

The Serendipity School



every child deserves a chance

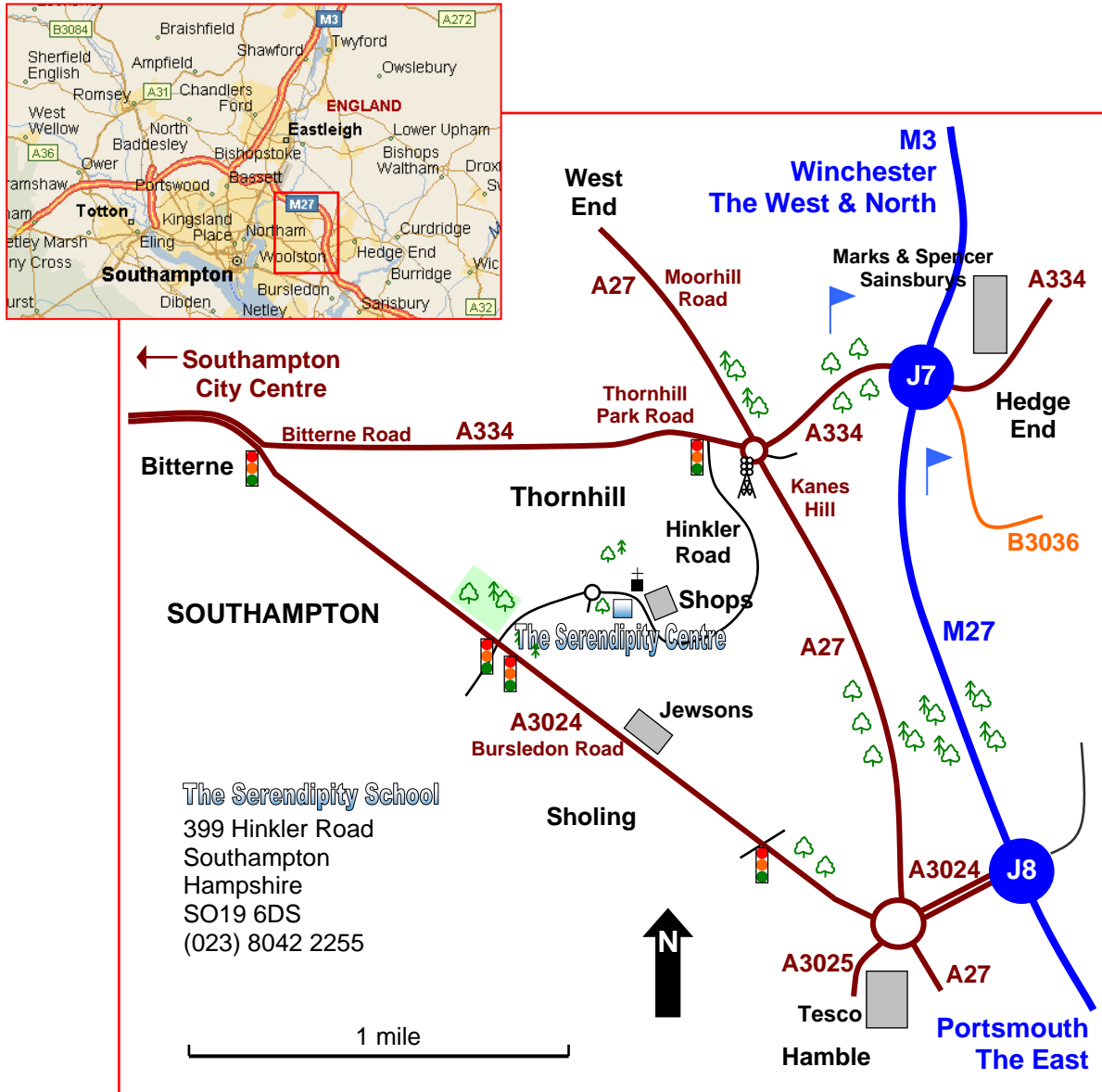
*The past is something that's gone forever
The future is something we will work on together*

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS



2025 -2026

HOW TO FIND US



From the North/West

Exit the M27 at Junction 7. Take the last exit of the motorway roundabout and proceed up the hill (A334/Charles Watts Way). At the roundabout take the 3rd exit on to the A334/Thornhill Park Road. After about 400 yds turn left at the traffic lights into Hinkler Road. The Serendipity School is on your left after about 3/4 mile after the shops.

From the South/East

Exit the M27 at Junction 7. Take the first exit (A334/Charles Watts Way) and proceed as at left.

From Southampton City Centre

Follow the signs for Hamble and the A3024. At the junction with the A334/West End carry straight on towards Bursledon and Hamble. After 3/4 mile, and at the top of the hill, turn left at the traffic lights into Hinkler Road. The Serendipity School is on your right after about 1/3 mile just after the roundabout.

Letter from the Head Teacher

September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am very pleased to write these few words of welcome on behalf of the staff at The Serendipity School. Please take the time to read through this prospectus as it will help you find out about life at the school. I hope that you find it useful, informative, and reassuring.

