



The Collett School

Part of the Blue Tangerine Federation
SPECIALIST AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SCHOOLS
Registered Charity Number 1157000 Friends of Collet

Prospectus 2020-2021



Thrive in Life

KNOWLEDGABLE
STAFF WHO LOVE THEIR
WORK AND MAKE A
DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

HAPPY
CHILDREN WHO FEEL
SAFE AND WHO LOVE
TO LEARN

CREATIVE
APPROACHES TO
LEARNING THAT
ENGAGE EACH CHILD

CONFIDENT
CHILDREN WHO 'SHINE' AS A
RESULT OF THEIR
BURGEONING INDEPENDENCE



Welcome from the Executive Headteacher

Welcome! We believe our school is a '*very special*' school and this prospectus outlines our provision to give you a flavour of what to expect here. This booklet may not answer all your questions but I hope you'll find us friendly, approachable and at ease to ask us anything.

The Collett School was established in 1964 as Hemel Hempstead's first special school. Since then, we have evolved to reflect the educational and sensory needs of our children and their preparatory requirements for accessing adulthood. We continue to adapt and innovate in the light of improving knowledge and changing educational policies. But more specifically, we seek to create a personalised provision according to the needs of the children we have in the school now. In doing so, we seek to equip each young person with skills and experiences to best prepare them for success in our mainstream world. Our extraordinary oral histories project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, continues to track the experiences of former pupils and in turn, influence the changes we continue to make to our school. In the development of our bespoke provision, our community is an active participant in shaping the work we do and, the way our school looks.

Over the past few years, we have dramatically reshaped the school in terms of curriculum, teaching, organisation and the physical environment. All these important elements of our pupils' education are in collaboration with our children, their families and community. From September 2017, I will also be the Headteacher of St. Luke's School in Redbourn, forging greater links between the two schools and enabling further opportunities and support for our young people.

We hope you enjoy your visit to the school seeing our children having fun and making progress in their learning. We love The Collett School and I am very proud of the commitment, hard work and enjoyment shared by the whole team that makes this such a '*special*' school.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Houlton-Allen".

Stephen Houlton-Allen
Executive Headteacher of The Collett School (Hemel Hempstead),
Executive Headteacher of St. Luke's School (Redbourn) and, Forest House (Radlett)



A

Admissions

The Collett School is a purpose-built special school, established in 1964. We are a school for children with complex needs including Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech and Language Communication Needs (SLCN) and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

Pupils attending special schools in Hertfordshire have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that is issued by a Local Authority. Pupils are referred to The Collett School through Hertfordshire Special Needs Team. There then follows a consultation with the school as to whether or not the school can meet the child's needs.

Parents can visit the school before a place has been agreed by the LA. Our tours are usually given by the Head of School. When a place is granted, then arrangements for a successful transition and induction are made in close partnership with the child's family.



B Behaviours for Learning

We have a range of rewards and incentives that support pupils to believe in their abilities and know that they are cared for, respected and their attainment celebrated. As a result, pupils demonstrate excellent behaviours for learning at The Collett School. Our teaching and curriculum is engaging and pitched at the right level. Pupils are supported to develop strategies that will help them independently manage their own behaviours into adulthood.

We vary strategies for each child as a result of understanding children's developmental stages, SEND, social and emotional needs. Behaviour strategies are personalised and the child is an active participant in their overall provision.

Very rarely, do we have fixed term exclusions, though these may exist if there is a serious incident or persistently disruptive behaviours. Like in a mainstream school, the Head has the right to permanently exclude a pupil where their behaviour is having a seriously adverse impact on the other pupils. Parents have the right of appeal for any exclusion and a guidance booklet for parents is published by the Local Authority.

That said, we believe you'll be surprised and pleased at what you see across the school. There are of course incidents as a result of our children's needs, though the skillful ways in which our staff support our pupils to adapt and change their behaviours over time has resulted in a calm and purposeful learning environment at The Collett School. We support and adhere to the Hertfordshire Steps behaviour support programme.

