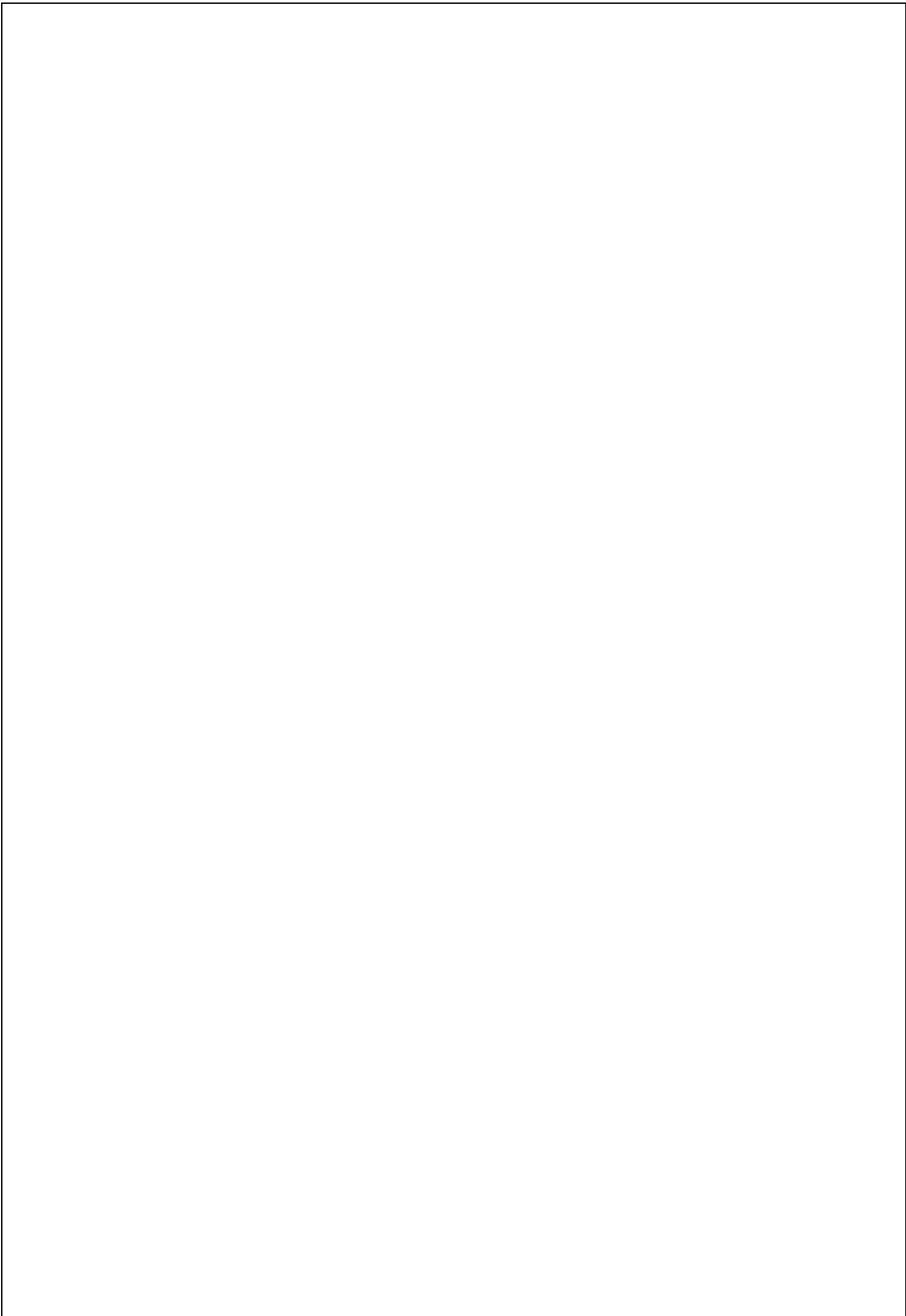


# **Southend High School for Boys**



## **Autism Resource Base**



## **Introduction**

To welcome and support pupils with additional challenges in their educational lives is central to our school ethos and it is with great excitement that we begin construction of the Autism Resource Base (ARB) at Southend High School for Boys.

