

15<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians

### Special Partnership Trust School & ARB offer

As we near the end of a very busy and complex academic year, I wanted to take the opportunity to provide some information about the development of the Trust, and some of the challenges that we are facing as we move forwards.

The Special Partnership Trust continues to work hard across four Special schools in Cornwall and two Special Schools in Devon as well as four Cornish Area Resource Bases. Because our commitment is specifically on supporting schools in developing and delivering high a quality special education offer we are being joined by two other Devon special schools next year – and building work has started on two new schools. All the pupils in our schools have Education, Health and Care Plans – to deliver these effectively we need support from Health and Care.

You may be aware that all public services are under pressure. Recent information shared about the challenge in Cornwall around the EHCP processing and the consultation you will have seen about, re-purposing SEN funding illustrate the pressure in the system.

Special Partnership Trust schools and ARBs are specialist SEN education establishments. Staff are highly trained to create innovative special education learning environments and an adapted curriculum to support the teaching and learning and preparation for adulthood of all pupils attending Trust settings. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils can access their learning in safe and appropriate environment. Some of the pupils in our schools have a specific health needs - the staff who work in our schools access training and support from the NHS health services to be able to support the pupils in school - some support for pupils should be delivered directly from a health professional such as a nurse.

The health school support is commissioned by the NHS and the Special School Nurse team are employed and directed by the Cornwall Foundation Trust. I do want to draw your attention to a change in the services provided by the NHS that will have a direct impact on the health support to the Special Schools across the Trust.

The Trust was not aware of a letter that was sent to you outlining the changes to the nursing support services. The Trust schools had already commented on the model, but were unaware that decision had been made and letters would be sent.

The Trust does not believe, given the context of SEN education, that the proposal represents a better service for SEN children and schools. The Trust, on behalf of schools and ARBs has already complained about the capacity and quality of support that the schools are receiving

from health to support education staff in providing complex medical care to pupils in Trust settings. Nursing capacity in school has been limited, has reduced and from September there will be no regular nurse/named nurse in schools. As a result, the Trust does not feel able to safely support children and young people with complex health requirements.

The Trust does not receive enough support or resources to meet the Health requirements and also continue the high quality educational offer that we aspire to and you expect. In addition, the Trust will not be able to fund specialist equipment and this will need to be provided by NHS services. Discussions with the LA and Health are ongoing, however, I wanted to bring this to your attention as the potential reduction of timely, regular on site support from qualified medical practitioners will impact on the offer to pupils. The Trust works very much in partnership and indeed sees the partnership with health and social care as a shared responsibility in delivering the requirements set out in the EHCP.

I don't believe partners are acting in a way that best supports delivery for SEN children and young people with the resources available.

I will keep you informed as discussions and developments unfold, if you have any questions, queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me or your school.

Yours sincerely



Guy Chappell  
CEO  
The Special Partnership Trust