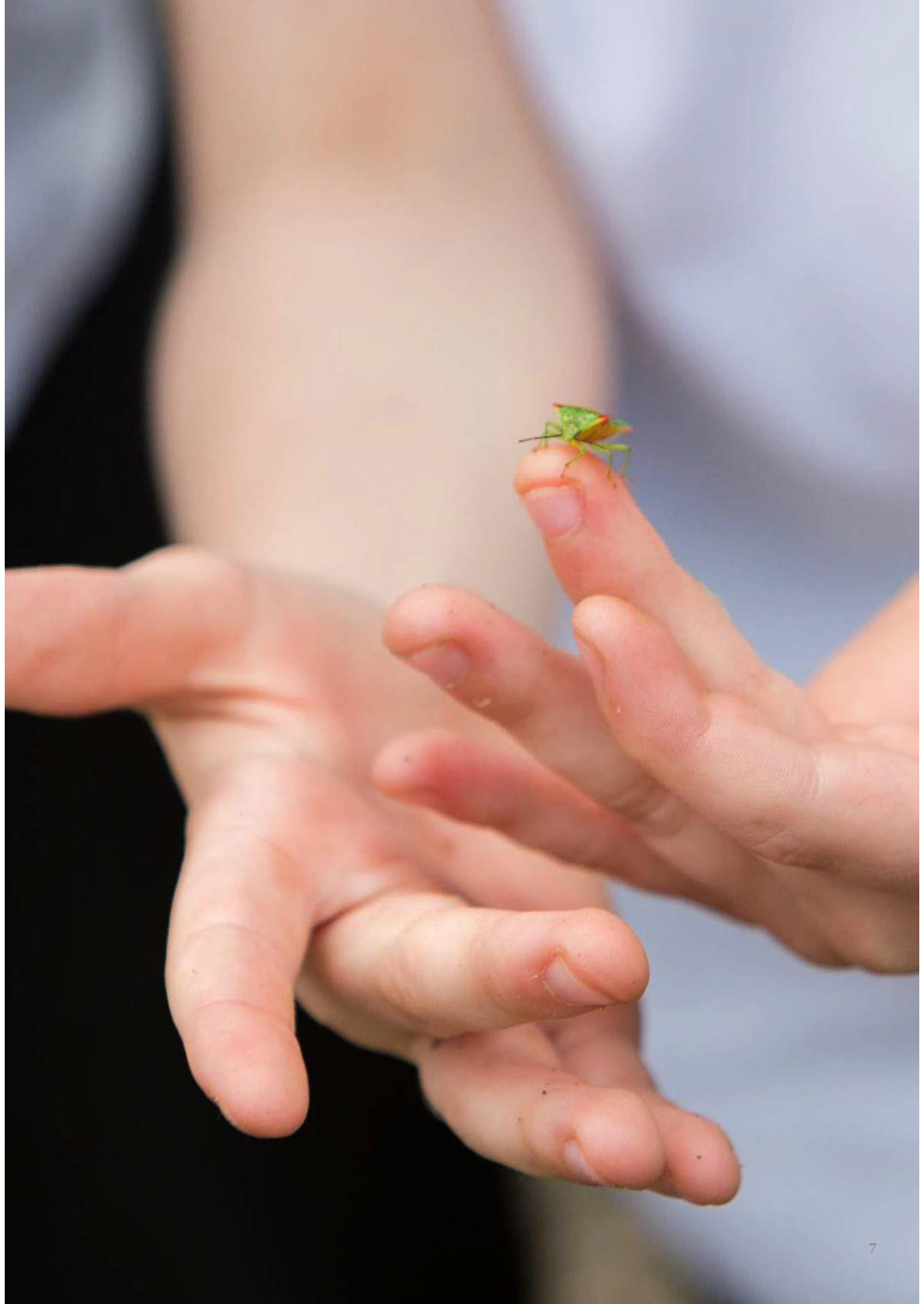


C Complex Needs

At The Collett School, we like complexity! We like difference and we enjoy our role in supporting children develop confidence in 'owning' strategies to access the mainstream world on an individual level. In close partnership with parents, we support our children in developing increasingly independent skills. This is so our young people can make their own decisions and judgments, exhibit their own personality with pride and so 'shine'.

Many of our pupils have complex needs as a result of 'overlapping' learning difficulties. Our skilled staff have formal and creative strategies to manage our pupils' personalised provisions. We access external support through the services of Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology and local organisations that support young people and their families. Our staff also support mainstream school teachers and support staff with advice, resources and strategies for children with SEND.

Over half our pupils have needs associated with ASD. We don't adopt a single approach to the education of pupils with autism because we believe every child's needs are different. We do use the principles of TEACCH and PECs (Picture Exchange Communication) with those pupils who will benefit from these strategies. We model, guide and support pupils to develop stronger emotional responses. Learning is an activity and we ensure where possible that teaching engages all the child's senses.





Disabilities & Difficulties



Each disability and learning difficulty 'label' helps schools draw on the research available and the experience of their staff to determine common parameters. We also know that each child is different and the provision at The Collett is dependent on the child's needs as an individual - adapting and changing as they do.

Our provision is not to create a homogenous group of children, but to be proud of our differences and explore our own strengths. With our knowledge and experience, we understand developmental stages and how learning disabilities can affect our pupils' holistic development and cognition. Rates of progress may be slower in some aspects of learning, though our children have many age-appropriate skills and abilities that we are aware of and, encourage to flourish. Rates of progress of learning for individuals at The Collett School are often 'outstanding' when compared to national expectations. Overall, progress across all vulnerable groups of learners is outstanding, with outstanding teaching over time facilitating this.



E Equality

We have a diversity and equality scheme that outlines the vision and values that underpin school life.

We are committed to meeting our statutory duties with regard to disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and community cohesion by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and by promoting positive attitudes, good relationships and equality of opportunity and access.

Our disability access plan is on our school website. This addresses the difficulties our site shows and our plans to improve these. We have already improved our site significantly through fundraised alterations to our buildings.



F Family Fun

We hold events throughout the year for the pupils and their families. As our pupils live across the county and travel to school by minibus, events on site that bring families together can be a helpful way the school can support children's and families' friendships.

We put on events such as 'Spooky Stories Night', where we go on a ghost hunt and write spooky stories ourselves. Race Nights, Quiz nights, comedy acts, choir groups, arts events and even Strictly *Collett* Dancing form part of our social calendar.

The Friends of Collett is our Parent-Teacher association with a focus on:

- 1) ensuring our families have opportunities to feel part of the school and
- 2) fundraising for resources and activities for pupils across the school.

