated in an appropriate way according to learner needs and may range from individual feedback to receiving a certificate in the main school assembly.



## Aromatherapy and Massage

Learners work within a group and experience a wide range of relaxing techniques to help them de-stress and reduce any frustration or pent up emotion that may lead to challenging conduct.

Learners are encouraged to participate in foot, hand or head massage. Calming background music and burning incense enhance the relaxing atmosphere. Post massage and foot spa, learners are encouraged to lie down and experience the



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ambiance that has been created through the session.

## Swimming

Learners work within the pool at Marl Pits on a weekly basis. Learners are motivated to undress with minimal help and supervision depending upon their skills and are encouraged to walk unaided to the pool.

Learners participate in a full range of activities including: developing their confidence and independence in the water and developing specific swimming skills such as kicking legs, using floats and other swimming aids. Learners are also motivated to play with a variety of equipment, and engage in appropriate play and interaction. Once finished in the pool learners are encouraged to dry and dress themselves before returning to the Intensive Support Centre.

## Community

As part of the weekly timetable, learners access the community to develop and enhance their personal independence skills. Examples of places visited include, Victoria Park, Rosendale ski slope, Asda and local cafes. Learners also engage in walks around the community to develop their road safety and awareness skills.



During these sessions, learners work alongside staff members who are most familiar to them to create a calm and trusted environment which allows for boundaries to be explored and progress to be made.



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## Living Skills

Throughout their time in the ISC, learners are taught a wide range of life skills designed to promote independence at a level suited to their individual needs.

This is completed through a range of sessions, with topics varied throughout the year and covering themes such as home management, clothing care, basic cooking, horticulture and personal care whilst using the onsite facilities available. For elements of these sessions, learners access the college flat, allowing for skill rehearsal and development in a true to life home environment.

Specific targets across these areas can also be identified for individual learners and integrated into key skills targets and everyday activities, giving learners more opportunities to develop and generalise these skills.



## COMMUNICATION

Learners in the ISC often have varying abilities to communicate, ranging from non-verbal communication to spoken language. To support the development of communication across all levels, learners benefit from the total communication environment which includes the use of spoken language, visual supports and additional alternative methods such as PECS.

### Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)



The use of the PECS is embedded across the curriculum and is accompanied by Makaton sign language. Learners are at various phases of PECS and have individual targets. Learners often work within a group where they take turns in using PECS to communicate. Learners are motivated by the use of preferred items, for example, certain foods or favourite items,

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encouraging students to use this form of communication. During PECS sessions, learners develop learning to learn skills, for example, sitting at a table within a group for a prolonged period of time; waiting; turn taking; making choices (preferred and non-preferred); listening and looking (picture discrimination).

### Promoting Early Interactive Conversation – Dorset (PEIC-D)

PEIC-D is a speech and language programme specifically designed for autistic learners or those with severe or complex learning difficulties who may have difficulties with communication. The programme aims to revisit early interaction skills including tolerance of others, turn taking and imitation, supporting learners in both acknowledging and later participating in early interactions with those around them.



Staff work closely with learners, completing enjoyable activities following their learner's cues and interests. Skills are developed in a way which removes the demand that learners may otherwise experience, allowing them to build their confidence and level of comfort with early communicative activities. This is overseen by our school Speech and Language therapist who reviews learner progress and guides and supports staff through the programme.

### Sensory Interaction



All learners in the ISC have a sensory passport detailing their sensory profiles including their likes, dislikes and regulatory activities. The activities are based around vestibular and proprioceptive ideas which assist in the regulation of a learner. These are updated regularly to reflect the changing preferences of the learners. Throughout a day there are timetabled lessons for sensory interaction such as Jabadao and Sherborne where the class participates together encouraging turn taking and peer interaction.

Sensory input is encouraged throughout the day on a proactive basis and can be undertaken at any time where it is required or beneficial. This is frequently used to support transition periods such as when learners arrive into school, between lessons or before home time.