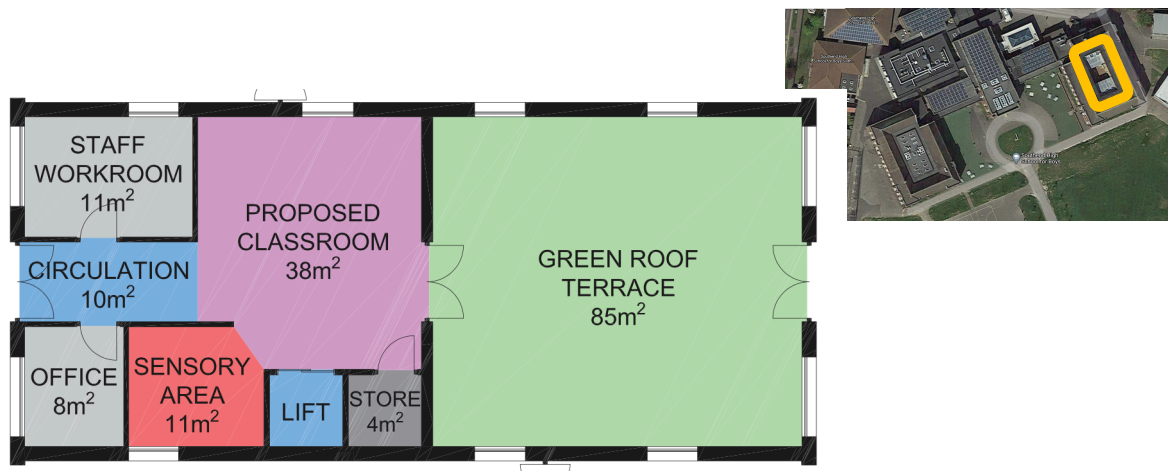
The ARB will provide the transitional environment that gives pupils direct access to a mainstream curriculum, but delivered in a specialist setting. The exact balance of time spent in the mainstream part of the school and the ARB will vary depending upon a pupil's specific needs, but we expect most pupils to spend between 25% and 75% of their time in the ARB, with the aim of reducing dependence on the ARB as pupils move up through the school and prepare for the next stage of their education.

As the ARB will be an entirely new provision, it has provided the opportunity to design and develop a resource that is tailor-made to support pupils on the autistic spectrum and will provide a unique combination of environment, resources, specialist teaching and support that will give pupils the opportunity to explore and develop their strengths and interests, gain confidence and understanding of their individual needs and manage their difficulties with an increasing degree of independence as they progress through the school.

If you would like further information regarding the ARB, please contact our SENDCo, Gareth March ([gdm@shsb.org.uk](mailto:gdm@shsb.org.uk))

## Environment & Resources

Central to the ARB provision is the base itself, which provides teaching, social and sensory spaces. The base will allow us to uniquely blend mainstream and specialist provision, in a manner tailored to each pupil's individual needs.



Whilst the base is self-contained, it's location is central within the school – this serves both to ensure the base is easily accessible for pupils and to reinforce the message that the provision, and those accessing it, are part of the school community.

The base will be staffed throughout the day (including before and after school) and will provide:

- **Classroom for small group and individual lessons:** Whilst remaining 'open-plan', when furnished this room will provide separate teaching spaces for pupils in each year-group. Lessons in the ARB will be led by a specialist teacher, SENDCo, appropriately trained LSAs and, where appropriate, mainstream teaching staff. The base will provide the resources (pupil desks, interactive screens etc) to teach all classroom based subjects.
- **Sensory Room:** A separate and appropriately decorated, furnished and resourced area in which pupils can 'retreat' if necessary. This may in response to a particular incident, or a planned part of a pupil's day.
- **Outdoor Area:** An outdoor space for pupils in which pupils can relax, which is separate to the large and often loud field/playground. There will be sufficient space for small group exercise/PE if that is part of a pupil's support plan.

**Staffing:**

**Provision Manager**

Day-to-day administration of provision.

Point of contact for pupils and parents.

**Specialist Teacher**

Small group/one-to-one teaching within the ARB.

Development of curriculum resources to support autistic pupils.

**LSAs**

Small group/one-to-one support within the ARB.

Support of ARB pupils in mainstream lessons.

Support before and after school (morning check-in, homework club etc).

**SENDCo**

Strategic oversight of provision and co-ordination of support.

Small group/one-to-one teaching within the ARB.

**Support:**

Pupils accessing the provision will benefit from 'wrap-around' support – the ARB providing a place to check in with staff, confirm that day's schedule and discuss any anxieties before the school day begins and a workspace to complete homework or 'decompress' after school.