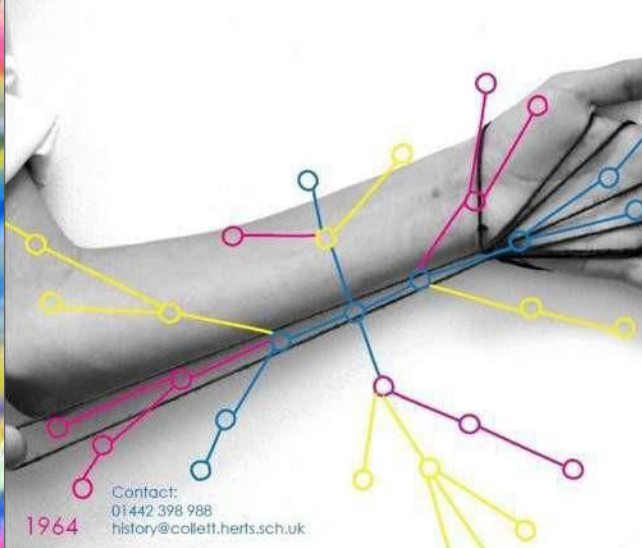
This is a great way to get to know other people in an informal and relaxed way.



G Growth

High expectations of ourselves and our pupils and a wealth of quality experiences ensures personal growth in order to transition successfully into adulthood. We have removed unnecessary transitions between lessons and linked learning. We have a flexible timetable that encourages spontaneity, adaptation and the ability to explore in greater depth. This means we can indulge and immerse learners in topics and extend their personal interests. As such, we see pupils develop a thirst for knowledge and, grow exponentially.

We have a diverse range of accreditation that supports pupils from Entry Level 1 up to GCSE equivalent qualifications for those who can access these.



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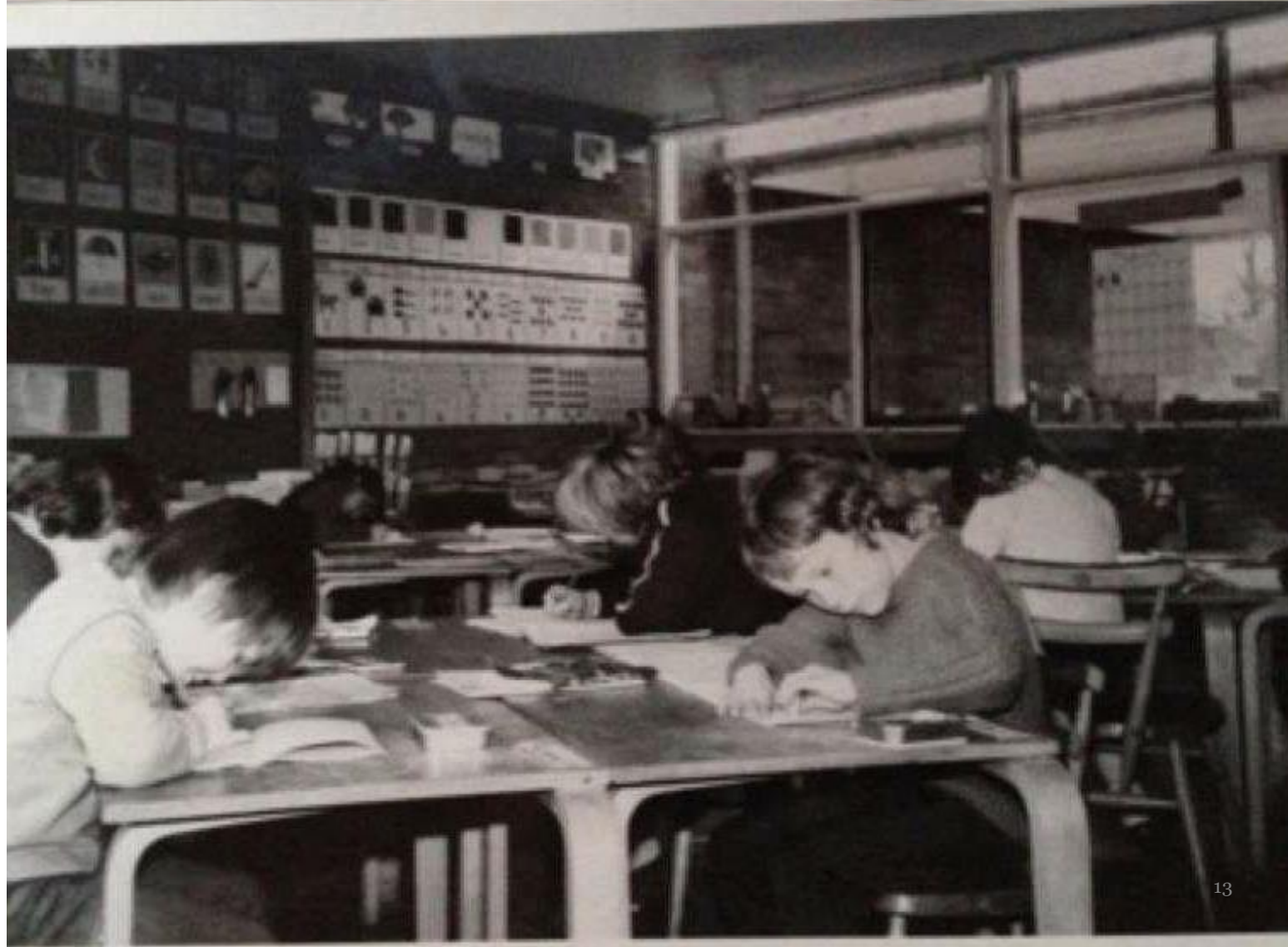
History: Lessons from the past

The Collett School opened on October 14th 1964. To mark our 50th anniversary, made possible by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we launched a project to collect and share experiences and memories, past and present, associated with the school. We continue to welcome back people who have been involved with the school in any capacity since it was founded in 1964 to share their stories.

