



St Catherine's
School & College

*Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs*

St Catherine's School Sixth Form College

Integrated Programmes of Speech and Language
Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Education and
Residential Care

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Introduction

St Catherine's Sixth Form College supports young people aged 16 to 19 with speech, language and communication needs and associated conditions. It is part of St Catherine's School and College, a non-maintained residential special school based in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight.

Our students' placements are usually funded by their local authority and all of our young people have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). The provision offered aims to meet each individual's specific needs.

The College exists to provide students with the opportunity to improve their knowledge, understanding and learning skills within a small-group teaching situation. Their learning is underpinned and supported by intensive and integrated speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. Teachers and therapists also work together within the classroom to deliver programmes.

The College's aim is for students to make sufficient educational and functional linguistic progress in order to be successful in the completion of any future vocational training, education or employment, whilst at the same time supporting their transition to adulthood.

Education and therapy services are supported by a skilled, dedicated care team as well as trained medical staff. All teams aim to develop the emotional, spiritual and physical well-being of each young person so they are ready to and able to learn to access the social and recreational opportunities available to them.

Promoting healthy living is an integral part of the School Nurses' roles, combining health education in the classroom, help and advice in the houses, and weekly drop-in sessions for sixth form students.

Students are guided towards accepting personal responsibility across all aspects of their lives as they move towards becoming independent young adults.

By attending St Catherine's Sixth Form College, young people with speech, language and communication needs will have the opportunity to:

- strengthen their learning skills and raise their literacy and numeracy competences;
- try out vocational training courses and enjoy a variety of work experience;
- improve their communicative ability;
- grow in personal and social maturity;
- gain externally accredited qualifications; and
- raise their levels of independence and gain a range of life skills, whilst at the same time being supported in their integration into the local community and having opportunities for social interaction and the development of their interests.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

St Catherine's has a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice that relates to all kinds of discrimination. Opportunity for achievement will be created for each student regardless of age, disability, race, sex, religion or cultural beliefs or sexual orientation.

PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Students follow an educational curriculum comprising a balance of courses according to each individual's interests and abilities. The courses are delivered over a one or two-year period, depending upon the individual. Both courses can be extended if necessary. Some students stay at the Sixth Form College for a more vocational third year.

Students follow a programme, which is appropriate for the level they are working at. For some students working towards higher-level qualifications is not appropriate and they will follow a more functional programme of study working towards entry levels or more vocational qualifications.

Programmes of study enable students to improve their performance in the following essential skills:

- communication and social interaction;
- written language and literacy;
- basic IT competence;
- numeracy;
- problem solving and practical work skills; and
- independent living.

Students with areas of particular ability are able to follow other accredited courses at the College or off site at other educational establishments, as appropriate.

The Sixth Form College's education and therapy programmes dovetail with highly specialised and individually tailored life skills and leisure programmes. Care staff support young people's social and recreational activities within the College and the wider community. Students are encouraged to develop individual talents and interests as well as participating in opportunities to enhance their personal and social development.

Students take part in structured work experience with a range of local employers on the Island. In addition, students may have the opportunity to attend the local college to experience a range of different vocational taster courses. Some students have the opportunity to attend the local college in Year 3 to follow more vocational courses.

Close liaison between the staff at the College and other agencies ensures that each individual student is both supported and challenged appropriately, according to their own specific needs and abilities. By the end of their time at the Sixth Form College, the aim is for each student to be able to make realistic and suitable choices for their future, helping them to move towards independent living, establishing new routines and identifying and achieving their goals.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Speech and language therapy is delivered in three ways in the Sixth Form College, closely correlated to students' coursework and life skills programmes.

1. Students receive small group or individual therapy, which continues to address his/her particular, needs in receptive, expressive and social communication skills.

A personal programme is devised, incorporating contributions for his/her own goals for improvement in communication. Emphasis is placed on taking responsibility for persisting areas of difficulty and learning effective strategies to overcome these. The form in which these therapy sessions take place is responsive to each student's needs.