We believe that all students deserve the best educational opportunities, and that there are no barriers to learning and achieving positive outcomes. We aim to achieve this in a safe, secure and caring environment to foster positive relationships, promote the importance of learning and acquiring new skills, becoming independent and resilient, and preparing for life outside of school. Our approach is one of positive reinforcement, celebrating all successes, and finding opportunities to learn and grow in a variety of ways. We want our students to be happy to come to school and provide a range of educational, social and cultural activities that allow them to flourish.

Once your child has a place at The Serendipity School, we will endeavour to make you and your child feel welcome and part of our school community. We believe that every student is capable of achieving success, and strive to meet the needs of each and every one of them. We are fortunate that we are able to give our students very high levels of support whenever it is required. However, we also encourage all students to be as independent as possible both in their learning and in their social and personal development.

We are proud of all our students and their range of achievements not only in learning, but in their social skills, the creative arts and sporting achievements. When visiting the school, you will soon discover our real strengths lie in the positive atmosphere created by the hardworking and dedicated staff who create a happy, secure and challenging environment.

We are committed to supporting parents and carers and we understand that as the guardian of a student with complex needs you may need additional advice and support to ensure that your child gets the best chances in life. Education is a partnership between students, parents and carers, and the school. If you have a question, would like advice, or just feel in need of a bit support then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will always do our very best to help you.

Yours sincerely

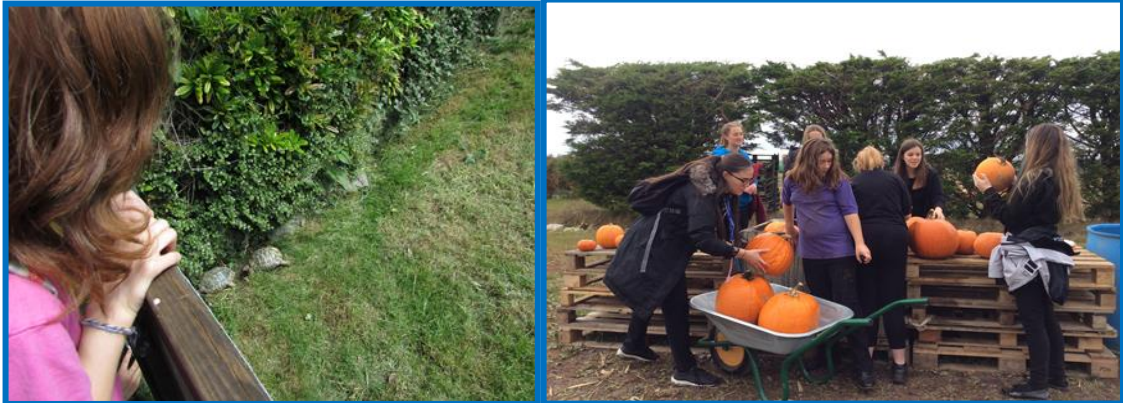


Philippa Smith
(BA Hons/PGCE Secondary English/PGCE SEND)



An overview

The Serendipity School, is an independent school catering for girls aged 9-18, who are not attending mainstream secondary school because of severe or complex Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), ASD, ADHD, attachment or trauma needs and forms part of The Serendipity Centre Ltd (TSCL). TSCL specialises in the education and residential care of girls who have experienced life trauma or a phobia of education, and who would benefit from placement in a girls only environment. The Serendipity School's is an outstanding school (OfSTED June 2024), and a centre of excellence for the care and education with a well-documented reputation for innovation and excellence in its work.



The Serendipity School is situated on an attractive site in the Thornhill district of Southampton, with easy access to Junction 7 of the M27, and split over two buildings. Built in the late 1970's, the main building has been extensively modernised to provide a high-quality teaching environment with 4 classrooms, a small group room, and a large multi-purpose dining/teaching area. An adjacent learning and creative space is used for our primary students, and also includes space for creative and sensory sessions for all students.



The Serendipity School has a caring and considerate ethos in which all members of the school community are respected and valued. In particular, the school values parental partnerships, and operates an open-door policy to aid effective communication with parents and carers. The school also operates extended opening hours, offering breakfast to all students in the morning, as well as twilight learning sessions for individual students who need to access education outside of the normal school day.

The Serendipity School

The school only employs the best staff who are deeply committed to the care and education of our students. The staff, are very experienced in dealing with students with complex educational, behavioural, emotional and social needs and aim to genuinely give the girls the chance that they deserve.



Our Principles

Mission

TSCl will be a centre of excellence for the care and education of girls with Special Educational Needs, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), ASD, ADHD, attachment or trauma needs.

Vision

TSCl will support and guide young people in a safe and secure environment; engage them in life-long learning experiences, empower them to become independent; help young people to develop more adaptive ways of coping with their difficulties and build their capacity to make a positive contribution to society.

Aims

The aims of the Serendipity School are to:

- support, promote and re-engage students in learning so that they may achieve their full academic and personal potential
- promote positive behaviour amongst the students and to help them make a positive contribution to society
- guide the students towards social and economic independence
- provide a safe, secure and stable base for the students and to help protect them from harm
- support and promote the health and well-being of the students.

