

## **Sir Charles Parsons School Information Report**

### **Introduction to the school**

Sir Charles Parsons School is a foundation special school in Newcastle upon Tyne. It is partner of a charitable Trust which includes three other special schools within the city. Newcastle City Council is the fifth partner member within the Trust. The school is situated in the east end of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The school caters for children and young people between 11 and 19 years of age who have significant learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex learning difficulties and disabilities. All the students have a degree of special educational needs and have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or are moving through the statutory transition process towards an Education Health Care Plan.

The school moved into a new purpose built building which provides outstanding facilities for young people with additional needs, in June 2011. These facilities include specialist art, food technology, music and information and communication technology classrooms as well as a swimming and hydrotherapy pool which are fully accessible to all students.

Our ultimate objective as a school is to enrich our students' lives by providing the opportunities which will help them grow and develop as young people, and help prepare them for life after school.

The school's mission statement is:

**“Enjoy, learn and achieve”**

That is, to ensure that every day, every one of our students:

enjoys their day in school;

learns as much as they can; and,

achieves as much as they are capable of.

This reflects the high aspirations and expectations we have of our students. It is not simply a statement, but is a 'core belief' that is referred to, talked about and 'lived' on a daily basis. It should be evident to anybody visiting the school.

### **What is the purpose of the School Information Report?**

The report has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the provision the school offers; and
- To make the provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving young people with special educational needs, parents/carers and service providers in its development and review.

### **How does a child or young person get a place at Sir Charles Parsons School?**

Parents/carers are welcome to contact the school to arrange a visit when they will have the opportunity to look around the building and talk to a member of staff about the provision available. New admissions to our school will either have a Statement of Special educational Needs, an Education Health Care Plan or be undergoing the statutory assessment towards an Education Health

Care Plan. Newcastle City Council is the Admissions Authority for Sir Charles Parsons School and parents/carers interested in a place for their child should consult with the Special Education Needs Section at the Civic Centre, Newcastle. (Tel: 0191 2774648)

Prior to any child or young person commencing a placement at Sir Charles Parsons School, we will endeavour to produce a transition plan which is designed to support them

### **What type of placement is available at the school?**

Students attend Sir Charles Parsons School on a full-time day provision basis.

### **How much support will my child receive?**

All students aged between 11 and sixteen years of age are taught in small class groups of between seven and ten students. Class sizes for the Post 16 students based in the main building are of a similar size. Post 16 students who attend our satellite bases within the Sixth Form of our neighbouring mainstream secondary school (Walker Technology College) are taught in larger class groups of up to fourteen students.

Every class in addition to a teacher is supported by at least one qualified and experienced learning support assistant. Many classes have more than one learning support assistant, dependent on the needs of the students within the class.

Staff work closely together as a team to ensure that your child enjoys a positive relationship with them. Staff meet regularly to ensure that they are using consistent and effective approaches at all times in their interactions with your child.

If a child or young person's needs are considered to be exceptional, even within our specialist school setting, the School Leadership Team in consultation with the local education authority, will seek to provide the additional support they may require.

### **How accessible is the School?**

As a relatively new purpose built specialist school, Sir Charles Parsons School is fully accessible.

The building is light, airy and spacious with large well equipped classrooms and a number of specialist teaching areas.

The school building and surrounding grounds are both safe and secure.

### **What resources are available at the school?**

All classrooms have:

- high quality information and communication technology (ICT) facilities to support students learning, including interactive plasma screens and desktop computers
- a hoist system which enables non-ambulant students to be transferred to and from their wheelchairs safely and with dignity
- adjustable tables
- an adjustable sink
- facilities for making hot and cold drinks, a microwave and toaster
- automatic doors;
- blackout screens.

In addition to the classrooms, each wing of the school has a social 'break out' area and a least one small group room. These areas are used as additional teaching areas for small groups of students.

Students regularly access specialised teaching areas, for example, a dedicated ICT suite, food technology room, science rooms, music room, art room and sports hall.

The school also has a purpose built swimming pool and hydrotherapy pool fully accessible to people who have a physical disability.

One wing of the school has two floors. The upper floor is accessed via stairs or a large lift. This lift is fully automatic. This enables students who can move around the school independently, but who, due to their physical disabilities, would be unable to operate lift buttons, to use the lift without adult supervision.

Large accessible outdoor spaces are available for learning and social activities. This includes a small wildlife pond, a greenhouse, small horticulture area and a multi-use games area (MUGA).

### **How do the children and young people travel to school?**

The majority of students are eligible for free home to school transport which is provided by Newcastle City Council.