Over the last 5 decades huge developments have been seen in education for people with learning disabilities. The History Project maps these changes within the context of a local school, from the perspective of pupils, staff and the community.

The oral histories collected in the project will form the basis of a publication in the next few years. The exhibition that took place around the country mapped and explored the story of The Collett School, its links with the local community and the development of learning disability education in the period 1964 - 2014. From these experiences, we will continue to learn more about our alumni and use this so as to inform our decision-making for the next 50 years of this special school's future.







I Independence

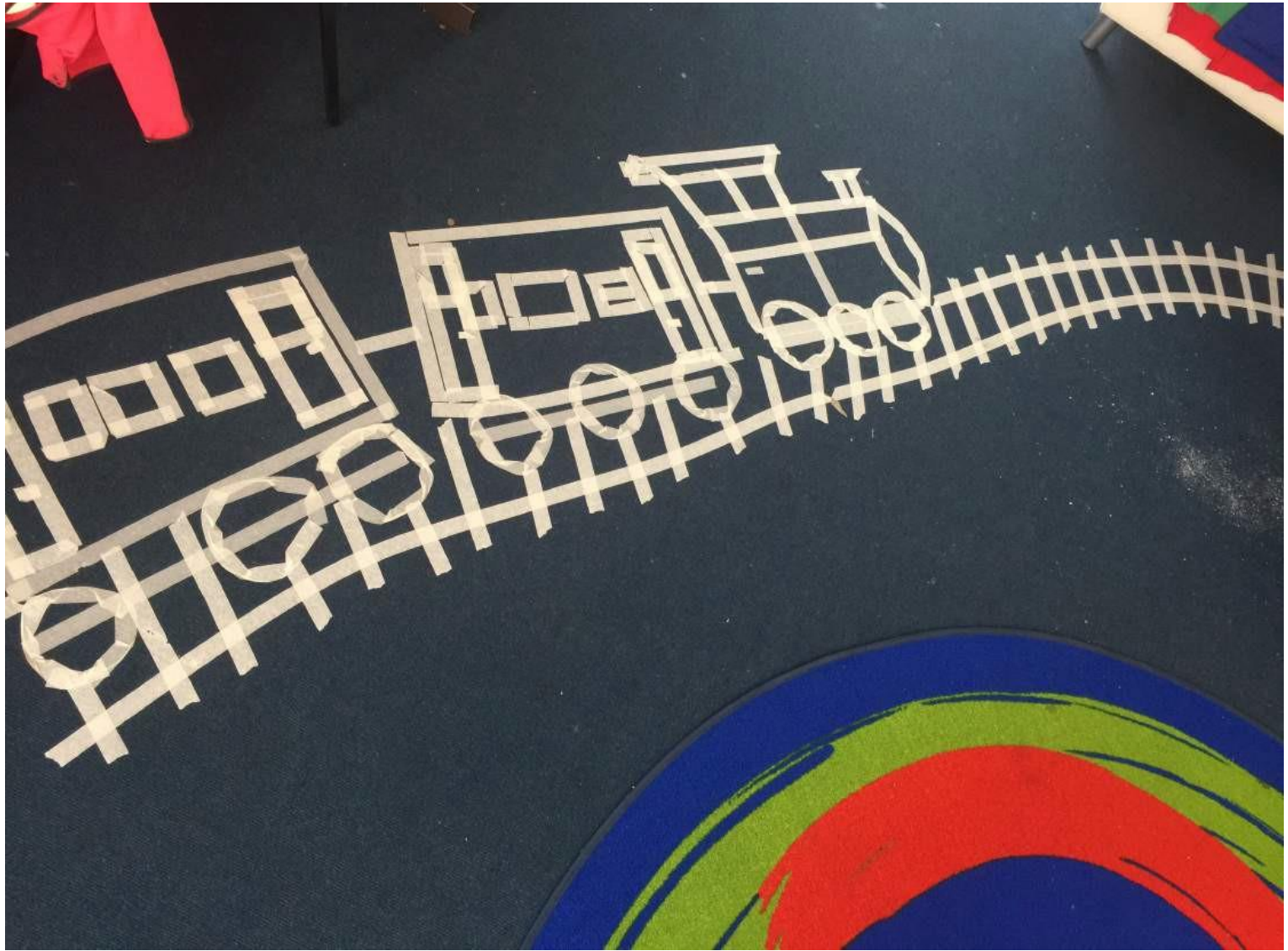
Our curriculum promotes independence in learning, activities and the development of personal interests. Within our small classes, there are freedoms to ensure pupils approach learning tasks from which they develop the confidence and skills to work independently.

