

Education at Vbranch

EDUCATION AT VRANCH HOUSE SCHOOL - THE CORE OFFER

Like all schools Vbranch House is obliged to state the services and opportunities it will provide its pupils and their families. This statement is known as the "Core Offer". To access Devon County Council 'Local Offer' please click here:

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>

Ours has been accepted by Devon County Council and appears below:

Vbranch House School Core Offer

Learner profile

Pupils at Vbranch House require a quiet, nurturing and supportive environment, delivered through personalised learning opportunities in small class groups. Pupils at Vbranch House all experience moderate to severe physical disabilities and may have a combination of additional needs including complex medical needs and multisensory (visual and/or hearing) impairments. Whilst we have some more-cognitively able pupils, most of our pupils experience specific or global learning needs and others have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

A small minority of our pupils may have needs associated with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) or occasionally-challenging behaviours arising from sensory integration/regulation needs. We do not however have any specialism in meeting the very specific needs of individuals whose primary learning needs relate to ASC or Behavioural, Emotion or Social Difficulties (BSED). We cannot admit to any part of the school any child or young person whose behaviours or needs may dilute the safety, wellbeing or education of our existing pupils.

School Designation

The registered range is from age 2 to 18 for up to 33 pupils. We have capacity for a pre-school nursery, managed by a Nursery Nurse and led by our Senior Teacher - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), from the age of 2 to the year in which they reach primary school age. Each class in our lower school is led by a qualified SEN-experienced teacher and a team of highly experienced specialist support assistants who provide a high level of additional support.

Our Secondary provision is led by our Senior Teacher – Secondary, who works across all three classes. Secondary classes or groups not being led by the Senior Teacher are led by SEN-experienced Tutors or Higher-Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), under the direct supervision of the Senior Teacher. All pupils are provided with a curriculum which is personalised and appropriate to their individual developmental and health needs.

Securing placement

A potential pupil's suitability for a place at Vbranch House School will be determined by the Local Authority and as a result of a formal consultation with the school. The school will only carry out an assessment to determine if it is able to meet a child's educational needs as a result of the Local Authority requesting it does so. An assessment should not be undertaken without the Local Authority's agreement. More information regarding the Local Authority's application process for a place at any Devon school or college can be found here:

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place>

The curriculum

The Vbranch House Individual Education and Wellbeing (VIEW) Curriculum is the mainstay of our educational provision and describes at every step an individual's assessed needs and projected areas of development as they progress through the school and college.

Delivery of learning is project and theme-based, with each pupil having individually planned and assessed outcomes for each session. Pupils are taught collectively in ability groups to improve their chances of meeting their learning outcomes and there are also regular multiple-class and whole-school based activities.

Within the our Secondary provision we have the capacity to help continue the developmental journey of our pupils into adulthood. Much as children and young people in any other setting, our pupils face many challenges, choices and decisions once they reach College age, such as "where do I want to live/work/go when I leave college?"

This Secondary phase of learning at Vbranch House builds upon all the knowledge and skills our pupils have acquired in the lowers school, or primary and junior phases in another setting, to access information and make informed decisions about the things that really matter to them. In this Secondary phase we use AQA Functional Skills and Unit Award programs of work, often started at the end of the lower school phase, to add to the VIEW curriculum the opportunity of recognised accreditation and social enterprise/vocational skills. This approach is aimed at helping our pupils gain access to the world of work, be that supported paid employment or voluntary work.

Content of the curriculum and enrichment are decided by the Head of Education and Senior Teachers at Vbranch House to enable best possible outcomes for individuals.

Enrichment

Vbranch House School offers a varied enrichment experience consisting of: music therapy, rebound therapy, hydrotherapy, personalised programmes for speech, language and communication, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and nursing care. Pupils also have access to 24 hour postural management.

Therapy Support and Intervention

Upon entry to Vbranch House, every pupil will have their needs assessed by the school Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist (OT) and Speech & Language Therapist (S<). The school will provide Physio, OT and S< programmes as deemed appropriate by professionals and specified within the individual's Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). If direct therapeutic input is required from any of these professionals, then this will be clearly outlined in any EHCP and arranged accordingly by the relevant therapist.

Our Therapists devise therapy plans written to address the Needs identified for delivery by our experienced and trained Therapy Assistants and class-based staff.

Staff Ratios

The school will provide a ratio of staff to each pupil appropriate to their needs during the school day. The ratio will be dynamic; a pupil requiring the whole-time support of a trained Teaching Assistant will be allocated the time but if others who need more than 1:1 (and for some activities this can rise to 3:1) or can be taught in small groups might receive 1:3. There will be no permanent allocation of support; as a pupil's needs change the ratio of support will change. All Teaching and Lunch Time Assistants will be fully trained and specialist training will be provided for support staff having the intimate care of a child with specialist needs.

Equipment

The charity will provide equipment for each pupil as required and as per professional recommendations during their time at school. This does not include the provision of a wheelchair (although additional Wheelchair needs can be addressed through our Specialist Wheelchair Service) and Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA). The provided equipment includes Stenders, Walkers, adapted seats and tables, complex recliners, couches and some IT equipment (in relation to recording and producing written work and communication).