Students may travel on a minibus or a taxi with other children and young people from their local area. All minibuses in addition to a driver also have at least one escort who is employed to support the students throughout their journey. Students who are transported by taxi may or may not have an escort, dependent on the needs of the student or students being transported.

Those students that live fewer than three miles from the school are usually brought to school by a parent/carer.

Parents/carers can if they choose, opt to access an Independent travel budget as an alternative to their child accessing home school transport. Parents/carers are allocated a budget which they can use to fund alternative arrangements for getting their child to school. This includes for example, bringing their child to school in their car. The budget allocated could then be used to offset fuel costs etc.

For those students for whom it is appropriate, learning how to travel independently to and from school is a very important learning goal. It boosts confidence, self-esteem and increases the opportunities open to them in their future lives. The school fully recognises however, that accessing an independent travel programme is not appropriate for many children due to their nature of their special educational needs.

Where the school does believe it may be appropriate, we discuss with their parents/carers whether the child would benefit from Independent Travel Training. Students do not begin an independent travel programme without full consultation with and the agreement of parents. Even after successfully completing the programme, students will not begin to travel independently to and from school without the agreement of parents/carers.

Further details regarding home to school transport including eligibility can be obtained from School Special Educational Needs Transport Section, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne Tel 0191 2774646

### **What specialist services are available at the school?**

A wide number of professionals work in school to support our student's health and education. These include:

- Children's Community Nurses;
- An occupational therapist;
- Physiotherapists
- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers for the Hearing and Visually Impaired
- a counsellor

In addition to the above, clinics are regularly held in School for students and their families. These include:

- Orthotic clinics
- Wheelchair clinics
- Dietician's clinic
- Medical appointments carried out by paediatricians.

### **What will my child learn at school?**

Our curriculum is based on a standard mainstream secondary model of education which broadly follows the National Curriculum. It is however, carefully adapted to suit the needs of individual students. Students move around the building to different classrooms to be taught by specialist subject teachers.

Every student is offered a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Students with specific and/or complex needs access personalised learning programmes designed to address their individual needs and abilities.

All students are prepared well for the next stage of their education and life. There is a strong emphasis on the development of students' communication, literacy, numeracy and social interaction skills and; on giving them the skills and knowledge that will help them to live a good quality of life as possible as young adults.

Specialist approaches are used to support pupils learning and these include:

- Sensory curriculum for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties
- Social Skills programmes including: Sex and Relationships Education for Secondary aged pupils
- Work experience opportunities
- Rebound Therapy
- Hydro-therapy
- Visual Timetables
- Makaton signing and 'on-body' signing

### **How will I know what progress my child is making at school?**

Student progress is monitored on a daily, weekly and termly basis in relation to their individual education plan targets, attitudes to learning and the different curriculum areas. We report to parents formally on this progress at parents' nights and annual review meetings and also through the use of the home school diaries.

Progress in curriculum subjects is assessed formally using National Curriculum and P-level statements in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students in Years 10, 11 and the 6<sup>th</sup> Form access a range of appropriate accredited courses and their progress is measured by their achievement in these accredited courses, for example Entry level certificates, Assessments and Qualification Authority (AQA) Unit Award Scheme certificates and the ASDAN Personal Progress Award.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are discussed and reviewed three times a year in consultation with parents and students. The student's progress towards the targets identified in their IEPs is reviewed every lesson along with their attitude to learning. Staff and students review targets and learning together and record progress either in the class book for Key Stage 3 students or in the students learning passport for older students. Good learning and progress will be reported back to parents and carers through the home school diary at the end of the day.

### **How will my child's well-being be supported?**

Student's emotional well-being is paramount to us and, in line with our mission statement "enjoy, learn and achieve", we take great care to ensure that all of our students enjoy school and have positive learning experiences throughout their time with us.

Considerable emphasis is put on the teaching of Personal Social and Health Education and pupils are given many and varied opportunities to enjoy a range of Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural experiences during their time at school.

Staff treat students with respect and have high expectations of them. Much emphasis is placed upon developing pupil's confidence and self-esteem and ensuring that all feel valued.

All students carry with them, either in a learning passport or class book, information which ensures that everyone working with the student is aware of their key learning objectives and adopts consistent approaches to supporting them.

Individual Student Support Plans are used when a student may need additional guidance to develop positive patterns of behaviour. This helps ensure that all staff are consistent in the manner they support the management of a student's behaviour. These are created in consultation with parents/carers and with the student when this is considered appropriate.