Ethos

The ethos of a school is more than a set of good intentions, it is how students, staff, and visitors interact. At The Serendipity School we believe that staff and students should:

- be caring and considerate of others
- treat everyone with equal regard
- recognise both individuality and the value of working within a team
- work in an environment that is safe, secure, and supportive
- discuss issues and concerns openly and honestly
- strive for personal development
- be prepared to share knowledge, ideas and skills
- accept responsibility for their actions.

School Organisation

Administration

The Serendipity School is an independent school for girls aged between 9-18 years, registered with the DfES (no. 852/6009). The school is operated by The Serendipity Centre Ltd; registered in England, company number 06829359.

Contact Details

School Address

The Serendipity School
399 Hinkler Road
Southampton
Hampshire
SO19 6DS

Telephone : 023 8042 2255
Email: referrals@serendipity-education.com
Website: www.serendipity-education.com

Head Teacher

Miss Philippa Smith
philippa.smith@serendipity-education.com

Proprietor

Mr Sean Maguinness
sean.maguinness@serendipity-education.com



The Serendipity School

The Head Teacher and Proprietor can be contacted using the above information both in and out of term-time.

Staffing

Education Team

Member of Staff	Position
Sean Maguinness	Proprietor
Philippa Smith	Head Teacher/DSL
Ruth Murphy	SEND Lead/Maths teacher
Laura Bayliss	Maths/ P.E. Teacher/Form Tutor
Izzi Goater	English teacher/Form Tutor
Kerry Saunders	Assistant Head (pastoral)/ Primary specialist/English teacher/Form Tutor
Alice Jennings	Assistant Head (Pastoral) / P.E./PHSCE teacher
Russ Cast	ASDAN/Art/Food Technology teacher/Form Tutor
Lexie Masters	Science teacher/Form Tutor
Stephen Groom	Assistant Head (curriculum) Discovery/Outdoor Learning teacher/Form Tutor
Shelley Munday	LSA (4 days)
Shaun Stewart	LSA
Kat Hallum	LSA (4 days)
Jade Mandiville	LSA
Arousha Kahn	LSA
Kim Bird	LSA

Staff have a wide range of specialist knowledge in their chosen areas, and experience to deliver an appropriate curriculum to students to ensure the best academic and social outcomes for them. We have an ongoing programme of professional development to ensure that staff maintain and develop their professional expertise, fostering the approach that 'every day is a school day', and we are always able to learn new things.

The maximum class size is 6, with a fully qualified teacher and at least one LSA supporting students.

Administration Team & Support Team

Lisa Cripps	Receptionist / PA to Head Teacher
Carol Brown	School chef

Referrals and Admissions

Referral Agencies

The referral of a student to The Serendipity School will normally be handled by the Local Authority responsible for your child. Professionals, schools, parents and carers are all welcome to make informal enquiries to the school. However, The Serendipity School works in partnership with the Local Authorities, and it is they that will ultimately manage the referral.

It is expected that most students will either have, or be in the process of assessment for, an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The Serendipity School caters for students with:

- complex special educational needs
- social, emotional and mental health needs
- life traumas
- educational phobias.

The placement of all students at the school has to be authorised by the Local Authority responsible for the student following a consultation process. Details of the Admissions Process are included in the school's Referrals and Admission Policy (available from the Head Teacher upon request).

The school is registered for 25 places.

Admissions criteria for The Serendipity School

The School usually only accepts students whose specific needs cannot be met in a mainstream school or pupil referral unit (PRU). The student must normally meet **one** of the following criteria:

- have a Statement of Special Educational Needs / Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) in which The Serendipity School is named as the student's school
- be in the process of assessment for a Statement of Special Educational Needs / Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) in which The Serendipity School will be named as the student's school
- have agreement from the Local Authority responsible for the student that they will attend The Serendipity School.

In addition, other factors will be considered before a referred student is accepted into the school. These additional factors might include:

- the wishes of the parent or carer
- the nature of the student's needs and previous educational experiences
- the recommendations of the referring body
- the suitability of The Serendipity School for the student (the student must have needs that can be met within the expected available provision and staffing levels).



Before admission we will visit new students and also give them and their parents or carers an opportunity to visit the school. This is an important part of the admission process as it gives the student an opportunity to meet the staff and see the school for themselves. Once a placement is confirmed by the local authority, a detailed transition programme will be discussed with the parents or carers and young person, which outlines their first few weeks at The Serendipity School.

For further information on admissions, you may contact Pip Smith (Head Teacher) on 023 8042 2255.

Refusal of Admission

The Head Teacher reserves the right to refuse admission in the following cases:

- the school is fully subscribed and admitting further students would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources
- where the admission of a student would compromise the Health and Safety of students and/or staff within the school, or, would seriously compromise or disrupt the education of students already within the school.

