



SAXON WOOD SCHOOL

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

“Opening doors to discovery, success and independence”

Saxon Wood is a special primary school for children with physical disabilities and complex medical needs. The school is located in Rooksdown near Basingstoke but our pupils are drawn from an extensive catchment area comprising the whole of north Hampshire and neighbouring counties. There are places for 35 day pupils aged 2 to 11.

What our parents say...

*“Everyone is welcoming and friendly in Saxon Wood. Everyone is always very professional and has a smile on their face”
(Parent survey)*

*“After our daughter was born there were times when it all felt overwhelming. Finding Saxon Wood was like a lifeline. It was such a calm and supportive school”
(Saxon Wood parent)*

At Saxon Wood School, we are committed to...

- Providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum modified to meet individual pupil needs
- Providing the additional specialist care and support to enable our pupils to become as independent and confident as possible
- Providing a safe and supportive environment where pupils with complex disabilities can thrive.

Our last four Ofsted reports have judged us to be either good or outstanding.

“Pupils speak highly of their experiences at the school and are proud to be members of their “family school”. They rightly believe they are very well cared for because their individual needs are considered in all aspects of the school’s work” (Ofsted June 2016)



Harvest Samba 2018

OUR PUPILS AND THE CURRICULUM

“The school’s range of subjects and experiences (the curriculum) has been carefully designed with the pupils’ needs in mind. Consequently, the experiences and opportunities pupils receive help them to learn to love their time at school and to learn well.” (Ofsted June 2016)

The school caters for a wide range of physical disability. The majority of our pupils have one or more additional disabilities associated with their physical challenges. These might include...

- Learning difficulties ranging from mild to very severe
- Visual impairment
- Perceptual difficulties
- Communication difficulties
- Epilepsy

The curriculum is differentiated to meet the individual needs of our pupils and, as far as possible, barriers to learning are removed by the provision of specialist equipment. The special features of the curriculum largely aim to develop pupil’s independence and mobility as well as their communication and social skills.

The school offers an integrated therapy / physical management programme that is part of each pupil’s Individual Education Plan. School staff, Health Authority staff and parents work closely together to ensure that pupil needs are met in a properly thought out and co-ordinated way.

At Saxon Wood, we pride ourselves in developing modern and bespoke provision for children with multisensory and complex medical needs. Staff in our sensory classes are experienced in working alongside children with a range of sensory needs including visual, auditory and multisensory impairment as well as those with PMLD. Our staff are highly trained in utilising multichannel communication strategies such as Eyegaze, Objects of Reference, Makaton, hand-on-body signing and symbolic communication in order to help our children to access and understand the world around them. Modern resources such as Acheeva bed learning stations, switch adapted toys and equipment and state-of-the-art AAC allow our children to overcome daily challenges and demonstrate their progress and achievements.



Christmas Production 2018

SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND STAFFING

“There are excellent relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. Pupils do their best because they recognise when the adults around them care about the progress they make” (Ofsted June 2016)

The education, care and happiness of our children is at the heart of everything we do but, as a school, Saxon Wood is changing...

As the only primary school for children with physical disabilities in Hampshire, Saxon Wood has always been a unique and vital resource for the county. But over the last ten years, we have seen a marked change in our student cohort. With advances in medical technology, many more babies with disabilities are surviving. This is, of course, good news but the harsh reality is that many of these children will go on to have complex medical needs such as gastrostomies and tracheostomies together with an increased reliance on specialist equipment to communicate.

At Saxon Wood, managing and responding to this change has resulted in a small but highly trained and dedicated staff, well-resourced and supported to help them meet this daily challenge. Many of our staff now have a range of highly specialist medical or tech skills enabling them to fully meet the needs of our children. This training is ongoing and continual professional development for all staff is a high priority. Staff turnover is very low reflecting a strong, cohesive and mutually supportive team. As an example, each year, staff write, direct and perform in an annual fundraising pantomime which is always well attended by parents, friends and the wider local community.

There are currently 34 pupils on roll aged 2 to 11. In addition to the Head Teacher, there are 6 teaching staff supported by 17 Learning Support Assistants. A further 5 staff comprise the administration and caretaking teams. On a daily basis, Saxon Wood staff are supported in school by a team of clinical professionals including nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

As a new Head Teacher, you will be fully supported by a highly committed and experienced governing body. Many governors are parents or ex-parents of Saxon Wood children and are very knowledgeable about special educational needs. Governors are very often in school. The school also benefits from a highly effective PSA.