We take the time to practice skills in different environments and situations as to ensure the individual can understand concepts and reflect on their own learning and abilities.

We provide a caring, nurturing environment in which the children tell us they feel safe and happy. From this starting point, our pupils can take risks in their learning, make mistakes and learn from these and so make progress in their learning.

Our pupils are happy learners and enjoy challenges. They work with teachers and TAs to determine gaps in their own knowledge and with their increasing skills, access resources with independence to fill these.

Our in-house assessment scheme actively engages pupils, staff and other professionals in the identification of pupils' needs and next steps for learning. We cover the softer skills as well as the typical academic subject areas in order to form hard data from which to analyse and support individuals make the progress they can.



#HelloYellow

from
Mandela
Class

always
talk.



Joined Up Thinking & Common Sense

We know that great schooling can help develop the confidence, self-esteem and 'human agency' required for an enjoyable life now and in the future. We know that literacy and accessing the world we live in is a priority for our children and their families. Making sense of the world and establishing a role to play in it, drives our vision and ethos.

The setting of realistic challenges whilst holding high expectations of our pupils excites, stimulates and makes our world relevant. Developing thinking and problem solving skills encourages and develops the pupils' own interests and strengths. In doing so, we use a wealth of strategies that address pupils' speech and language communication needs to access, interact with and explore the world around them with increasing confidence.

Our curriculum is led by the needs of our pupils through relevant curricula taught in Pathways that lead to appropriate accreditation that supports the individual transitioning to adulthood. This is common sense. This is what we do.



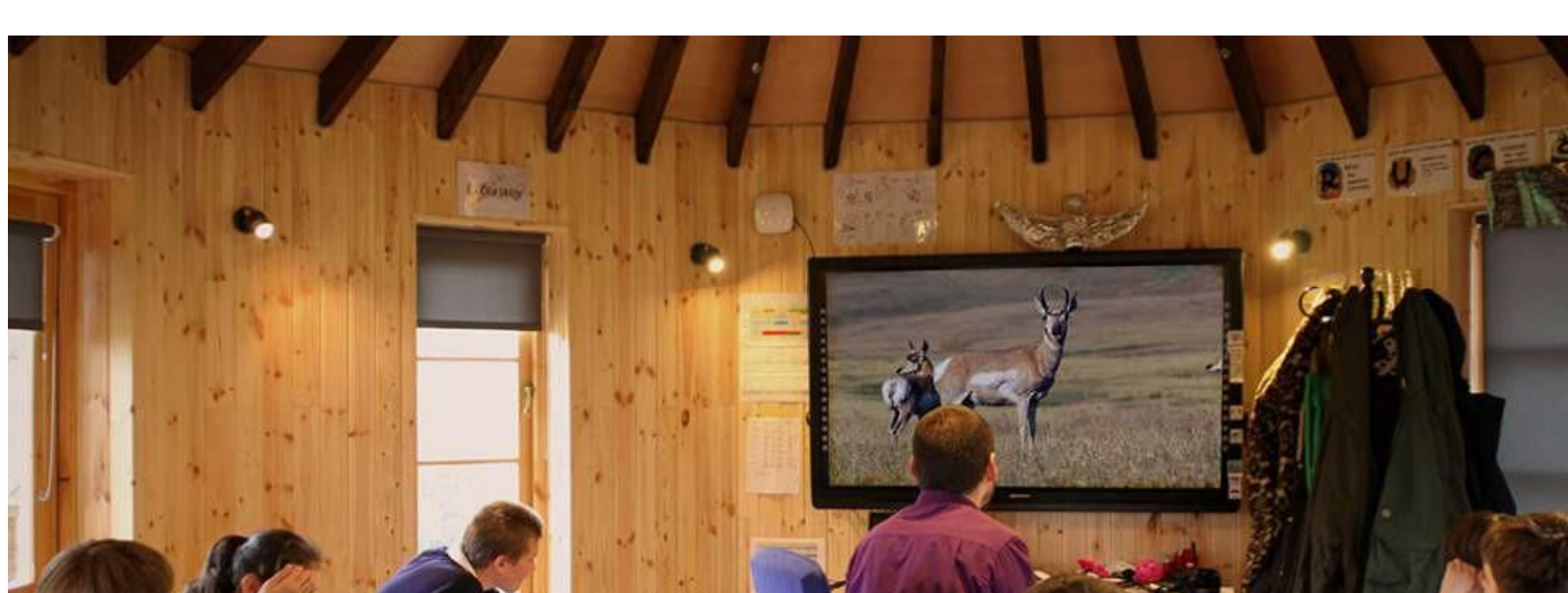
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Kinaesthesia and Movement

Kinaesthetic approaches to learning are about 'doing' --- where physically engaging in learning helps us retain knowledge better than other forms of learning. There are three main types of learning: Kinaesthetic (doing) visual (seeing) and aural (listening). The vast majority of our learners are kinaesthetic and visual learners at The Collett School. Therefore our curriculum employs a range of strategies that support the children to be active participants in their learning. Acting out historical scenes for example can help children empathise with experiences that have shaped our world.

We are out and about in our community to make learning relevant to our lives, whilst combining our subject teaching within 'topics' helps our pupils make connections between the concrete and abstract concepts that we need to understand.