Educational Matters

Provision

At The Serendipity School we cater for students with mild to moderate learning difficulties, complex behavioural, emotional and social difficulties arising from, for example, a life trauma. We provide a welcoming, caring and supportive environment where students are valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. All aspects of school life are important to the learning process and a strong pastoral curriculum underpins all we do. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which encourages students to achieve qualifications that are relevant to their level of ability, and we are committed to developing the literacy, numeracy and 'life skills' of all students.

Our provision is further enhanced by a range of outdoor learning opportunities through our innovative 'Discovery' programme, Forest Schools, equine therapy and physical education.



Curriculum Entitlement

At The Serendipity School we believe that all students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. Thus

- all students will have a Behavioural Support Plan based on their Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and learning needs
- all students will have access to the full range of National Curriculum subjects, which will be differentiated according to individual needs
- all progress in core areas of English, maths and science will be assessed against national criteria.
- the school focuses upon the strengths of all students, aiming to make all students confident, happy and to achieve success. All achievements and successes are celebrated
- all teaching will be in very finely graded steps with frequent opportunities for revisiting and reinforcement of learning.
- all students will be given opportunities to work towards nationally recognised qualifications and prepare for further academic study or training.

Curricular Content

The aim of the school is to provide an appropriate curriculum to meet the individual needs of each and every student. The curriculum is designed to improve all aspects of a student's educational and social development.

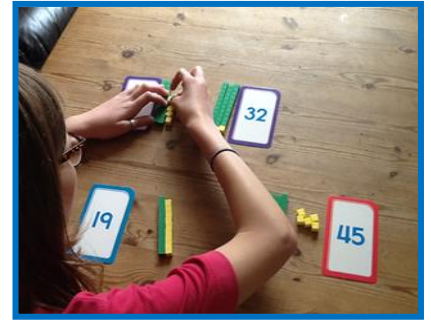
The curriculum is personalised to the needs of the individual student and takes into account both their ability and their progress. It is designed to be broad and balanced in order to allow students to take part in as many educational experiences as possible, so that otherwise hidden talents can be discovered and enhanced. Great emphasis is placed on fostering self-confidence and a maturity of approach that will aid a student in independent adult life. To this end, students in the later years at school will take part in work experience and college taster days, with support as necessary.

It is our aim that as well as providing a broad and balanced taught curriculum, great emphasis is placed on the 'hidden curriculum' (the environment and time spent outside the classroom). The 'hidden curriculum' is used to develop self-confidence, reliability, the skills of mixing with their peers and adults, also taking responsibility for younger students and helping others less fortunate than themselves. The importance of preparing students for adult life cannot be stressed enough.



Special Educational Needs Policy

The school has a comprehensive *Special Educational Needs Policy* that underpins teaching and learning. Parents and carers are welcome to have access to the full document (copies of which may be obtained from the Head Teacher). The Serendipity School aims to:



- allow for the early identification and assessment of students' Special Educational Needs.
- provide a broad, relevant and balanced curriculum based on the individual needs of students.
- provide maximum access and attainment by deploying available resources such that students receive the support they need, and have the opportunities required to foster their personal, social, cultural, moral, spiritual and educational development. (To aid this, the ground floor at Serendipity is designed to allow full wheelchair access and hearing loops have been installed throughout the whole building.)
- provide a graduated response to a student's needs to help them realise their full potential and therefore leave the school best equipped to succeed in the next stage of their lives; whether that is reintegration into a mainstream school, attending Further Education, participating in training credits or joining the world of work.
- develop an ethos and culture that provides students with a wide range of needs and a therapeutic environment that allows them to realise their academic, moral and social potential, in a way that individual student support in the mainstream may not be able to do.
- work in partnership with students' parents, carers, and external agencies to provide for their individual needs.

Inclusion

The Serendipity School supports Government policy, which states that where possible students should be educated in a mainstream setting. We aim for students to have inclusion opportunities during their time at The Serendipity School where this is appropriate, and this is usually achieved within Key Stage 4, when students have opportunities to access 14-16 Vocational Pathway courses provided by local colleges.



Equal Opportunities

At The Serendipity School we aim to encourage our students to respect individual differences. Through the school's curricular programmes, we try to foster attitudes and ways of behaving which respect individuals regardless of age, culture, religion, received gender, social lifestyles, ability, disability or sexuality. The school is opposed to any forms of discrimination and it seeks to build a partnership with students, staff, parents, and carers to fight prejudice both in school and in the community as a whole. Staff aim to ensure that all aspects of diverse cultures and religions are viewed positively and seek opportunities to make use of materials that will support this.

We are committed to include all students in all school activities where this may be managed without risk to health and safety. We have a comprehensive policy on Equal Opportunities that is available from the Head Teacher upon request.

English as an Additional Language

When dealing with students whose first language is not English, particular care will be exercised. Teachers will closely follow the student's progress across the curriculum to ascertain if there are any difficulties. It may be necessary to make an assessment of their proficiency in English, as a basis of planning additional support required. The Serendipity School will have regard to the advice of the Hampshire Ethnic Minority Achievement Service regarding the initial placement of EAL (English as an Additional Language) students in order to facilitate the ready acquisition of English in both its spoken and written form, and will offer supported programmes for EAL students.