The space will also be available each break and lunchtime for pupils to eat and socialise, if they would prefer the ARB to other communal areas. During leisure times, pupils are welcome to invite friends to use the space with them. Each pupil will have a bespoke timetable, agreed with their own input, alongside that of their parents, teachers and other professionals. Outlined on the next page is below is an example 'day in the life' of a pupil supported in the ARB.

In this example, all slots are used for lesson time, either in the ARB or mainstream part of the school. It may be appropriate, based on individual circumstances, for a pupil to have 'supported study periods' built into their timetable, where they work with an LSA or specialist teacher to review a recent topic or prepare for an upcoming lesson. This time could also be used to meet with other professionals who may be working with that pupil e.g. educational psychologist, mental health support, occupational therapist.

Individual plans will be unique to each pupil, all will include:

- Personalised interventions - developed for each child targeting the specific areas of focus related to a child's autism and will be outcome-focused, pupil-centred and co-produced with the child and their parents and/or carers.
- Clear indicators of expected academic progress and outcomes from their starting points.
- A programme of social interaction and emotional resilience work which will be based on a careful analysis of each individual's need.

## **'A Day in the life'**

### **0815 Arrive at school,**

Come to ARB (or met at school entrance by LSA). Check in with provision manager/LSA; go through timetable for that day; order break and lunch, if eating in the ARB - *This eases anxiety, minimises 'surprises', gives staff an indication of mood etc.*

### **0830 Lesson 1: Science**

Attends lesson with LSA support - *A lesson the pupil enjoys and in which he is academically strong. Attending the lesson allows the pupil to complete practical laboratory work.*

### **1030 Morning Break**

Spent in ARB (using indoor and outdoor space, with friends - *The space is quieter and less busy than the playground. His snack has been delivered by the canteen, to avoid queuing in a busy and sensorily challenging dining hall.*

### **1100 Lesson 2: English**

Attends small group English lesson in ARB, with specialist teacher (who has coordinated resources with English department) - *Struggles to engage with the English curriculum and requires specialist teaching.*

### **1300 Lunchtime**

Eats lunch in ARB; leaves to attend lunchtime boardgames club (*supported by LSA*) - *Enjoys this activity, it is not very busy and gives him the chance to practice and develop his social skills.*

### **1400 Tutor time**

Spent with tutor-group - *Comfortable here, in a familiar space, for a short period of time, with the same people everyday.*

### **1430 Lesson 3: Geography**

Attends independently - *Feels comfortable doing this, as classroom is next to ARB. An LSA will 'check-in' during the lesson.*

### **1530 Homework club**

Fills in reflective journal; completes homework in ARB, with LSA/specialist teacher support; leaves books and materials in school, ready to hand-in next lesson) - *Much happier doing this as it separates home and school. Ensures homework is done and avoids conflict around homework in the evening.*

### **1615 Leave for home**

## **Admissions**

As all pupils attending the ARB will have an EHCP, admissions will be overseen and administered by the Local Authority. Enquiries regarding admissions should, in the first instance, be directed to your EHCP Case Officer.

The guiding criteria for admissions to the ARB are as follows:

*(a) A diagnosis of Autism and a finalised Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for children or young people with autism as the primary need. In some exceptional circumstances admission may also be agreed for pupils with an EHCP who are on a waiting list for a multidisciplinary assessment of their social communication needs. In the absence of a confirmed diagnosis, the EHC Multi-agency panel must have considered professional evidence from the child's educational setting, health care professionals and an educational psychologist. The evidence must confirm that the child has significant difficulties in the areas of social interaction, communication and language and restricted and repetitive behaviours.*

*(b) The cognitive ability to access the mainstream curriculum of the school and achieve success in accredited qualifications but, for reasons primarily associated with their autism, such as their social anxiety, are as yet unable to make sufficient progress or fulfil their potential in a full-time mainstream school placement. Entry to the mainstream school is dependent on pupils passing the 11+ examination. Therefore, in order for ARB pupils to be able to access the mainstream curriculum they must be capable of working at a minimum of age-appropriate expectations, with suitable differentiation and support. This could readily be evidenced through performance in the relevant school entrance examination (with appropriate support/access arrangements in place), but may also be established through ongoing teacher assessment, evidence of the pupil's work and any other formal assessments they have undertaken.*

*(c) The ability to benefit from access to mainstream classrooms with appropriate support from the Resource Base (i.e. do not have a level of social anxiety, which may result in significantly high levels of challenging behaviour or have challenging behaviours which are entrenched and are additional to their ASC).*