



Torfield School



For children and young people who have a range of Special Educational Needs



Welcome to Torfield School



Foreword: Head of School, Natalie Shuttleworth, says...

I am very proud to welcome you to our inspirational primary special school. We cater for children who have a range of Special

Educational Needs (SEN), particularly 'Autism and Associated Communication and Language Difficulties' (ACLD). In practice this means a large number of our children are autistic. A significant number of pupils also have speech, language and communication difficulties and other complex SEN. Every child that comes to Torfield has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that describes the particular needs they have.

Our philosophy

Our philosophy is that our children come first. It is our job to ensure all our children have the tools to equip them for the next stage of their life, be it transition to Torfield School, a new phase within our school, or a new primary, secondary or special school. We strive to provide an

exemplary educational experience for all of our children and to be 'more than a school' for our children and their families. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and professionals.

"An outstanding climate for learning"

"The atmosphere is such that pupils know that they are valued and supported both as individuals and collectively. There is a clear shared bond between staff and pupils that underpins, supports and develops the outstanding climate for learning."

Craig Pamphilon, School External Advisor Annual Report July 2016.

Achievement

We are very proud of the achievements of our pupils, who make progress in so many ways, often exceeding the expectations of their families. Our personalised approach provides the right kind of care, support and intervention that promotes independence and enables all of our children to learn.

Dedicated staff

Our dedicated and highly skilled team of teachers and support staff work with families and professional colleagues to ensure we provide a consistent approach to meeting each child's needs, identifying what steps have been achieved so far and what they need to learn next.

Parent partnership

As you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us. We value the partnership between school and parents and carers because it is only by working closely with each other, that pupils can achieve their full potential. We work very hard to involve you in every step of your child's time here. We hope that your association with us will bring both happiness and success for your child.

Get in touch

We welcome your interest in our school and ask that you come and see us for a visit while our children are present; when you can see the school at work. Please email us at torfieldoffice@tasmat.org.uk to make an appointment.



Executive Headteacher of Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust, Richard Preece, says...

Welcome to our wonderful Trust. We are very proud of the work that we do to support and challenge children and young people at Torfield and Saxon Mount to be the best that they can be.

Understanding

We understand the needs of our pupils and the difficulties they face, as well as the difficulties many parents and carers will have encountered in order to secure a place in a special school.

We also understand that a special school is not where some parents/carers want their child to be placed for the duration of their school career and in these cases we always do our best to support and reassure the families with whom we work. We are always ambitious for our children to become as independent, resilient and successful as possible in all aspects of their learning, social and personal development.

Improving standards

We constantly strive to improve standards in everything we do and we aim to provide consistently high quality educational experiences for all of our children.

Next steps

Finally, we aim to raise aspirations for children and young people, enabling them to be confident and successful in their next step in education and in their preparation for adulthood and we genuinely try to 'go the extra mile'. This is an area of our work of which I am most proud.

Welcome to Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust.

Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust

The Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust was established in October 2014 and is the accountable body for both Torfield School and Saxon Mount School. Both schools cater for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, including autism, language and communication difficulties and complex learning difficulties. Jointly the federation caters for around 200 pupils aged 4-17. The schools also support local mainstream schools and colleges in their work to meet the needs of children and

young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We have offered Outreach support and training to mainstream school staff, transition programmes for Year 12 students at local colleges and as a Trust, we aim to continue to build our reputation as a centre of excellence in our field.

Although Torfield and Saxon Mount work closely together in a number of areas by sharing resources, expertise and strategies, they remain separate schools with their own distinctive ethos and values.



School day

Settling in

The school day starts at 9.00am. Pupils may arrive from 8.45am. Pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 have a 15 minute playtime mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Lunch is between 12:00 and 1:00 when pupils will also have a 30 minute playtime. Our school day ends at 3.15pm.

Transition

Children and their families are really well supported when starting at Torfield, whether in Reception or during Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. We have a bespoke starting school storybook as well as a number



of other resources that are used to support all pupils who are new to the school.

Transport

The Local Authority may provide transport between your home and school. To ensure the safety of our pupils, escorts will travel on all minibuses and in some single taxis. It is the responsibility of parent and carers to ensure that their child travels safely and behaves appropriately on the transport.

Uniform

We believe a school uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it children quickly feel part of the school community. All children are expected to wear the uniform.