Preparation for Post 16 education

Where appropriate, students will be offered in-fill college placements at Key Stage 4. We work closely with all agencies involved, with the aim of enabling students to achieve their full potential through realistic, but challenging expectations. Staff support is available for students during their college placements if required.

Staff at The Serendipity School work closely with a number of education providers offering a range of courses, at Level 1 for example (Catering, Animal Management, Child Care, and Sports Leader Awards). Courses may be for 1 or 2 days and the students are supported by school staff, if required.



In some circumstances post 16 students have undertaken a dual registration at both The Serendipity School and a local college provider to ensure a successful transition into the post 16 Learning environment, alongside continuing to access academic subjects and qualifications.

Careers, Job Placement and Post-16 Provision

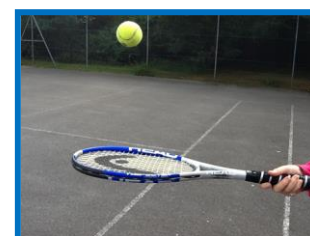
On the basis of reports received from a student's college placements our own observations and the quality of the student's schoolwork, the school recommends appropriate pathways for the students post-16 working in conjunction with Social Worker, The Virtual School and any other relevant outside agency.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught with due regard to moral considerations and an emphasis on the value and importance of family life. RSE is not taught in isolation, but within a framework of a personal development programme dealing with many aspects of growing up. Parents and carers are welcome to discuss policy matters, look at the policy document, and view teaching materials. Students may be withdrawn from RSE lessons upon written request.

Physical Education

Physical aspects of the curriculum provide an important opportunity to develop self-esteem, encourage co-operation with others and



The Serendipity School

develop understanding of healthy lifestyles. All students have PE as part of their curriculum. A diverse range of activities is offered to the students, including a selection of more traditional PE activities alongside opportunities to participate in engaging off site activities making use of the facilities of local providers. The only acceptable reason for not taking part is a Doctor's certificate, or a note from parents or carers.

Religious Education

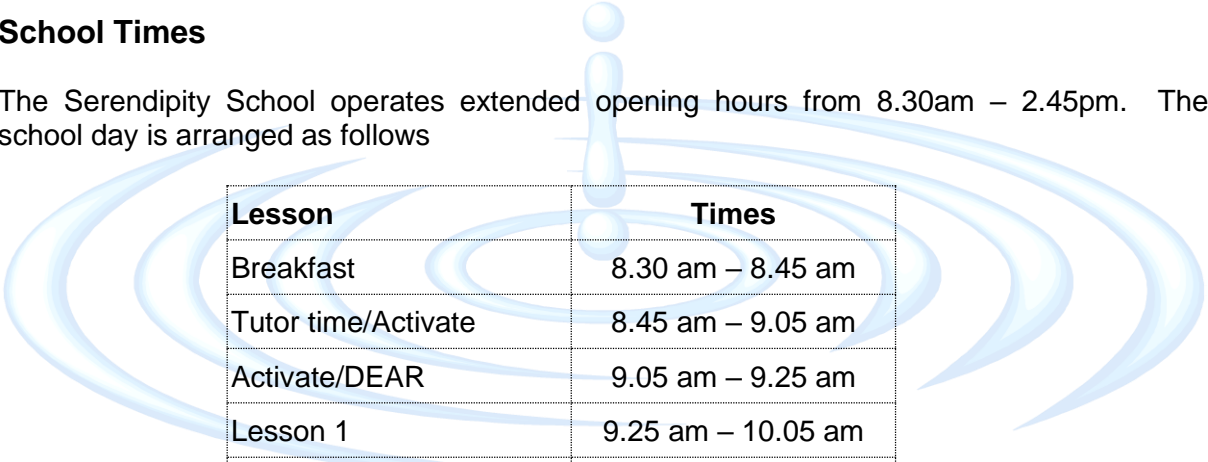
RE is available to all students through the Humanities programme. RE covers all faiths and religious observances in equal measure and reflects the diverse nature of our learners and the culture/community in which we live. A parent or carer has the right to withdraw their child from religious education by making a written request to the school.

Collective Worship

The daily ethos of The Serendipity School is focused upon 'Respect'; respect for self, others and the environment. Every Friday morning, the whole school celebrates student success and achievement, with reflection and positive feedback from staff and students. Certificates reinforcing student (and staff) achievement are awarded by a member of the senior management team.

School Times

The Serendipity School operates extended opening hours from 8.30am – 2.45pm. The school day is arranged as follows



Lesson	Times
Breakfast	8.30 am – 8.45 am
Tutor time/Activate	8.45 am – 9.05 am
Activate/DEAR	9.05 am – 9.25 am
Lesson 1	9.25 am – 10.05 am
Lesson 2	10.05 am – 10.45 am
Break	10.45 am – 11.00 am
Lesson 3	11.00 am – 11.45 am
Lesson 4	11.45 am – 12.30 pm
Lunch	12.30 pm – 1.00 pm
Lesson 5	1.00 pm - 1.45 pm
Lesson 6	1.45pm – 2.30 pm
Tutor Time	2.30 pm – 2.45 pm

While we have many off-site visits these mainly take place within normal school hours. If there are any activities that extend beyond the normal school day you will be given advance notice in writing.

