

The Romsey School Inclusion Unit.



Introduction

The Inclusion Unit was founded in 2003 and although located in a block on its own, is an integral part of the school. Although the Unit was conceived for the purpose of behaviour support, it has evolved significantly over the years to incorporate the needs of pupils who are suffering emotional difficulties and are struggling to maintain a full time timetable. The unit very much operates around the mantra “Every Child Matters”.

The Inclusion Unit has three rooms and a kitchen area and is staffed by two full time members of staff. The Inclusion Manager is also a maths teacher. The Main room has space for approximately 15 pupils. The Inner room has space for approximately 10 more pupils. The front room is mainly used as an office but also doubles up as a meeting room as well as having a sofa and kitchen area. This provides a comfortable area for pupils who are particularly distressed and need time out to gain control of their emotions.

Outside there is a garden which is in the process of being cultivated. This is an on-going, long term project by several of our pupils. A fence and shed have also been built by the pupils to teach the importance of land maintenance.

The Inclusion unit staff treat each and every pupil as an individual. They are non-judgemental and always endeavour to create a caring atmosphere whilst imposing clear boundaries. Pupils can only be referred to the inclusion unit by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and parents are always kept informed. This process helps the school develop and maintain a close working relationship with parents and pupils.



The Intervention process

Only a member of SLT can refer a pupil to the Inclusion Unit. This is to ensure that the stepped approach to behaviour is adhered to. When a pupil is referred to the unit, their needs are assessed and any issues are raised. These issues can be wide ranging and may include behavioural, emotional and physical needs. Once the needs of the pupil are identified the Inclusion team will endeavour to solve any issues using a variety of methods. These may include removal from a certain subject for a time, dropping of a subject (subject to approval by SLT) or the planning and implementation of a part time timetable.

Pupils are then given an ILP (individual learning program). The ILP will have details of any interventions that have been made to the pupil's timetable including any contracts of behaviour raised. The ultimate aim of intervention is to;

- Identify issues
- Follow the "Stepped approach to behaviour" to determine the level of intervention required
- Draw up an ILP
- Support the pupil concerned
- Control any issues identified
- Liaise with outside agencies and arrange external support if needed

The ultimate goal of the Inclusion Unit is for the pupils to reach a stage where re-integration into mainstream school is achieved. If this is not possible, measures are put into place to further support the pupil's learning. This could involve, but is not limited to, the introduction of a part-time timetable, an external work placement, extra sessions with a 1:1 tutor, counselling sessions and visits to outside agencies such as the Corn loft art therapy centre.

The Unit also works closely with the local Police and hosts “Cop Shop”. This scheme operates with two officers who spend time in the unit and in and around school during the lunch break. They provide advice and guidance for pupils who are perhaps worried about particular issues and also go a long way to challenging any stereotypes they might have of the police. They are approachable and friendly towards the pupils and are in a unique position to offer advice on specialist subjects.

The Inclusion unit also offers pupils the chance to participate in activities that they may not have the opportunity to experience. These are run on a weekly basis, they are designed to offer a broad range of experiences. Recent visits have been made to Calshot activities centre where the pupils could experience the thrill of rock climbing indoors. Another trip involved bird ringing on Salisbury plain where pupils are taught how to safely handle a wild bird and the process of ringing a bird.

The Inclusion Unit staff strive to make pupils realise that the Inclusion Unit is not a “Sin Bin” but a sanctuary for pupils who are struggling to cope in a mainstream environment. The Unit is not a place where pupils can “escape” mainstream lessons but rather a place to work quietly under supervision.



Praise when praise is due

Although pupils are often referred to the unit because of behavioural issues, the Inclusion staff acknowledges the importance of giving praise when a pupil has achieved a task set. This builds the self confidence of a pupil who otherwise would be seen to be struggling when compared to the rest of their academic class. Rewards can be used to motivate pupils but are carefully implemented.



The Daily Struggle

The Inclusion Unit also provides a safe haven for pupils around school who do not necessarily cope in certain situations. For example, pupils can ask to spend lunchtimes and break times in the unit to sit quietly. Other pupils can volunteer, or be requested, to spend lunch times in the Inclusion Unit to avoid situations that would lead to discipline issues. Most pupils realise that taking themselves out of situations that can lead to trouble is often the best solution and the Inclusion staff acknowledge the maturity to make those decisions. Often it is found that removing a pupil from their peer group can make a dramatic and significant improvement on their behaviour. It is this improvement that the Inclusion staff will strive to have maintained during the re-integration process. Pupils who spend time in the Inclusion Unit are set work by their subject teachers and are still expected to complete the syllabus for the subject(s). If a pupil has dropped a subject for any reason, often extra literacy and numeracy lessons are set. Never does a pupil spend time in the Inclusion Unit with nothing to do.

Exams and GCSE's

The Inclusion staff aim to support each and every pupil through their schooling and although the ultimate aim would be for the pupils to gain as many GCSE's as possible, it is also acknowledged that this may not be a realistic goal for some pupils. Therefore, through consultation with parents, and with agreement with SLT, it is sometimes arranged that a pupil drop certain subjects in order to better concentrate on core subjects that carry a higher importance to the pupil's wellbeing later in life. However, the base target for GCSE attainment is set at 5 GCSE's. These are supported a variety of courses such as the introduction of vocational based qualifications and ALAN (Adult Literacy and

Numeracy) testing which has proved incredibly successful and are nationally recognised qualifications.



Re-integration

The ultimate aim of the Inclusion Unit is to support pupils through difficult times and encourage the pupils to re-integrate with the mainstream school. This process can sometimes be a very short one, other times it can be a lengthy process. Other pupils may not reach full re-integration. These pupils will continue to have the support of the Inclusion staff until they leave school.