2. Speech and language therapy is also delivered in the classroom in collaboration with teaching staff to:
 - a) support and reinforce the development of the student's vocabulary towards more age-appropriate levels, particularly in those subject areas which involve words and concepts at an adult level;
 - b) assist the comprehension of text according to their specific disabilities in processing language (e.g. the retention of information, the perception of implied or inferred information below the surface structure);
 - c) assist and guide the organisation of students' written language and literacy as necessary, with reference to their original difficulties with sequencing sounds and sentences, phonological disabilities etc.; and
 - d) develop their understanding of social communication within the context of the Sixth Form College environment.
3. Group therapy sessions are also provided to support young people's functional communication and understanding of social interaction. Students have the opportunity to concentrate on:
 - a) expanding their knowledge and use of idioms and inferences in conversation – decoding 'hidden messages' and understanding the real meanings behind spoken words;
 - b) practise their improved spoken language and communicative strategies within the safety of the group;
 - c) expanding their social use of language as young adults, e.g. putting into practise listening to others, negotiating, compromising, and so on within group exercises before using them in the real workplace and community;
 - d) following a programme of personal, social and health education focusing on some of the issues that students at this age may encounter, including alcohol, drugs and sex education, and
 - e) developing their confidence and self-esteem.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Aims and Purpose

The aims of occupational therapy in this setting are as follows:

1. To establish and raise sensory, motor and visual perceptual competence and independence in activities of daily living, through programmes of therapy which address the specific needs of the student.
2. To enable young adults to maximise their capacity for learning, by providing support in the college, or in individual or small group work to enable each student to access their chosen education curriculum more effectively, with a clear focus on the acquisition of new skills.
3. To empower the young people to manage their own sensory and self-regulation needs by providing them with strategies that they can apply on an as needed basis as independently as possible.
4. To improve and compensate for fine and gross motor difficulties so that the young adult is able to engage as independently as possible in productive occupations, leisure activities and self-care tasks.
5. To enable the young adult to engage in activities and occupations that are meaningful to them.
6. To support the young adult to be as independent as possible in engaging in activities of daily living.
7. To support the young adult to be as independent as possible in engaging in instrumental activities of daily living.
8. To support the young adult to identify and achieve the next step of their learning and living journey.
9. To support the development of functional skills within the context of the wider community.
10. Providing staff training, as required, to enable all staff to support the development of young adults sensory, motor and functional skills.

The occupational therapy team works to assess, develop and support young adults in the following areas:

- Sensory integration skills;
- Gross motor skills;
- Fine motor skills;
- Visual perception skills; and
- Functional activities of daily living.

A holistic approach ensures that each young adult's skills are developed across the waking day and into the educational environment. They do this through a combination of in-depth assessments, individual programmes, paired or group work as well as general educational and residential support.

THE CURRICULUM

Students with speech, language and communication needs may have had difficulties in accessing the curriculum and in applying their skills appropriately. Students between 16 and 19 years continue to need a broad and balanced curriculum with integrated speech and language therapy and occupational therapy to meet their needs and to enable them to achieve their potential. They may also need to revisit some areas of the National Curriculum to further establish and consolidate their learning.

At St Catherine's Sixth Form College the curriculum has been designed to meet each student's needs by following a broad curriculum. Students have the option to follow some GCSE subjects, if this is appropriate as well as focusing on some aspects of the following areas.

English

Our students continue to need intensive specialist teaching in this curriculum area, specifically with respect to skills in written and spoken language. The English lessons lead to a qualification dependent on the student's ability.

The English courses on offer include Entry Level Functional Skills, Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills and GCSE.

Mathematics

All students are supported to become as competent as possible in numeracy. Students with speech, language and communication needs may have specific difficulties with the concepts and vocabulary of mathematics and continue, post-16, to need specific teaching in this area.

The mathematics courses offered include Entry Level Functional Skills, Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills as well as GCSE Mathematics. Again, this is all dependent on the individual student.

Mathematics, however, cannot be taught in isolation and throughout the curriculum, and residential students time in care, there are opportunities for students to develop and improve their numeracy skills, e.g. Young Enterprise, Life Skills, Cooking, Technology, Independent Living.

PSHE

Students with learning disabilities often exhibit difficulties with understanding themselves as part of society, can be confused by concepts of space and time as well as sometimes finding it hard to think about the needs of others.

PSHE covers a range of topical issues to help prepare students for life in the real world. An awareness of life in a multicultural society is a key element of this as well as an understanding of the concept of being British.

Information Communication Technology

Information Technology is used throughout the curriculum and staff at the College recognise the importance of giving all students the opportunity to use Information Communication Technology (ICT) effectively, particularly for supporting their learning and for use in the wider community.

The BTEC IT or Entry Level qualification is used as the framework for the taught sessions of computer studies. Other subjects use ICT across the curriculum.

Careers Education and Guidance

Careers Education is vital so that students can equip themselves for the world of work, future education or training and to develop positive attitudes to lifelong learning. Careers Education is supported by input from an Independent Careers Advisor.