Sir Charles Parsons School is an inclusive, supportive community and relationships between pupils are generally excellent. Inevitably, as in any school disputes and arguments do occur between students. When such incidents occur, they are quickly, sensitively and firmly addressed

There is a very positive learning environment at school and staff provide excellent role models.

### **What training do staff at the School have?**

Staff on appointment are already qualified either as teachers or Teaching Assistants to at least Level Two or Level Three in Childcare and/or education. A comprehensive induction programme is in place for all staff.

One of the school's Assistant Head Teacher manages a broad Continuing Professional Development programme which is accessed by all staff. All staff receive comprehensive and on-going training in meeting the needs of our students. Mandatory training includes safeguarding, moving and handling, behaviour management and emergency medication administration.

The five annual training days are used to further extend staff knowledge and expertise and to work collectively on areas of whole school improvement.

The school benefits from having staff who are qualified and have the expertise to provide:

- Makaton training
- Moving and Handling Training
- Minibus driving training

All teachers and teaching assistants access performance management procedures which identify any training needs.

### **How does the School support families?**

The school works, through our transition programme for Year 6 pupils, to establish a relationship with parents/carers prior to their child starting at the school.

Your child's pastoral team are the first point of contact and support for parents and carers. We are committed to working openly, collaboratively and co-operatively with parents and carers for the benefit of the students and their families.

Parents/carers are encouraged to play an active role in their child's education. Information is communicated to parents/carers every day in the Home-school diary.

Parents are encouraged and supported to attend two Parent's Evening each year and their child's annual review meeting. These meetings give parents an opportunity to find out, both about their child's progress in school and contribute to the identification of key learning priorities for the future.

The school has a dedicated Parent Support Adviser, Mrs Joanne Corby. Her role is to be a point of contact/information for parents and carers. She provides information and support to parents, carers and their families on a wide range of issues. Specific concerns about a child's education or welfare provision, should however, be initially raised with your child's pastoral team.

'Parent/Carer workshops' are held in school regularly throughout the school year and topics are addressed which have been suggested by parents/carers. Parents/carers are warmly invited and encouraged to attend these workshops.

The school works closely with other agencies, for example, the North East Special Needs Network, Family Information Service, Family Support Workers and Children with Disabilities Social Care team. These close working relationships help families access the support that they need.

### **What links does the school have with the community?**

Students in school are involved in a wide range of activities which give them the opportunity to work with and participate in activities both in and out of school involving the wider community. Our community is not restricted to our locality. Our students are keen to engage with a wide variety of adults and other students from a range of organisations, schools and colleges.

Students are involved with a range of faith organisation and as part of the curriculum, staff arrange visits to a city mosque and synagogue and are currently developing links with a Buddhist centre outside of Newcastle. Clergy and parishioners of Christ Church, our community Church of England church regularly engage with our students, support visits to the church and take part in religious celebrations both in school and in the church, such as our annual Carol service and harvest festival.

We have developed strong links with nearby mainstream schools for example, inviting students from St Alban's school to concerts and to use our swimming pool. Students from Walkergate Primary School also access swimming lessons in our pool.

St Marys High School Sixth Form students work with our younger students each year and plan a joint Christmas party. Year nine students work collaboratively with young army cadets from Walker school on a coastal exploration programme, "Big Adventure" in south Tyneside each year. Our power chair football team regularly play against young people and adults in matches at Percy Hedley Foundation.

Each term we provide the opportunity for groups of up to eight medical students from Newcastle Medical School to come into school and take part in lessons. This helps our students to become familiar with potential future doctors and also gives the medical students an insight into how our students learn and how some medical matters are addressed in school.

Students from a range of schools and colleges are given the opportunity to follow a work experience programme in our school.

Students are given the opportunity to experience the world of work in the community through our work experience programme. We participate in the Project Choice programme led by Sunderland Health Authority which provides work experience on a sequential, weekly basis and can lead to a one year post 16 programme with the aim of leading to employment. This can involve placements in hospitals, business, offices, hairdressers, schools, stables and horticulture centres. Our staff and students also worked in partnership with the local charity, Smile for Life to create a café which is now open to the public and is staffed by our sixth form students on a work experience programme.

Students regularly access the community whether in one of our two mini-buses or more locally to use facilities in the east end of the city. This includes local libraries, shops and cafes.

#### **What activities are available to students outside the school day?**

School operates an after school clubs on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Clubs start immediately after school and finish at 4.50 p.m. After school activities currently offered include: swimming, rebound therapy, power chair football, ICT, sport and music.