School meals

Children have the choice of either a hot nutritious meal from our school meals service, or bringing a packed lunch into school. We provide all children with fresh water. We are committed to ensuring that children eat healthily and a varied menu is provided, with vegetarian options and salads also available each day. Sample menus are available on the school website.

Free school meals

For children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, the government provides free school meals. For older children, you need to be in receipt of certain benefits. Our office staff are always happy to help and provide information or advice in relation to claiming free school meals and by helping to complete forms if needed.

Every child has the right to a great education, whatever their needs or abilities – and Nicola believes her children could not have done better than at Torfield School

Nicola and Andrew Carey have three children, Olivia, Henry and Ruben, who are 10, seven and five years old respectively. The family lives in Bexhill.

Instant attraction

Nicola believes that if it were not for Torfield School, Olivia and Ruben would not be at school at all. Both children are on the autistic spectrum and both have learning disabilities and, although Olivia managed well enough at her nursery, it soon became clear that there was no viable option in terms of mainstream primary education.

“As Olivia was our first child we had nothing to compare her to and for some time thought that she was just a bit delayed and would catch up later,” Nicola explains. “However, when we visited the local schools we realised that they were completely unsuitable for her needs and accepted that we had to look for more specific care. When we walked into Torfield we were absolutely blown away – we knew immediately that it was exactly what we wanted for Olivia, and she has flourished beyond our hopes.”

A new life-skill

From being completely non-verbal when she started at Torfield, Olivia now very rarely stops talking! Although she still suffers with anxiety she is sociable and bubbly, and she has learned to self-calm which is something Nicola is especially delighted about. “Previously, if there was too much noise or activity around her she would be unable to cope and go into a huge meltdown. The strategies that the school have put in place for her have worked incredibly well and she knows that when things get too much, she can take herself off into a quiet area, or put on ear-defenders. This is a wonderful skill for her to have attained and means that we can take her out and about without risking a panic attack.”

Safety first: predicting the unpredictable

Safety is something that concerns every parent and in Olivia’s case this is an even more important issue, as she has a tendency to run off unexpectedly. For that reason, Nicola is impressed with the security measures which Torfield takes very seriously. “Parents need to know that their children are safe at school, especially when they can be unpredictable. I know without a doubt that Olivia’s welfare is just as important to the school as it is to us and I trust everyone completely. She even went on a trip to a London theatre and had a fantastic time; the staff consulted closely with us beforehand and the risk assessment they carried out was as thorough as I could have wished. This is another thing I like about the school – they really listen to parents.”

Respect for parental input

The teachers at Torfield not only listen, but actively encourage feedback, such as with the design of the home/school communication system. “We were asked for ideas as to how best to maintain efficient and up-to-date contact and the result works wonderfully well,” says Nicola. “Like many families with children at Torfield, we don’t get everyday face-to-face contact with the staff because we live some miles away but ‘phone, email and the home/school book mean that we are in constant touch.”

Big steps forward

Ruben has only recently joined Torfield but although his learning disabilities are more severe than those of his sister, Nicola hopes that he will benefit to as great an extent. “He is still not talking but has learned to communicate through

picture cards, which helps a great deal. He is also a much better eater than before; he is encouraged to choose what he wants from the buffet-style lunch and has started eating things we hadn’t been able to persuade him to try at home. His sensory phobias have also improved, to the extent that he has overcome his fear of water and is now happy to go swimming in the school’s pool. He loves the Sensory Room and the softplay area; these are valuable therapies in themselves.”

Support for the whole family

It is fair to say that Nicola is passionate about Torfield School, and what it is able to offer her children. “If I had had to home-school Olivia and Ruben they would have missed out on such a lot – friendships, life skills, many experiences and opportunities – and Andrew and I would have missed out on a great deal of support, too. I feel very privileged that my special children are in such a special environment.”

Children say

Olivia: “I like being star of the week and I get to choose a prize in assembly. I feel happy and safe at school and I like playtime and music the best!”



Curriculum: creative and rewarding

Carefully planned activities

Learning at Torfield is delivered in carefully planned and differentiated activities and all pupils follow the National Curriculum or the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Although children join us with low levels of prior attainment, we expect all pupils to engage and behave well, so that they are able to make the best possible progress in their learning. Some children require additional support and so assessments are frequent and thorough in order to inform staff, who may then adjust learning programmes to meet the needs of individuals.