'Movement' also suggests keeping fit and interacting with others. Our teaching supports pupils to take part in activities that occur in the classroom and in our free time. We provide experiences that are both familiar and new in order to consolidate learning and inspire different interests that can be taken up as hobbies/ interests outside of the classroom. It also encompasses the practices of fine and gross motor skills - where we find ways to ensure our needs are met within the school day and beyond.



L Learning Groups

Learning Groups at The Collett School are linear age groups, determined by the needs, abilities and interests of the children. It means that some of our children work with other pupils in different key stages. However, our children benefit from a personalised provision that stretches their abilities and affords them the appropriate challenge and bespoke curriculum to their needs, not simply because of their chronological age. They remain with the same teacher for most of the day –from Reception right through to Post-16 to make links in their learning.

Our stakeholders agree that the children are happier learning this way. Our data confirms our pupils are making excellent progress.





Measuring Progress

The removal of the National Curriculum levels (September 2014) and the changes to public examinations from 2014 has created a clutch of challenges for schools. Moving forward, our Collett School system, CAPPS (Collett Assessing Pupil Progress System) uses the best of previous models of assessment and ensures a linear pathway of learning from the pupils' starting points up to and including Entry Level, Vocational and GCSE examination levels of attainment.

We robustly benchmark our methodologies with mainstream and special school practices to ensure we can determine what is 'good' and 'outstanding' progress.

We are using this opportunity to provide pathways for learning that ensure at each stage pupils, parents and professionals can gauge the individual's progress in learning and determine the right interventions that secure rapid progress wherever possible.

Our assessment measures determine the independent abilities of the pupil and have been widely commended.



The intake of pupils at The Collett School have higher needs than ever before in its history. For this reason, we need to be creative in not only *how* and *what* we teach but ensure the environment supports the pupils' progress in learning. We are developing innovative and magical spaces that inspire and are 'fit for purpose'.

Entirely through fundraising, we have built a tree-house classroom and tree-house library. With the support of The New Factory and further fundraising, we have redeveloped four classrooms donated by Warner Bros. which were used by the stars of the Harry Potter films.

We have successfully fundraised for three new minibuses with wheelchair access and are currently working hard to ensure our entire school is suitable for all people with physical difficulties - a challenge as we're built on a hill.



N

Next Steps for the School



Refurbishing our school to draw on the strengths of the curriculum is a continual drive for our learning environment. We have converted a horsebox to be a mobile café to support our pupils' functional skills and experience of the work in our community.

We will also be working in close partnership with St.Luke's School under the banner of the Blue Tangerine Federation. This relationship is set to bring more opportunities and support to children and young adults with learning difficulties as well as their families in the western districts of Hertfordshire.



The Core Offer

The Collett School enables pupils with a range of learning needs to access education and engage in learning preparation for adult life. This is provided in a safe and secure environment. Our pupils have barriers to learning, which may include a main need of MLD, ASD and/or SLCN. They may also have secondary needs in the areas of behavioural and emotional, medical or physical and sensory difficulties.

All pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated according to their personal needs and strengths, which includes a focus on the development of functional literacy and numeracy skills. Additionally, the curriculum will focus on the development of functional speech, language and communication, social interaction and the improvement of life skills.

The curriculum includes a wealth of routes for learning, which includes lunch-time and after-school clubs that include sporting, academic and socially driven activities. Timetables and lessons are responsive to the needs of the children across all key stages. Small classes and favourable adult/pupil ratios, which can vary according to the needs of the pupil, ensure that learning can be tailored to the child's individual needs. Included in this offer of a personalised approach is the assurance that intimate care and attention to all basic functions is guaranteed.

Children learn in different ways so knowledge is delivered and skills taught using kinaesthetic, visual, practical and concrete approaches. Pupils are likely to require access to a high level of visual support, e.g. objects of reference, photographs, the use of symbols and appropriate signing strategies. Pupils are given regular opportunities to learn new skills and to generalise those already learned through frequent repetition and the chance to practice skills in different situations. This will include a large range of curriculum enrichment activities, such as visits to museums and topic-related facilities in the wider community.

Staff are the greatest resource in the school and they are expert in using strategies to overcome barriers to learning. Staff are trained in alternative communication approaches, for example, signing, symbols and IT-based alternative and augmentative communication devices. Staff are trained in physical intervention as a matter of routine.

A range of professionals work with the pupils, parents and staff of The Collett School to ensure that the best possible guidance is provided to encourage and support educational development. We have Speech and Language Therapists on site and access Occupational Therapists, School Nurses, Consultant Paediatrician, Educational Psychologists, counsellors and the advisory teachers for Autism, Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment in our holistic approach for the young people.

Pupils have access to a good range of nationally accredited courses, which include Entry Level certificates of achievement, personal development, life skills courses, various vocational courses and GCSE courses. We have strong active links with colleges of further education and have link courses in Key Stage 4 as preparation for the transition to college at 16.

Please see our website for further information.



P

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

We see personal and social development as central to our teaching at The Collett School. It is by making our own choices and sustaining activities that we understand ourselves, our relationships with others and develop a need to push our own boundaries and learning.

Pupils have 'options' built into their timetables so as to encourage making and sustaining choices, whilst providing opportunities to try new things. The curriculum is enhanced with trips, visitors, focus days and activity weeks.