On Friday afternoons we run 'STAR Time' for all students who have achieved their personal STAR point target during the week. STAR Time and STAR points are the heart of our behaviour management and academic achievement system whereby students understand

the consequences of the choices they make. STAR Time involves activities both on and off site.

Out of School Activities

The school provides a wide range of activities in which all students are encouraged to participate. Typical destinations include leisure centres, ski centres, museums, and theatres.

Support Agencies

The Serendipity School has close links with all the agencies that interact with our students including (amongst others) Social Services, Educational Psychologists, Counsellors, CAMHS, the Local Health Service, and the Youth Offending Team. There are regular TAC (Team Around a Child) meetings for all the professionals involved with our students.

We are often asked to provide reports and offer advice to other professionals who support our students. Parents and carers have a right to see their child's records and we are happy to make them available upon request.

Involvement of Parents and Carers

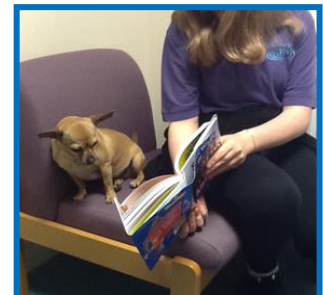
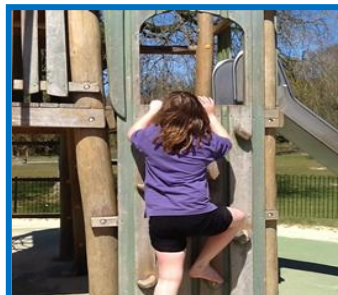
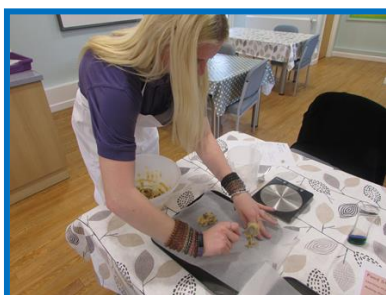
We are committed to working with parents and carers. If you have a query or a problem, we will aim to make a response within 24 hours. At The Serendipity School we place great importance on the partnership between staff, parents, carers and students.

We would like parents and carers to be actively involved in the education of their child and aim to keep them fully informed. We believe that the best team consists of the student, the parent or carer and the teacher all working together.

Parents and carers are welcome to visit the school at any time, although telephoning beforehand to make an appointment is very helpful and much appreciated (and during lesson times parents and carers will not be admitted into classrooms).

As part of the statutory processes for reviewing a Statement of Educational Needs/Education Health Care Plan, an Annual Review Meeting is held each year. Parents and carers are invited to this meeting to discuss their child's progress with a range of professionals. We cannot emphasise too strongly the boost it gives to students' self-confidence and progress when parents/carers and the school work together. We welcome comments and suggestions from parents and carers who have ideas for additional ways in which we can improve working together.

For day-to-day information students will be given a STAR Book through which teachers, parents and carers can communicate. This can be used as a focus for discussion on curricular and / or behavioural issues, in addition to being used as a record of achievement. We will always contact parents and carers immediately if we are concerned about any aspect of their child's welfare, progress, or behaviour and we hope that parents and carers will also let us know of any problems at an early stage.



Reporting to Parents and Carers

During the school year, we keep parents and carers informed of their child's progress at various stages throughout the year.

A termly progress review is sent home at the end of the autumn term and another at the end of the spring term. Termly reports illustrate current progress and set targets for future attainment and development. In addition, a full end of year progress report will be sent home at the end of each academic year.

As part of the statutory processes for reviewing an Education and Health Care Plan, an Annual Review Meeting is held each year. Parents and carers are invited to this meeting to discuss their child's progress with a range of professionals.

Parents and carers may request to see the Head Teacher or SEN Lead at any mutually convenient time to discuss any matters that will be of help to the student's education and progress.

Student Welfare

Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedure

The Government places a duty on schools and Proprietors to report any unexplained or repeated injury or concern to Social Services including non-accidental injury, severe physical neglect, emotional abuse, and/or sexual abuse. This procedure is intended to protect children at risk and schools are encouraged to take the attitude that where there are grounds for suspicion it is better to be safe than sorry. Whenever it is necessary to report an incident to Social Services, we will make every endeavour to contact parents and carers to inform them that a referral is being made.

Referrals are only made after a great deal of thought. Even so, schools and Proprietors run the risk of upsetting some parents and carers by reporting a case that, on investigation, proves unfounded. In such circumstances, it is hoped that parents and carers will accept that the schools and Proprietor had the child's best interests at heart. We are all aware of sad cases reported in the press where incidents have not been reported and a child has been subjected to unnecessary suffering and we would all wish to avoid any possibility of such an occurrence.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Serendipity School seeks to ensure that bullying in any form does not happen. We are committed to providing a caring, safe, and friendly environment for everyone. Bullying incidents are very rare, due to a very positive ethos in the school and the high level of care and support we are able to provide. We also encourage our students to be kind and help them develop respect for each other as well as for their environment. We place great emphasis on encouraging students to work and play together co-operatively.