Early Years

Children's learning is largely play-based using high quality, age appropriate resources. Children are supported to join in both child-initiated and adult led activities. Our practice is largely informed by the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2 follow the learning opportunities from the Foundation Stage; which is adapted to meet the needs of each individual child.

Key Stage 2

Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will follow a two year topic cycle. Again planning and implementation will take in all areas of the National Curriculum.

Small groups

Class groups are small with high staff/pupil ratios to ensure that programmes designed to meet individual needs can be delivered. Most of our pupils leave us at the end of Year 6 and transfer to our federated partner school, Saxon Mount. Sometimes children transfer to mainstream secondary schools, or other special schools.

Academic and social progress

Children don't just learn academically, they also learn through social interaction. This is an aspect that our pupils can find particularly challenging. We understand this and provide lots of personal development opportunities.

Appropriate support

We assess pupils on entry to school. Appropriate speech and language support is then offered to all pupils who would benefit from it. This may be in-class support, small group work or intensive individual programmes delivered in blocks of time. We also have a weekly communication session which includes social use of language. All pupils are supported through access to a curriculum enriched with opportunities to develop communication skills.

Home learning

Home learning is considered to be an integral part of teaching/learning activities at Torfield School and extends opportunities for pupils to practice their newly learned skills and competencies. Class teachers will share our approach at meet-the-teacher sessions and during Family Workshops. Further information about our approach to learning can be found on our website.

Parent workshops

We do our best to help you to help your child at home too and provide regular parent workshops and programmes. These include guidance in using the home learning packages Education City, Purple Mash, Espresso and Clicker 7. Other workshops include E-Safety, Makaton, Managing Behaviour and Thinking Skills. These sessions are a great opportunity to share experiences with other parents.

Please always ask if you need help with home learning. Staff are available to provide on-going individual support to ensure your child is safe on the internet.

Moving on

We have an excellent track record in preparing children to move successfully into secondary schools. By the time our children leave Torfield School, we aim to have prepared them well for whatever their next stage is. Often this is a transition to a secondary age SEN school and many of our pupils go on to Saxon Mount School which is our Federated partner school. Sometimes children require a different kind of support and may move to a different special school.

Best possible opportunities

Some of our pupils are also able to make a successful transition into mainstream primary or secondary schools following a period of support from Torfield. In each case transition is well planned and supported in order to give children the best possible opportunities in their new school.



Rory is thriving and growing in confidence in the calm environment of Torfield School

Jason and Katie Boyd live in Bexhill with their children, Moira, aged eight, and Rory, aged six.

Rory joined Year One at Torfield in September 2017, having previously attended a mainstream primary school.

Good progress

Jason and Katie are delighted with the progress Rory has made since starting at Torfield School. Katie says: "He has picked up phonics really quickly and he is now learning to share. His social skills are definitely improving and he is a lot more confident and happy. He is getting on well because he is now in a calm environment. The staff are very skilled and we feel confident they know what they are doing. His relationship with his sister, Moira, has improved and they enjoy more happy times together now."

Anxiety issues

"Before Rory started at Torfield it felt as though we were living under a very dark cloud," Katie says. "I couldn't work and had a knot in my stomach every morning. We now know what we're doing from day to day, but when he was at his mainstream primary school, we couldn't plan anything because he was only accessing school part-time. Rory started school before he was diagnosed with ASD, but we had explained some of his issues to the staff. He has sensitive hearing and found the noise at school difficult to bear and he was constantly full of anxiety. The school would ring as soon as there was a problem and ask us to take him home."

Impressive school

The family had heard good things about Torfield when Rory was in nursery but wanted him to try a mainstream primary school and hoped he would be able to cope there. Katie says: "When it was obvious Rory wasn't happy, we

called an emergency meeting. The SENCO at his school also mentioned Torfield to us and when we went to look at it we were both very impressed. We could tell straight away it was the right environment for Rory. Our application was turned down initially as the local authority wanted to see if the mainstream school could do more to accommodate him. But after we reapplied, the teacher from Torfield came to observe Rory in his school setting and her report was a key factor in him being allowed to change schools.

Writing skills

"Rory got on really well at Torfield right from the start. He did half days to get him used to it but after the first week was attending full-time. We had tried to prepare him during the summer and the school had given us a transition book, which was very useful. Rory is now a lot calmer in everyday life. He can sit in a circle with other children whereas before he would run off. He can now ride a scooter as they are helping him develop his motor skills. He can read and write some words. The other day he wrote the word 'dog' on our chalk board at home and I was thrilled."