Opportunities to take part in a range of lunchtime and after school clubs include board games, languages, gardening, art, singing, sports activities, homework clubs and extended learning clubs. Pupils also create their own clubs and invite others to join --- these have included IT based activities and crafts-orientated clubs.

Working with a range of professionals, the pupils, staff and children's families, we audit, track and prioritise learning activities that support the individuals' PSD. As a result of which, pupils 'shine' and access our community with increasing confidence.

Q Quality of Provision

The Collett School achieved a 'Good' Ofsted report in October 2018. A link to the school's report is available through our website or directly at www.ofsted.org.uk. The report highlights the fact our teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and create a very positive climate for learning that results in pupils being eager to learn, staying focused and doing their best.

The provision at The Collett School is equally strong for all types of learner. The National Autistic Society's accreditation of the school highlights the impact of our successful work with children on the Autistic spectrum and celebrates our spiritual, moral and social support for children to develop caring relationships and the strategies we use to support independence and self regulation.

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“The Collett
School has robust
assessment measures that
accurately determine the
individuals’ abilities and
their next steps”
Ofsted

R Reviewing Progress

EHC Plans & Parents’ Evenings

Over the course of the year, The Collett School has three Parents’ Evenings alongside other numerous formal and informal opportunities to see your child’s progress in learning. Our CAPPS system of assessment helps parents and professionals alike understand the individual’s progress across all aspects of learning.

There are many opportunities to see your child ‘shine’ at The Collett School - academically, socially, across a range of places, events and activities. These moments are captured as part of our review meetings that share the planning and creation of your child’s provision.



S Sensory Needs

Many of our children have specific sensory needs and most access their requirements through the group and individual activities within the class. For some however, they require additional support, which is provided both in the classroom and within our 'Hive'. In the Hive, we have a higher staff:pupil ratio to support those with a greater complexity of needs and seek to ensure all our children are responsibly supported to access learning. We aim to enable pupils to develop the strategies that will increase their time spent within their regular class. Work undertaken by the staff in the Hive identifies needs, strategies and methods of supporting the pupils in lessons and around the school.


Sensory needs may include the sensitivity towards light, noise and different materials. We have a range of physical resources and a wealth of knowledge and experience to support pupils in extending their learning and skills. Our knowledge and experience is regularly benchmarked with the Occupational Health therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Education Psychologists, with whom we have excellent working relationships.



Times of the Day

Timetables are bespoke to the class though are anchored to our principles for learning at The Collett School. Literacy and Numeracy are focused on functional skills. Topic is used to ensure history, geography, science and language are linked in time and concepts --- further still, that learning is linked throughout the curriculum and pupils are therefore enabled to be immersed in a culture, theme or experience regarding knowledge and skills development. External accreditation is used to assess what pupils can achieve independently as a result of deep learning.

Below is a guide to how the day works.

	
	Pupils arrive at school
8.30 - 9.00	Learning starters, reading, handwriting
9.00 - 9.40	Numeracy
9.40 - 10.20	Literacy
10.20 - 10.35	Break - games and playtime
10.35 - 11.15	Topic including literacy
11.15 - 12.00	Specialist subject time that may include PE, Science, GCSE courses
12.00 - 12.45	Lunch - clubs, societies
12.45 - 1.15	Reading - guided reading, group reading, 1:1 and private reading
1.15 - 2.30	Specialist subject time that may include college and creative arts activities
2.30 - 2.45	Transport home
2.30 - 3.30/4.30	After school clubs