Parents and carers have an important part to play in helping to deal with bullying. If you are worried that your child is bullying or being bullied in school, please contact the school immediately so that any incident can be dealt with swiftly.



Student Voice

Representatives from each tutor group form the Student Voice and meet on a regular basis. This provides an opportunity for an open discussion of student initiatives and any concerns they may have with the school.

Behaviour

At The Serendipity School we focus on the positive aspects of student behaviour at every opportunity, so developing a caring environment in which students feel safe, secure and happy. We believe that all students behave best when they have high levels of self-esteem and where achievements, successes, and good behaviour are recognised and rewarded. This is done both publicly and individually through the use of the STAR Book, charts, stickers and stamps, weekly certificates, free-choice activities and STAR Time. We see these strategies as important and effective ways of encouraging appropriate behaviour, care and consideration for others, and a pride in the individual talents of all our students.

We also encourage students to begin to appreciate that there are consequences for all the choices and decisions they make, be they positive or negative.

The school has a comprehensive behavioural policy that logs students' behaviour and offers them, and their parents and carers quick and fair feedback of a positive and negative nature. An excellent standard of discipline is achieved by good relationships between staff, students, parents, and carers. We operate an open-door policy for parents or carers and gives, appropriate support to parents and carers when necessary.

Great emphasis is placed on manners and politeness, on the etiquette of receiving visitors, including thanking them for time given to the school, and on consideration of other people's points of view or opinion. The school hopes to develop a student's skills in:

- Good relationships with others
- Personal honesty
- Good work standards
- Following instructions
- Personal pride in appearance
- Good time-keeping.

Excellent student-staff relationships help to minimise any problems that occur. Staff offer guidance, but if it is refused then we will use consequences such as time away from peers or missing a free time or off-site activity.

Exclusions

For students with significant behaviour problems parents and carers will be consulted, and individual behaviour plans will be drawn up. Since The Serendipity School will, for many of our students represent a 'last chance', we aim to operate a minimum zero-exclusion policy.

However, there are some behaviours for which the Head Teacher reserves the right to exclude the student. For example, where the continued presence of a student would compromise the health and safety of students and/or staff within the school, or, would seriously compromise or disrupt the education of students already within the school.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to create an alternative timetable for a student to help re-engage with learning following an incident(s) of inappropriate behaviour. This would be organised in consultation with the parent, carer, student and staff from the school.

Medical Matters

When new students are admitted we ask parents and carers to complete a medical questionnaire for our records. The school has a comprehensive policy on administration of medicines in school that is available upon request. If students need to bring medicines into school, we do require parents and carers to provide written instructions on the use of the medication. Staff require written permission from the parent or carer before they can administer any medication. The medicines will be stored safely and securely and will be administered as per the written instructions from parents and carers.

Students who require inhalers may keep their inhalers within the classroom, but they should be used under the direction of a member of staff. All students who are on permanent medication or have an ongoing and serious medical condition have an Individual Healthcare Plan which is held centrally in school.

We do not have our own school nurse and staff are not trained to carry out complicated medical procedures. All staff however, are qualified first aiders, therefore they are able to provide basic first aid treatment for minor medical problems and accidents.

Any student requiring First Aid will have a telephone call to parent/carers, which documents the nature and cause of any injury and any treatment offered.

Sickness and Absence

We ask parents and carers to notify us if their child is to be absent from or late to school for any reason. It is most important that we receive a note or telephone call regarding illness or absence otherwise this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Students with sickness and diarrhoea should **not** attend school until the illness has passed, and they have been free of the symptoms for 48 hours of the last symptoms.

It is important that absence due to illness be notified in writing when the student returns to school. After 4 days illness it is helpful if a Doctor's note can be sent to the school (or at least permission given to check with the surgery as to whether the student is fit for school with or without medication). Where medication is prescribed staff can supervise the medication on receipt of written instructions from the parent or carer.

Students who become sick at school may be taken home; therefore it is important that the school has (on file) the times when the parent or carer is available or an alternative address where the student may be taken.

If it is necessary to send a student to hospital, parents or carers will be informed as soon as possible, and a member of staff will accompany the student until a parent or carer can attend. In most cases, hospitals will not commence treatment without a parent or carer being present.

Treatment can only be given by the school for accidents taking place in the school. The school cannot give treatment for accidents or injuries that happen outside school.

Medical Appointments

Students may be released for medical appointments on receipt of a written request from the parent or carer, but the school would appreciate appointments being arranged outside school time whenever possible.

General Information

Uniform

There is a compulsory school uniform. Upon admission the school provides each student with

- coloured short-sleeved polo shirts
- a choice of coloured hooded jumpers

Students are expected to provide their own black trousers and to wear sensible black shoes; not trainers or canvas shoes). Students may wear their own black outdoor coats and jackets to and from school.

Students should be dressed neatly and tidily in school uniform at all times.