Proud of achievement

"I like the rewards scheme they have at Torfield. If the children do anything good they are given a smiley stamp. Once they have collected five, they win a prize. The first time he didn't seem bothered but now he is pleased to show me what he has won. He was recently made Star of the Week for being good at meal times every day and it was the first time I'd seen him proud of something he had achieved," Katie says.

Happy experiences

"Torfield is the perfect school for Rory. It feels calm and welcoming when you go in and we can tell he's having a good experience there because he talks about his teachers and the children he likes playing with. Now, if my phone rings, it is to tell me about something nice Rory has done at school."





Enriched curriculum: **trips and visitors**

Supporting independence

Pupils are encouraged to participate in the large number of curriculum trips and after school clubs that can support independence, learning and also provide social and personal development opportunities. This includes opportunities for older children to participate in residential trips.



Trips

To enrich the curriculum we take children on a wide range of educational, academic and cultural visits linked to their current topics. There are two minibuses for educational visits, and pupils at Torfield gain a huge amount from these high quality visits. These have included visits to:

- London theatres.
- Historical buildings and places of cultural significance.
- Drusillas Zoo.
- Herstmonceaux Science Centre.
- Museums and Art Galleries.
- Fire stations, police stations and other places where public services are provided to the community.

As well as supporting learning, educational visits support pupils to develop self help, independence and life skills. Visits to public amenities, supermarkets and other everyday places can help families to achieve family visits more successfully as well.

Residential Experience

Children in Year 6 take part in a residential visit at Hindleap Warren Activities Centre. This week long residential visit provides a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities including abseiling, zip-wire and archery.

Visitors

In addition to educational visits, we welcome a range of visitors to school who share their skills and experiences with our pupils. These include musicians, writers and illustrators, maths magicians and dance specialists.

Vincent is now beginning to fulfil his potential thanks to the caring staff at Torfield School

Kate Poyser lives in Bexhill with her sons, Alfie, aged 27, and Vincent, aged seven.

Vincent joined Year Two at Torfield in June 2017, having previously attended a mainstream primary school.

Reading progress

Vincent's life has been transformed since he started at Torfield School. Kate is delighted that he is now much happier and enjoying learning. "When he was at his mainstream school he couldn't read and could barely write his name. Now he can read well and his handwriting is amazing. He can also count in fives and tens up to 100."

Positive changes

Kate is thrilled to see such changes in him. "He is like a different child, it is as though he has started to like himself now. The improvement isn't just educational, his mental health has been boosted as well. I can do a lot more with him and take him out with me. Nothing is off limits any more," she says.

Good care

"What is good about Torfield is they are not just educating your child between nine and three, they are interested in what's going on at home. You can discuss any problems with the staff and you can go on courses to learn the skills you need to manage an autistic child.

Unhappy time

"Vincent was diagnosed with ASD when he was five. He did not cope well in a mainstream school and had lots of periods of exclusion, which was difficult for me as I am a single mother and need to go to work. When he was off school he would have to go to a child minder, or be looked after by my son, or my elderly parents.

Left outside

"Vincent was sometimes violent and disruptive at his last school and most of the time they were trying to educate him in a hallway. When he became too difficult they would telephone and ask me to pick him up. When we applied for Torfield the Local Authority said he could cope in mainstream which was clearly not the case as they didn't have the capacity to deal with him properly. But after I appealed against the decision not to offer him an EHCP, he was eventually offered a place at Torfield," Kate says.

Quick learner

"Vincent settled almost immediately and his life was transformed after he started. I particularly like the communication book they send home because there is always something positive in there about what he has been doing. He responds well to Torfield's reward system and has learnt that he can save up his smiley face rewards to get a bigger prize.

Patient staff

"The care they get from every member of staff is remarkable. Once he refused to get in his taxi and when I phoned the school the headteacher offered to come and collect him. Eventually he let me drive him there but wouldn't get out of the car when we arrived. The headteacher came and sat in the car with him and eventually he allowed her to take him into the school. It shows how much they think about the children that she offered to collect him herself.