Young Enterprise

Students following our vocational route have the chance to participate in the nationally-recognised Young Enterprise scheme, giving them hands-on experience of managing a company and dealing with customers. The students develop systems and study business procedures in response to individual needs and opportunities identified by the students themselves. Basic literacy, numeracy and communication skills are at the heart of this curriculum area. This course is usually offered students in Year 3.

Vocational Training Opportunities

To extend students' vocational awareness, sixth formers attend the Isle of Wight College to follow part-time courses offering vocational and personal enrichment. They attend in as a discrete group supported by members of the College's staff.

Work Experience

The chance to undertake work experience provides students with opportunities to develop their understanding of the world of work and enhance their prospects of employability. There is a work experience co-ordinator and job coach who supports the students to choose their placement and supports them on their placement as necessary. All students experience periods of planned and structured work experience, which are reviewed regularly and can also be supported by specialist staff.

Study Skills and Study Sessions

To prepare for further study once they have left St Catherine's Sixth Form College students have study sessions where they are taught about planning their own time to ensure work is completed but also some of the study skills required to be able to complete work set. This ranges from taking notes when someone is speaking, keeping a diary so they know what tasks they need to complete and also revision techniques.

ACCREDITATION

Many of the courses lead to accreditation through a range of Exam Boards. These are reviewed on a regular basis to meet the needs of students.

English Functional Skills Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 and Levels 1 and 2

This programme offers candidates certificates in Functional Skills at Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 and, if appropriate, Level 1 and 2 (which are equivalent to GCSEs). This award provides young people and adults with foundation skills in the three primary areas of:

- reading;
- writing; and
- speaking and listening.

Some students take GCSE English.

Mathematics Functional Skills Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 and Levels 1 and 2

This award provides young people and adults with foundation skills in the three primary areas of:

- understanding and using mathematical information;
- calculating and manipulating information; and
- interpreting results and communicating mathematical information.

For both Functional Skills programmes, there is a final exam covering all areas at an appropriate point in the year. Some students take GCSE Mathematics.

GCSE Art

The students can choose to follow the Fine Art course which consists of two pieces of coursework and a controlled assessment. They look at the process of drawing through different mediums and have the opportunity to explore different textures. They will also look at some key artists throughout the years.

GCSE Photography

This element of the arts curriculum gives young people the opportunity to use their good visual skills to both gain confidence and accreditation of their strengths. The skills taught help students to look critically at visual material and make considered judgements.

The research elements of the course are supported by Speech and Language therapists and can be cross-referenced into other curriculum areas.

GCSE Music

This course focuses on three elements: performance, composition and the study of music genres. Students need to be able to play a musical instrument confidently both as a soloist and within an ensemble.

BTEC Science

For those students who want to pursue their interest in Science, there may be an opportunity to take the BTEC Level 1 and/or the Level 2 First Certificate in Applied Science. The course covers elements of the three subject areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The course includes an exam which covers all areas.

BTEC Vocational Studies

The students follow a range of units which they can choose to attain a Level 1 qualification. The units they choose may lead to a work experience placement to extend their knowledge and interest.

BTEC Home Cooking Skills

The students follow a Level 2 course in Home Cooking Skills.

Life and Living Skills Qualification

Students following this course have the opportunity to develop their life skills through this OCR qualification. There are no minimum entry requirements and the qualification spans across Entry level 1 to 3.

EXPLANATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The table below shows the different types of accreditation that can be offered at St Catherine's School and Sixth Form College, and how they fit into the National Qualifications Framework.

National Qualifications Framework Level	Accreditation offered at St Catherine's (according to individual need)
<p><u>Entry level</u> Which is broken into: Entry 1 Entry 2 Entry 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Entry Level Certificate (English, Maths, ICT, Art, Design & Technology, Music, Science) – AQA Unit Awards (RE, Maths, ICT, Life Skills & Vocational Education) – Entry Level English Functional Skills – Entry Level Mathematics Functional Skills – BTEC Work skills Entry 3 – Living and Life Skills Entry Level 1-3
<p><u>Level 1</u> (e.g. GCSE grades D – G or 4 - 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCSE (Maths, English, Music, Art, Photography) – BTEC Certificate Information Technology Qualification – Level 1 Functional Skills Mathematics – Level 1 Functional Skills English – BTEC Science Level 1 and – Work Skills Level 1
<p><u>Level 2</u> (e.g. GCSE grades A** - C or 9 - 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCSE (Maths, English, Science, Art, Photography, Music) – BTEC Certificate (Applied Science, Cooking) – Level 2 Functional Skills Mathematics – Level 2 Functional Skills English

For further information about St Catherine's Sixth Form College, please contact the Admissions Co-ordinator on 01983 852722 or email admissions@stcatherines.org.uk

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