



WOOLGROVE SCHOOL

Special Needs Academy

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Headteacher: **Mrs Lisa Hall**



22nd April 2020

Dear Headteachers and SENCOs

Woolgrove Outreach Services

We hope this letter finds you, your family and colleagues well. We are writing to update you on the latest news for Woolgrove Outreach for DSPL1. Just prior to Christmas, the local authority asked all current Outreach services to put forward a tender if they wished to continue to provide an Outreach service for their local area. We are very pleased to announce that Woolgrove Outreach was successful in our bid and that the local authority has agreed to continue to provide funding for our service for a further three years. In addition to the service that we currently provide for mainstream primary schools, the local authority has also agreed to provide a small amount of funding for Woolgrove Outreach to extend our service to support mainstream secondary schools within our DSPL1 area.

Outreach is a free service available to all local authority mainstream schools which also now includes secondary schools. Outreach's main aim is to work with staff in schools to increase their confidence and expertise when working with children below age related expectations or who have a range of difficulties accessing the curriculum. In order to access our service, it is not necessary for pupils to have a diagnosis or an EHCP but pupils must be working well below age related expectations and/or have difficulty accessing the curriculum.

As many of you are aware, Outreach continues to receive a high number of referrals and so there is often a delay between receiving the referral and when we are able to start. We are aware this isn't ideal. We work hard to ensure waiting time is kept as short as possible, whilst maintaining an effective and worthwhile service. We appreciate your understanding and patience in waiting for us to start your referral. When we acknowledge receipt of your referral, we aim to provide you with a rough guide as to when we are likely to be able to start (which is approximately one term currently) but this varies due to the nature of individual cases and how many referrals have been received in a given period.

Woolgrove Outreach also offers the opportunity for mainstream staff to visit our school to observe teaching and intervention sessions. In addition, we provide a range of FREE training courses that SENCOs, teachers and teaching assistants are invited to attend.

Flyers for these courses are sent out via email each term. We aim to run a minimum of four courses per year and regularly run more. These are some of our courses:

Supporting Pupils with SEND for TAs - this course has been designed specifically for TAs with or without experience of working with pupils with SEND. We aim to share a range of strategies, resources and ideas to help when working with pupils with SEND in the classroom.

Literacy Strategies and Resources for Children with SEND - this course is aimed at teachers and teaching assistants. It focuses on strategies and resources that can be used in or out of the classroom to support children with SEND

Improving the school experience for the child with Autism - a whole day course dedicated to sharing strategies and resources to support pupils with Autism.

Communicate In Print 3 - this is an introductory session for anyone wishing to know how to use the latest version of Widgeit's Communicate In Print programme.

How to set up your own Sensory Circuit - a practical session on setting up and running your own sensory circuit in your school.

Drop in Solution Circle for Teaching Assistants and Teachers - come along, share your problems and gain advice from the outreach team.

We're pleased to announce that Zoe Tyler, Outreach teacher, will be rejoining our team after being on maternity leave. She continues to work half a day per week. Laura Claxton covered Zoe's maternity leave this year and has been a great asset to the Outreach team. She is an experienced mainstream and special needs teacher and currently teaches a Year 2/3 class at Woolgrove.

Diane Barratt continues to support the team by providing valuable admin support once a week. Sharon will soon to be entering her 14th year at Woolgrove and is responsible for running the Outreach department as well as teaching and being subject leader for English across the main school.

At this current time, we are uncertain as to when our usual service will be able to resume. However, in the meantime, if there is anything that you feel Outreach can support with, or if there is anything you would like to discuss, then please do not hesitate to contact Sharon via email at outreach@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk and we can arrange a time to discuss any matters by phone or via email. We hope you and your pupils all stay well and that we will be able to work together again very soon.

With warmest wishes



Sharon Knight

Outreach Lead, Woolgrove School



Lisa Hall

Head Teacher