Excellent facilities

"My father used to be a special needs teacher and he is very impressed with Torfield and thinks it completely outshines the school he taught at. Vincent enjoys all the facilities and activities. He enjoys swimming in the school pool and being taken on outings. At his last school he was never allowed on outings because they couldn't manage him, which was really sad for him," Kate says.

Great support

"The staff give me wonderful support when I have problems and teach me coping mechanisms which is very helpful. They are teaching Vincent to manage his own feelings and to let other people know how he is feeling. Thanks to the staff at Torfield he is now at last fulfilling his potential!"





Excellent facilities

Light and airy building

Torfield is a light, airy and attractive building. We have also invested in high quality resources that support a multi-sensory approach to the curriculum.

Pool and sensory facilities

The indoor heated swimming pool has sensory lights and sound. Both sites have areas and resources that can support sensory needs and there is a sensory garden area at our Croft Road site.

Outdoors

We have three all-weather play areas including canopy and

lighting. This allows children to have access to outdoor learning opportunities during the school day. In addition to this we have two outdoor play facilities with challenging and age appropriate play and fitness equipment as well as a Multi Use Games Area for games and PE lessons. The grounds of the school are attractive, safe and secure.

Physical development

The new and recently installed outdoor equipment was selected to provide improved opportunities for physical and social interaction and development and to help children to learn about making healthy lifestyle choices.

Classrooms

Every classroom on both sites is well decorated, well resourced and has an electronic whiteboard and access to PCs.

Additional Support

Children have access to NHS provided Speech and Language Therapist and /or Occupational Therapist support, depending on the needs identified within their EHCP or statement. Additional support programmes are also identified and provided by school staff and monitored through a child's Individual Education Plan.

Caring for a child with severe learning difficulties can be a frightening and isolating experience. Torfield School has helped Maureen and Brian to overcome the barriers

Anna Pearce is eight years old and lives in St Leonards with her mother, Amanda, and grandparents Maureen and Brian.

Unbending support

In many ways, Maureen and Brian feel very blessed. Not only to be able to play a major part in bringing up the granddaughter they adore but because of the help and unbending support they have had from Torfield School. Nowhere else, believes Brian, could have addressed Anna's many needs so well and at the same time ensured that he, Maureen and Amanda were empowered in the challenge of looking after a child with Anna's difficulties.

No better environment

Anna has autism as well as many of the traits which can go with the condition. She self-harms, will abscond and can be aggressive, and until recently was largely non-verbal. "We were fortunate in that Anna's autism was picked up early so that by the time she was due to start primary school she had the Statement she needed for a place at Torfield," Brian says. "I don't really like to think about what we would have done otherwise; she would not have been safe in a mainstream school and it would have been a dreadful worry for us. As things are, Torfield could not be a better environment for her and it has been wonderful to see the progress she has made, and continues to make."

A learning curve

Maureen and Brian have been close and hands-on grandparents to Anna ever since she was born, learning by necessity about autism along the way. However, Brian admits it has been a huge learning curve for them and that at times they felt out of their depth. "We knew very little about the condition in the early days and even less about where to turn for advice. From our point of view,

one of the best things about Torfield is that it has been such a valuable source of information and support, and has enabled us to better support Anna in turn. The staff have always fallen over backwards for us and nothing is ever too much trouble."

Peer support for families can be a lifesaver

Torfield has a policy of encouraging family participation and Brian has found this something of a lifesaver. "Other than through the medical profession and social services, we knew hardly anyone who had personal experience of autism and we did feel quite isolated, so the social events that Torfield runs for families have been absolutely invaluable. We have been on loads of courses such as gardening and sewing, and to coffee mornings, but the main point is getting people together, where we can have a chinwag and compare notes and experiences. The peer support is worth as much as anything, and is very reassuring – it makes such a difference to know you're not alone."

Strategies that work

Anna has made very positive progress, particularly in her reading and her speech and especially in the last year, and she has also become more behaviourally stable, something which Maureen greatly appreciates. "She can be very affectionate and it's so lovely that she will give us hugs and kisses more often! It is also much easier to take her out, to play parks or to the shops, with much less risk of a tantrum or meltdown, and we credit Torfield for giving her the strategies to modify her behaviour."

Confronting fears and gaining advice

Brian is very honest in admitting his fears and the insecurity he and Maureen have felt in the past. "It can be frightening to be confronted with a situation you don't know how to handle but one it is so important to get right. That is why we have been so grateful for how everyone at Torfield School has listened to our every concern and done everything in their power to address each one."