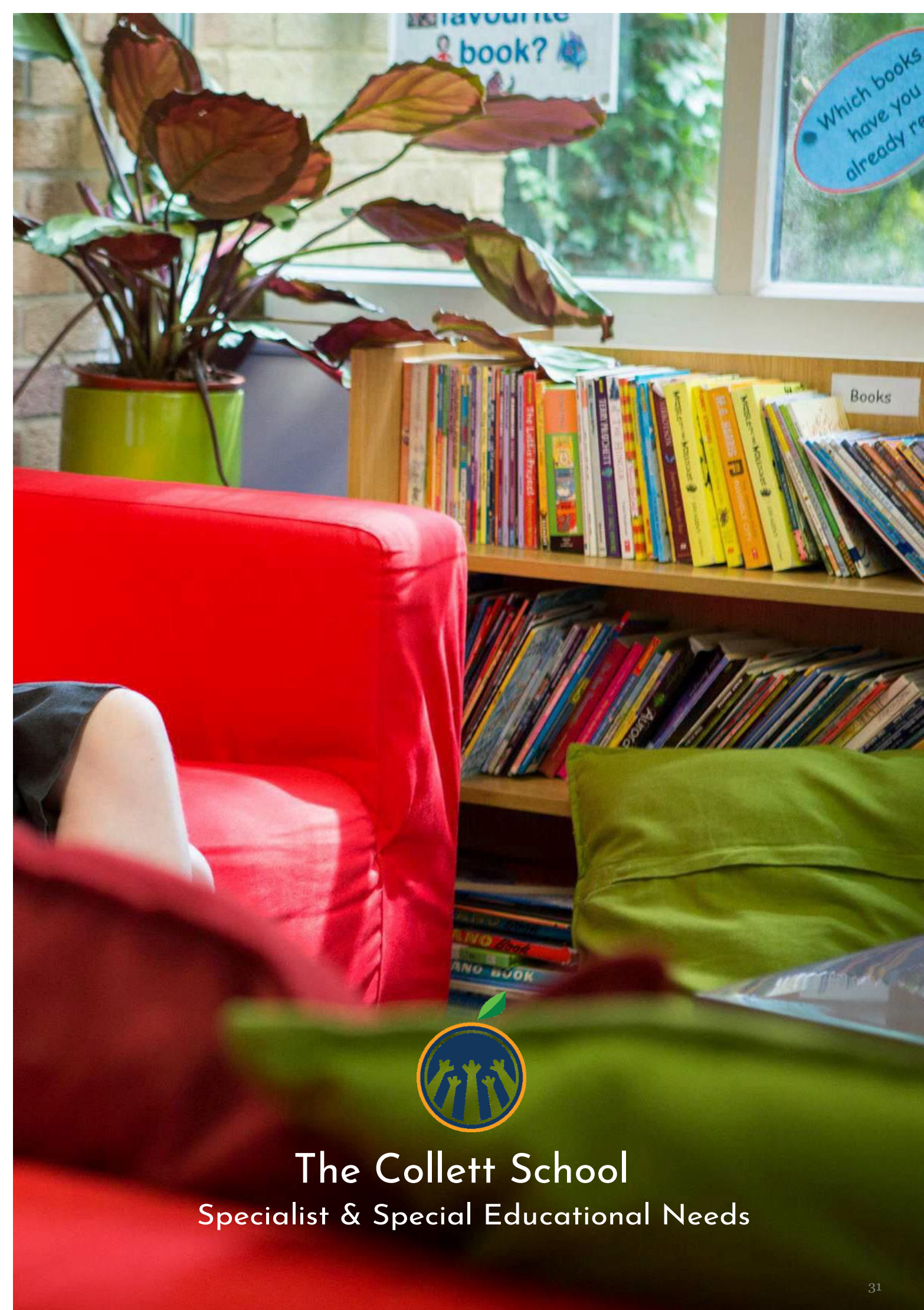
U Uniform

We have a simple uniform that supports the pupils and their families. Having a uniform means fewer choices to make in the mornings and it is a relatively affordable set of clothing; the majority of the uniform is acquirable through supermarkets.

Pupils in the Middle and Upper schools (Years 6/7-11) voted to have a blazer and the school provides parents with a badge. All of our uniform is non-gender biased and can all be worn by both girls and boys.

A sweatshirt with the logo on is available from the school office to buy at cost. Children in our Lower School have a royal blue sweat-top, those in Middle School wear a navy sweat-top and those in Upper School have a greysweat-top. There is a PE kit uniform and several other optional choices for those that wish to buy them.





The Collett School

Specialist & Special Educational Needs

Vision: To Thrive in Life

For our pupils to engage independently with our mainstream world with advancing confidence and on an individual level.

Mission: To Promote the Abilities in Disability

With high expectations and through dynamic learning opportunities, we seek to provide an outstanding, personalised provision in which each child is enabled to shine. We seek to ensure all our partnerships and stakeholders value the strengths of each individual and supports them in exceeding expectations.

Values: Learning, Independence, Happiness

We create an inclusive environment in which The Collett School community feels happy, safe and engaged. We find pleasure through succeeding in our learning; building knowledge, skills and understanding. We actively promote our belief that each child and adult feel valued for their own personal worth and contribution.



Work Experience & Post 16

By the end of Year 11, every pupil will have taken part in a work experience programme. It is imperative to us that pupils see their future in the workplace beyond college. These experiences are carefully planned, differentiated and supported according to the individual's needs. We like to work with caring and nurturing establishments that also know how to create challenge in the work our young people do on placements.

Work experience is dovetailed with our careers education and guidance for all pupils in the school. YC Herts services are used from Year 8 as we support the pupils and their families to consider steps beyond 16 years of age.

Our children mostly transition to mainstream colleges with SEN provision such as West Herts College and Oaklands College whilst some take up apprenticeships.

It is our intention to improve the opportunities for our pupils as they transition into adulthood through Apprenticeships and Supported employment.



The X Factor

What kind of person do you want working with your child?

You have to be a special kind of person that wants to work with children who have special needs. You need buckets of common sense, a clear understanding of strategies, but be prepared that rarely do things go the same way twice! You require patience but high levels of energy, boundless enthusiasm and a passion for making a difference. You never feel your work is 'finished' as you learn from the wider experience of the team. You show a capacity to keep analysing, adapting and building on the impact you have with children. You love getting up in the morning to come to school...

Welcome to The Collett School.



Young Adults

We have an important role in your child's journey to adulthood. I hope this prospectus has given you a sense of our ethos, values and determination to do our very best with every unique child in supporting them to become proud, confident individuals who can successfully access the world on an individual level.



Contact Us

Executive Headteacher: Mr Stephen Hoult-Allen MEd(Cantab), BA(Hons), PGCE, NPQH

Head of School : Mrs Pam Stocks

Chair of Governors: Mrs Ros Wood

Search our website at:

www.bluetangerine.herts.sch.uk

Email us at: admin@collett.herts.sch.uk

Telephone us on: 01442 398988

Or call in/ write to us at:

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The Collett School

Specialist & Special Educational Needs

Registered Charity Number 1157000 Friends of Collett