For lost or significantly damaged items, the school may ask for a nominal voluntary contribution to cover the cost of replacements.

Jewellery

Jewellery must not be worn except for watches. Ear-studs are the only item of pierced jewellery that is permitted, all other forms of piercing are done at the student's own risk. Jewellery must be kept to a minimum due to health and a safety concern.

Mobile phones / electronic devices

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones, iPods or any other electronic device to school due to health and safety concerns. Students who bring in these items will be requested to hand them in on arrival, and they will be stored securely until the end of the school day. The school is unable to accept any responsibility for the loss of any such items on the premises.

PE Kit

- School PE polo shirt
- Black tracksuit bottoms
- Black shorts
- Socks
- Trainers
- Plain swimming costume

This can be brought into school and kept in the student's locker.

All jewellery should be removed during P.E., or swimming lessons as a safety precaution. Valuables should be given to the teacher for safe keeping.

Valuables

All students have their own small locker in school in which they can keep personal possessions. However, it is recommended that students do not bring valuable items into school because of the chance of them being used or broken by other students. The school is unable to accept any responsibility for the loss of valuable items.

Under no circumstances should any student bring drugs, alcohol, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes/vapes), matches, lighters, chewing gum, knives, weapons, or aerosol cans onto the school premises.

Any valuables are required to be handed in and will be stored securely for students until the end of the day.

Lost property

Although we are a small school, all property (including clothing) should be clearly marked with the student's name. This will save us a considerable amount of time and helps prevent disputes over ownership of articles.

Money

Due to safeguarding issues, unless money is brought at the request of the school (for example, photograph money, contribution to charity) students do not need to bring money to school. The school is unable to accept any responsibility for the loss of any money on the premises.

Lunch

Due to the position of the school, and as students attend from a fairly wide area, students are required to remain in school during the lunch period. The Serendipity School provide a healthy lunch free of charge to all students, and any special dietary needs are catered for. Staff work with the students to ensure that they eat healthily and sit with them while they have their breakfast, break and lunch. Such social times provide important opportunities for staff to support students with their social and communication skills.

Student Transport

For most students, this is often an area of concern to parents and carers when considering a school placement away from their local areas. Unless home to school transport is included as a need within the EHCP, the Local Authority is only expected to provide free transport to and from The Serendipity School for students that live more than three miles away. Where transport is refused, parents and carers may appeal, although this may involve providing evidence of medical conditions or other reasons why the student should have transport provided. For any individual or different transport requirements needed by a particular student then the parent(s) or carer(s) should contact their LA.

Most of our students travel in taxis. We ask that parents and carers co-operate with the transport companies to ensure the safe transport of all students. The school expects students to wear seat belts and to sit where directed by the driver and/or escort. Good behaviour is expected on transport to and from school all times.

Please make sure you have the telephone number of your child's transport company in case you need to get in touch with them e.g. informing them if your child is ill and does not need to be picked up. It is also good practice to give them your telephone number or an emergency

contact number. We will do our best to help in an emergency but remember the golden rule is please keep us informed.

Parents and carers should ensure that they or a responsible adult are at the appointed place to collect their child at the end of the school day.

Links with Community

The Serendipity School works closely with local schools and colleges in the Hampshire area, developing inclusive opportunities throughout the year. In addition, the school aims to work very hard at forming positive links with the local community, through fundraising activities, educational visits, hosting professionals and offering training opportunities to other colleagues in educational settings.

Complaints

The Serendipity Centre Ltd (TSCL) seeks to maintain good relations between parents, carers, young people and staff, therefore by listening and being approachable, we will ensure that parents, carers, young people and staff feel confident to raise issues and concerns as appropriate.

TSCL seeks to listen and will try to resolve concerns as informally and quickly as possible and will always make clear what action, if any has been taken. We preclude any person who is the subject of a complaint from taking any responsibility for the consideration or response to that complaint. We do not allow any reprisals against a young person or others making a complaint.

Stage 1: If you have any concerns regarding any educational issues at The Serendipity School please do not hesitate to raise it with the Head Teacher, Miss Philippa Smith, immediately. We will listen to you, take your concerns seriously, and endeavour to resolve any issues as soon as possible.

Stage 2: If you are not happy with our response to your concerns you should make a formal complaint in writing, setting out the facts and stating what it is that you consider should have been done, or where you feel we have not met reasonable expectations. Please address your complaint to the Proprietor and send it to **The Serendipity Centre Ltd, 1st Floor Goodlands House, St Luke's Close, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 2US**. The complaint will be fully investigated and once all the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and you will be contacted in writing, within 5 working days.

Stage 3: If the complaint is of a serious nature, cannot be resolved at stage 2 or you are not happy with the response to your written complaint, you can request an independent panel to listen to your complaint. In this case, you should inform the Proprietor that this is what you would like to do.

The school's complaint policy is available upon request from The Head Teacher.

Accuracy

The information contained in this prospectus relates to the academic year 2025 to 2026. Though correct in relation to the 2025/26 year at the time of printing (September 2025), it should not be assumed that subsequent change will not affect the accuracy of the information before the start of or during the school year in question.