Maureen agrees. "Anna is our world and we want nothing other than the best for her. At Torfield, Anna is getting the best possible support and so are we. So many people don't understand what it is like to have a child with severe learning difficulties and I used to get upset when Anna was accused of being 'naughty'. Because of Torfield School, we are now in a better and more enlightened place."





Clubs

Pupils are given opportunities to take part in a range of clubs throughout the week, which include:

- Art
- Lego
- Computer
- Swimming
- Catch-up club
- Cookery

Holiday clubs are popular and these operate during most of our school holidays



Sport

We aim to develop agility, physical co-ordination, fitness, confidence and enjoyment through physical activities. The school encourages all children to participate in sport in order to develop an appreciation of teamwork, a respect of and tolerance of the abilities of others and an awareness of opportunities to enjoy fulfilling leisure activities.

Expert tuition

A number of sporting and music activities are provided in partnership with fully qualified coaches or tutors.



Festivals and Celebrations

All pupils are able to participate in assemblies, celebrations and themed activities during the year. They learn about different cultures and have opportunities to develop their skills in music, singing and performance.

Billie-Jo did not want to accept that her son needed additional support but now she knows only Torfield School could have helped transform his life in the way it has

Billie-Jo Hancock and her partner Daniel live in Hastings with their sons Roman, five and Sole, four.

Keeping all the options open

Even though Roman was awarded a Statement of Special Educational Needs relatively early, at about three years old, Billie-Jo took the decision to enrol him into a mainstream primary school as she believed his difficulties could be addressed through the additional support she assumed he would receive. However, within a very short time she had to admit defeat.

"I was probably in denial, not understanding enough about his condition or his needs but hoping for the best and although we had looked at Torfield School we thought we would give mainstream a try. After only a couple of months we had to take him out – he was desperately unhappy and making little or no progress, but thankfully Torfield had kept a place open for him and it has completely changed our lives. What a wonderful school it has proved to be; I love it so much I almost wish that Sole could go there, too."

Transformation

Roman is diagnosed with severe autism and with a social communication disorder and until fairly recently either would not or could not talk. He was only able to express himself by shouting and screaming, demonstrating his frustration in tantrums and unwilling to do anything for himself. Within the two years he has been at Torfield he has, explains Billie-Jo, been transformed. "He is much calmer, more confident and able to engage in social interaction in a way he never could before," she says. "He used to hit out at people because it was the only way he could show his feelings, and he now wants to dress and do other things for himself that he didn't want to before. At Torfield, they really encourage independence in the children, helping them

to realise they can do more than they thought, and this approach has certainly paid off for Roman."

Accepting the challenge

Living with a child who has autism is a challenge for any parent. Torfield School fully accepts this and provides families with as much support as it gives the children. Billie-Jo has taken several courses provided by the school, helping her to understand her son's condition more fully and to communicate with him in the most effective way, through sign language and pictures. She also greatly appreciates how well the staff keep in constant touch about every aspect of Roman's school life. "Each day I have a full picture of what he has been doing, what sort of mood he was in and even what he has eaten, through the Home/School Book and that is incredibly helpful," she says. "The school also asks me for my feedback and comments, too, and rather than just telling me what they think about Roman, they want to listen to what I have to say, so it's very much a two-way thing."

Complete trust

Being able to trust a school is important in any circumstances but perhaps especially so when such a vulnerable child is involved. Billie-Jo was at first nervous about Roman going by taxi – a necessity because of where they live. "The school is closely involved with the taxi company and the local authority makes absolutely sure that the drivers and escorts are suitable for a young lad with Roman's problems. Roman always knows who will be picking him up and I know that he will be looked after kindly and appropriately until he is left with a member of the school staff. That is worth a great deal."

Reaping the benefits of the right support

Billie-Jo could not be happier with Roman's progress and his achievements since starting at Torfield. "In many ways he is a very clever little boy; his understanding of numbers is amazing, and he can name and describe any planet in the solar system – these are things the school has used to encourage and expand his development. What Torfield has also done is to make him happier and more confident, with a real chance of a measure of independence in the future. For me, I now have a child who is able to give something back to me, and that is priceless. Each week, I see him improving step by step and it is hard to express how much that means."