## CARE AND CONTROL

**“Training in positive handling strategies through a whole setting holistic approach to managing difficult, disturbing and sometimes dangerous behaviours.”**

**“Training enables staff to feel more confident and competent in their management of disruptive and "challenging" behaviour, reducing stress by increasing safety and security for all involved.”**  
**([www.team-teach.co.uk](http://www.team-teach.co.uk))**

Learners in the ISC may present with extremely challenging conduct and it is essential that their conduct is handled positively and consistently. All staff working in the ISC have completed Team Teach training including Advanced Team Teach. The training equips staff with a range of strategies to deal with challenging conduct.

All learners in the Centre have a Conduct Support Plan which details the nature of their challenging conduct, the protocol and language to be used and any appropriate positive handling. Whenever possible de-escalation and distraction techniques are used to prevent the need for positive handling.

The Conduct Support Plan is accompanied by a Risk Assessment to ensure that the safety of learners and staff is maintained at all times.

Serious incidents are recorded in detail with information on **antecedents** (i.e. what happened before the incident), **behaviour** (i.e. detailed account of the incident) and **consequences** (i.e. what were the outcomes). Following de-escalation learners are given the opportunity to repair their relationship with the staff involved through appropriate physical contact, gesture, facial expression and humour.

All serious incidents are reported to parents / carers including any record of injury to learners or staff. Parents and external agencies are able to experience all positive handling techniques and role-play of Team Teach is often part of planning meetings.

Serious incidents are monitored by staff in the centre, members of the schools' Senior Management Team and representatives from external agencies including the LEA Advisory Team and the Educational Psychology Service.

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## INDUCTION

All learners entering the ISC are assessed using a variety of assessment tools. The induction period offers the learner time to settle into a new routine and environment. New targets are set and prioritised according to the learners' abilities, and these are discussed with parents and a range of outside agencies.

## INCLUSION

Initially, during the assessment period, learners remain in the ISC to enable staff to develop an individual timetable to meet their needs. On completion of these assessments learners are included into lessons with peers as appropriate. Tor View is committed to the inclusion of all learners.

Learners in the ISC are included as much as possible in the life of the school. ISC learners mix with their peers at break time, lunchtime and home time. ISC learners also have access to specialist facilities in the main school, for example the school hall, the Science, Food Technology and Art rooms. Lessons are selected according to the skills, interests and abilities of individual learners and including: a wide range of subjects including, Music, Horticulture, Technology and ICT.



## PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Throughout the school parents / carers and staff work in partnership. The intensity of staffing in the ISC ensures that parents / carers are fully updated on progress. The Learning Mentors complete a daily diary and parents and carers are invited to add their comments on behaviour, health, activities undertaken and to raise any issues. Diaries are regularly monitored by the class teacher. Throughout school parents are invited to attend the Annual Review and planning meetings. The purpose of the planning meeting is to discuss the placement and agree any changes in routines, to plan curriculum developments and to resolve any care and control issues. Parents are also encouraged to contact the Lead Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher to raise

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any concerns.

Recording in the form of photographs and video is an essential part of the ISC curriculum and parents/ carers have access to this data so that they can share in their young person's successes.

## **EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

The ISC is an innovative and cutting-edge development and as such attracts interest from many agencies external to the school. The school as a whole and the staff in the ISC are keen to share their knowledge and expertise with professionals from other agencies whilst continuing to develop their own practice and knowledge.

Learners in the ISC benefit from links with a range of services including Educational and Clinical Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Paediatrician and Psychiatry support, Learning Disability Nursing Team services, Advanced Sensory Integration support and various representatives of Social Services including the individual social workers of learners in the centre.

Staff from external agencies are involved at a number of levels, providing support for parents and learners, monitoring practice and making informal visits to the ISC. To minimise disruption to the learners and staff working in the centre visits are carefully scheduled.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Places within the Intensive Support Centre are requested by the Local Education Authority for learners who require the structure and facilities offered. Enhanced funds are required as exceptional needs funding for a Teaching Assistant Level 2.