Students and their families are invited to identify clubs they wish to attend. We try our best to accommodate the wishes of the students, but some clubs are often over-subscribed. Students may then have to wait their turn before accessing these clubs.

Parents/carers will need to make arrangements to collect their child from school after the clubs have finished. The school does provide an after school transport service for students living in the west end of the city. Students are transported on school minibuses to a drop off point, currently Westgate College on the West Road. Parents/carers can then collect their child from there. There is a charge for this service. This charge is currently £3 per trip.

Many of our students access the Easter and summer activity weeks. These weeks are funded by the school and supported by local charities, for example, the local charity 'Smile for Life'.

Students across the school access educational residential visits. Students have, for example, made visits to The Calvert Trust Centre, Kielder, Bendrigg Trust, Kendal and Beadnell. Groups of students have also undertaken educational visits to destinations outside the UK, including Belgium, Finland, Germany, and Poland.

The school is currently using some of its' Pupil Premium funds to provide educational programmes to develop students' practical literacy, numeracy and social skills in real, community situations. These programmes are delivered outside of school hours. Students eligible for Pupil premium funds and for whom these programmes are appropriate, access these programmes.

### **How will the School support my child at times of change?**

Transition from primary school to secondary school is difficult for all young people and their families, particularly when the young person has additional needs. The school works closely with Hadrian school and other primary schools in the Newcastle area to ensure that staff, students and parents/carers have opportunities to meet, share information and ask questions.

There is a structured transition programme in place between Hadrian and Sir Charles Parsons which gives Hadrian students many opportunities to become familiar with the building and staff at Sir Charles Parsons. Staff from Sir Charles Parsons work with the Year 6 students, developing relationships in preparation for moving on. Students transferring to Sir Charles Parsons from other schools are invited and expected to join this transition programme. Specific transition programmes may be developed for individuals who have particular needs and may need individualised support.

Transition onwards from Sir Charles Parsons to other placements after Year 11 or from the Sixth Form are also planned and supported by school staff who work with other agencies to prepare documents and share information.

Transition to and from Sir Charles Parsons is supported by the school's Parent Support Advisor who visits families at home as well as providing a point of contact within school.

Change can happen for many different reasons and may not always be planned. The pastoral system at the school ensures that your child is supported by staff who know them well and can support them to deal with any changes which may happen during their time at school. The pastoral team includes the staff who support your child's class directly as well as the school's Parent Support Advisor, a Family Support Worker and the Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care.

### **What might my child do when they leave school?**

A small number of students leave the school after Year 11. These students usually transfer to one of three local education authority Further Education Colleges, i.e. Tyne Met College, Newcastle College or Gateshead College.

The majority of students transfer to our Sixth Form provision after Year 11. Our Sixth Form provision has two separate bases. One is based in our main school building. The second is based within our neighbouring mainstream, secondary school, Walker Technology College. The students within this base, while still member of Sir Charles Parsons School are fully integrated into the Sixth Form provision of Walker College.

Students leaving the school from the Sixth Form transfer to a variety of educational settings. The majority transfer to the local Further Educational Colleges. A small number transfer to specialist colleges, for example Dilston College near Hexham. Students with more significant or complex needs may transfer to Percy Hedley College in Newcastle. Students with the most profound special educational needs access Social Care support packages or provision provided by Able 2, which is part of the Percy Hedley foundation.

A small number of students access Project Choice, an initiative which provides work experience opportunities, designed to lead to internships with organisations and hopefully paid employment.

**What can a parent/carer do if they feel the School Information Report is not being delivered or if their child's needs are not being met?**

If a parent has concerns about the provision available to their child at Sir Charles Parsons School they are invited to discuss these promptly with their child's Pastoral Teacher or member of the leadership team in the first instance.

The school has a Complaints Policy and procedures. If concerns raised by a parent/carer cannot be resolved through these discussions. Copies of the school's complaints policies and procedures are available from the school.

**How will the School Information Report be reviewed?**

The School Information Report will be formally reviewed and updated on an annual basis each July to ensure that it is relevant for the following school year.

**Who can I contact for further information about the school?**

If you require any further information about Sir Charles Parsons School please do not hesitate to contact:

**Mrs Joanne Corby**  
**Parent Support Adviser**

Sir Charles Parsons School  
Westbourne Avenue  
Walker  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
Tyne and Wear  
NE6 4ED

Telephone: 0191 2952280

Fax: 0191 2952299

E mail: [admin@scp.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:admin@scp.newcastle.sch.uk)