Behaviour and self-development: **foundations for the future**

High expectations

All staff within the school will follow the same behaviour rules and procedures to ensure continuity. However, we are aware of the range of complex needs experienced by our pupils; professional judgement will be exercised so that consistency is applied but that the individual needs and abilities of the pupil are taken into account.

Whole school rules and expectations

The following expectations are displayed in all areas of the school:

- Walk around the school.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Quiet voices.

- Good sitting and listening.
- Do what adults say straight away.
- Work hard and do your best.

Rewards and sanctions

Torfield School operates a reward system for all pupils that links directly to their achievement, behaviour and attitude as described through the school rules and expectations. Pupils can earn smiley face stamps for good work, good behaviour and positive attitude. Stamps can be used as a motivator to target challenging behaviour. Rewards come at 50 stamp intervals with a choice of reward increasing in value as the pupil approaches the 500 maximum level. All rewards are developed to support and increase personal development.

Celebration Assembly

Rewards and certificates are presented in the weekly Celebration Assembly where each pupil is individually praised and their achievement celebrated.

Additional reward charts may be given as short term interventions to help pupils manage playground situations, transitions and taxi journeys. Each week each class teacher awards the Head of School's Stars of the Week prize to one pupil who has made outstanding effort in work, behaviour or attitude. Pupils may achieve this award a number of times in a year if their behaviour warrants it.



Applications

State a preference

Although we are an academy school, the admissions process for children attending special academies is still managed by the Local Authority. Applications to attend Torfield School are made through the East Sussex County Council application process. As a parent of a child or young person with a statement of special educational needs/ Educational Health & Care Plan you can state a preference for the school you would like your child to attend and East Sussex Children's Services will try to meet your wishes.

Applications are made online at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions. If you are not able to apply online, you should contact the Admissions and Transport team at the address below for a paper application.

Admissions

For general enquiries you can contact: Admissions, Transport & Free School Meals Team County Hall St Anne's

Crescent Lewes East Sussex BN7 1SG 0300 33 09 472
admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk

Who can help?

We are always happy to help answer questions or offer advice if you are unsure how to access a place at Torfield School. Please don't hesitate to contact us.

At the Local Authority, you can contact the following teams:

East Sussex Children's Services: PO Box 4 County Hall St Anne's Crescent LEWES East Sussex BN7 1SG Assessment & Planning (SEN) Team Telephone: 01273 336740 Email: SEN.caseworkassistants@eastsussex.gov.uk

Information for Families: (formerly Parentlink) Confidential helpline: 0345 60 80 192 Email: informationforfamilies@eastsussex.gov.uk Admissions.

Transport & Free School Meals Team Telephone 0300 33 09 472. Email admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk Specialist

Transport Officer: Telephone: 0300 33 09. Email: sen.transport@eastsussex.gov.uk or freeschoolmeals@eastsussex.gov.uk. You are also welcome to contact the school office and we will try and answer any questions you may have.

Governorship

The Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust is governed by a Board of Directors, supported by an Academy Advisory Board. The directors have a wide range of skills and experience. Advisory Board members are appointed from the Torfield and Saxon Mount community. Together these groups work with the Executive Headteacher to strategically develop the organisation, provision and resources to provide high quality education for our pupils. The Board of Directors is the accountable body for Torfield and Saxon Mount and has a responsibility to agree the vision for the Trust, monitor and hold the schools to account for educational performance, and oversee financial performance.

Vision

We value the unique qualities of all children and believe it is the right of every child to be well supported in their development.

Aims and Objectives

Enable our pupils to make reasonable choices, communicate with others and develop independence:

Promote independence and preparation for life after school

Promote inclusion and equality of opportunity

Provide accessible, meaningful and challenging activities to promote learning and personal development

Promote and develop communication and social skills

Provide opportunities to learn about and practise empathy, respect, kindness, trust and collaborative working

Provide opportunities to develop self-esteem and self-worth

Develop moral, spiritual and cultural awareness

Provide a caring, supportive, safe and stable learning environment

Work effectively as a staff team, constantly striving for improvement

Celebrate achievements in all aspects of development

Provide pupils with opportunities to fulfil their potential

Promote enjoyment and pride in learning and achieving

Clearly share our values with parents, carers and other stakeholders

Manage our resources effectively



Torfield School - Croft Road- Hastings - East Sussex - TN34 3JT
Tel: 01424 428228 - Email: torfieldoffice@tasmat.org.uk - Web: www.torfield-saxonmount.com

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