Wheelchair adaptations can be referred to the charity's Specialist Wheelchair Service. Some equipment will be provided through the NHS (Ventilators are an example) and the NHS Mobility Centre will provide standard wheelchairs.

Inclusion

A child will be placed at Vbranch House because the Local Authority, parents and the school agree that it is the most appropriate setting. A very small number of Vbranch House pupils may benefit from accessing other educational settings for discreet areas of their learning and could therefore be included on a part-time basis provided Vbranch House cannot meet an identified Need and clear educational outcomes are agreed between the school, the parents/carers and the Local Authority. No such periods of 'inclusion' arranged under our Core Offer will exceed 10% of an individual's weekly attendance at our school. Any such 'inclusion' arrangements will be managed by the school, if deemed appropriate for an individual, on a case-by-case basis.

Transition

Transition into the school will be carefully planned and appropriately managed according to the individual needs of the pupil. This planning and management will include the preparation of staff through appropriate training if specialist training is required and the acquisition of needs-based equipment. At the end of Key Stage 2 the school will support transition to the next phase of each child's education, whether that be in our on secondary provision or another setting elsewhere. This process will involve liaison with, and if required support to, the receiving school or setting.

All transitions from our Secondary provision will be led by the Senior Teacher, who will assist parents and carers in exploring a wide spectrum of options, whilst working in partnership with colleagues in other settings, Social Care and the NHS.

Interpreters

The school will provide occasional access to an Interpreter Service. Occasional is defined as the provision of an interpreter for important meetings (reviews and clinics).

Home Education

Some home education may be provided for pupils, but under strictly controlled conditions (including duration and clear definition of the expected outcome) and only if the risk assessment shows that the provision is practicable, productive and safe. A home education programme will not exceed three hours in any single school day.

Additional Information (Not in the Core Offer)

At Vbranch House School we recognise the effects that physical difficulties can have upon the child's acquisition of basic skills. The relationship between movement, language and function is fundamental to all children's opportunities for learning. Through the VIEW Curriculum we strive to offer the children challenging learning opportunities in all aspects of their school day which are relevant and appropriate to their needs and potential.

All Vbranch House staff work as part of an interdisciplinary team and support and enhance one another's roles. Regular meetings are held to coordinate whole-class, group and individual children's education programmes. The interdisciplinary team consists of teachers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, school nurses and teaching assistants.

The class teacher also has a strong pastoral role and will be aware of the children's emotional and social needs as well as coordinating their education programmes. We ensure that children are aware of the rich cultural diversity in the UK and of other faiths and religious festivals.

A broad range of augmentative communication systems are used throughout the school and these include communication boards, touch talkers, eye gaze, iPads and talking books. Signing is used positively throughout the school to aid both communication and the development of spoken language and objects of reference are used to reinforce. Our overall aim for each child is to provide them with a challenging and aspirational environment in which they can flourish.

All curriculum policies and essential policies and procedures are available to view from the school office or downloaded from our website: www.vranchhouse.org . If you ask us for a printed copy of any policies, we may make a small charge for photocopying.

CLINICS

Vranch House offers a multidisciplinary approach, hosting a large range of medical clinics on site, such as: paediatrician, orthopaedic, dietician, dental and continence clinics. Where appropriate, pupils access a very high level of nursing and therapeutic input to support their health needs.

ASSEMBLIES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Assemblies at Vranch House are of a broadly Christian character which enable an opportunity for the whole school to participate in an activity together. Assemblies are considered part of the educational programme and are frequently related to the topic for the term, current or topical events or religious and moral education.

Religious Education is non-denominational and based around British Values giving children opportunities to experience good behavioural models through stories and discussions and to provide them with the opportunity to explore their own beliefs. Stories are taken mainly from Christian and other information related to other cultures and religions.

If you do not wish your child to be included in assemblies and religious education, please inform the Head of Education and the appropriate arrangements will be made.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The school aims to provide access to the curriculum regardless of gender, cultural background, ethnic origin, religion and disability.

We respect the religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds of all parents and children and this respect is reflected separately in our policies for Religious Education (RE) and Social and Relationship Education (SRE). We will make suitable provision for any pupil admitted with English as an Additional Language (EAL). Please see our EAL Policy of our website.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

If a child is absent from school without explanation or a valid reason then this is marked on the register as an 'unauthorised' absence. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school office on the first day of an absence although when possible please let us know in advance. It is always possible to leave a message on the answering machine if parents telephone early in the day. Please request an absence form for absences from school for other than medical reasons. Parents are not entitled to remove children from school for holidays as of right. Leave of absence must be applied for and the decision to authorise absence for holidays rests entirely with the school. This information is shared with any mainstream partner schools.

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL

A Home - School Agreement will be sent to all parents to be signed when their child starts school explaining the School Rules. Please also refer to our Curriculum Policy: Positive Behaviour Policy, which can be downloaded from our website.