“Governors are, rightly, pupil-focused and base their vision and work around a desire to improve outcomes. They have a clear influence on how the school is led and managed and ensure that actions are carried out” (Ofsted June 2016)

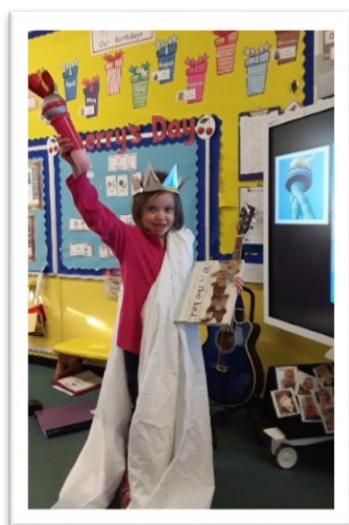
WORKING WITH OUR PARENTS

Our school prides itself on its strong family ethos and strives hard to work in partnership with parents. Parents are welcome in school at any time and there are excellent informal relationships between staff and parents at all levels. Staff give parents daily updates on their children, set goals in collaboration with parents, celebrate achievements and provide support with challenges both at school and home. We have staff trained to do outreach work in the home where there are particular challenges for children and parents.

Over the course of the year there are a number of whole school events to which parents are invited, which are always enjoyed by all.



Sports Day 2019



Practising for our American themed 'expo'!

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

“There are particularly close working relationships with health colleagues because the associate practitioner works closely with leaders, as she is based at the school. This helps to ensure that pupils are well cared for in relation to their physical needs, which is the primary area that the school caters for.” (Ofsted June 2016)

The school has a multi-disciplinary approach to meeting pupils’ needs. Local Health Authority professionals are very much part of the Saxon Wood team and are in school on a daily basis to share their expertise and knowledge. As such, professional development occurs across traditional professional boundaries.

The routine presence of health care professionals means that Saxon Wood is a school with a strong therapeutic environment. In practice this means that during a pupil’s day, he or she may be undertaking a therapeutic programme whilst simultaneously working at curricular activities such as literacy or mathematics. In each case, any programme will be highly individualised to a particular child and will invariably involve a range of approaches based on up-to date and relevant research. As an example, many of our pupils have a physical management programme to encourage and facilitate increased mobility and independence. All staff will be aware of a particular programme and the specific goals therein. For each pupil, goals are reviewed and discussed regularly at multi-disciplinary team meetings.

A range of other professionals also visit the school to provide additional advice and support as and when required. As an example, medical professionals regularly hold clinics at the school and these will often include consultant paediatricians, the school nurses and an array of clinical specialists, dependent on need. The school’s Education Psychologists and Specialist Teacher Advisor (Physical Disability) are also regular visitors.



Staff Production 2019

FACILITIES

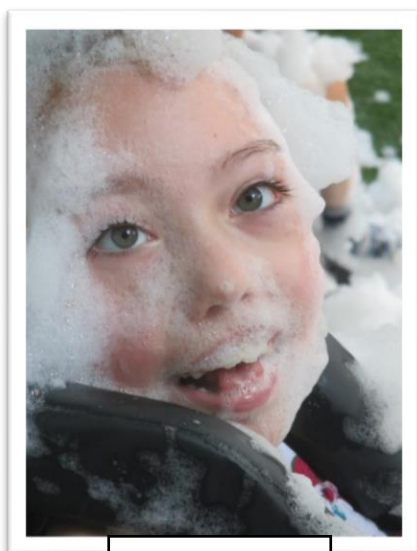
The school building is totally accessible to pupils using mobility aids such as wheelchairs or walking frames. As well as teaching areas, there are therapy rooms, adapted toilet and changing areas, a medical room, a soft-play room and multi-sensory room. The school benefits from extensive grounds which include specially designed play areas and sensory gardens. During the summer months, teaching can take place outside together with activities such as pond dipping and vegetable growing.

School trips take place for all classes throughout the year. The school has two specially adapted minibuses allowing pupils in wheelchairs to travel safely.

The school uses a wide range of up-to-date technology, much of which is bespoke for individual pupils. All classes have computers linked to the school network and internet together with various adaptations and access devices including Eyegaze and voice output.

PUPIL SAFETY and WELLBEING

Saxon Wood School and Hampshire County Council are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to enhanced DBS checks along with the other relevant employment checks.



Fun Day 2018

MORE FROM OUR PARENTS...

We are very happy. Staff are so friendly and amazing. Thankyou.

Super work is done by the whole team at Saxon Wood, absolutely loves everything you do with her and the children (even throughout the whole school) I strongly feel she is in the best place for her and would like to thank all the staff for everything they do.

It would be lovely to do more open afternoons in a classroom setting similar to the cowboy afternoon in Cherry Class.

There could be more emphasis on sharing staff knowledge with parents to allow skills to be developed at home as well as school. This is especially true with developing communication, although staff are happy to discuss if asked

We are very pleased/impressed with staff's individual plans/ideas for children. As has been particularly demonstrated for ... with her current reward system.

Very happy with Saxon Wood. My son loves school and is very happy to come in. I feel confident in all the staff and love how Saxon Wood is like a close knit family. My only disappointment is it doesn't extend into secondary education.

“Opening doors to discovery, success and independence”

