



Welcome to Dolphin Class SEN Unit

Nurturing Minds, Developing Potential, Enriching Futures

The aim of this booklet is to inform parents and carers of the ways in which our school welcomes, effectively supports and adapts provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to ensure that all children, no matter their need, will thrive and progress at Burnham on Sea Infant School.

All staff at our school welcome children with additional needs and work hard to provide an inclusive environment that embraces the range of pupils who attend our setting. We not only follow the statutory guidelines within the; Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for children 0 to 25 Years (Department for Education and Department of Health, 2015) but strongly value our unique school community and work hard to support all of its members.

Our school values of being 'kind', 'curious' and 'dedicated', are the core aim in everything we do and we were proud that Ofsted recognised:

'Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly school, where mutual respect is a strong feature of the positive relationships between pupils and adults. Adults create a safe, nurturing environment that builds trust and confidence in pupils. Pupils show a deep understanding of the need to acknowledge and respect individual differences.'

(Ofsted Report, 2023)

About Our SEN Unit - Our Ethos and Values

In September, 2025, we successfully opened our SEN Unit within our school site. This is based on our strong belief that children with additional needs have the right to be educated within their community and embraced and accepted within an inclusive but ambitious culture. Sitting alongside our mainstream classes, Dolphin Class has a designation for supporting children with cognition and learning difficulties, particularly around speech, language and communication. It is a 9 place unit with its own dedicated learning environment, including entrance/exit and outside space. Spaces are allocated for children with an EHCP through the local authority SEND team.

We believe every child deserves to feel safe and valued, develop confidence and independence, achieve their full potential and be included in all aspects of school life

Our SEN Unit provides a nurturing, inclusive, and supportive environment for children with cognition and learning challenges, particularly with speech and language difficulties.

We focus on:

- individual learning plans linked to EHCP targets and underpinned by the Equals Curriculum
- Small group teaching
- Access to mainstream activities (where appropriate)
- Speech, language, and communication development
- Social and emotional support

Staffing:

- SENCo: Shirley Marriott
- Class Teacher: Helen Lock
- Teaching Assistants: Karina Kilpin and Kirsty Powell

Our School Day

The school day for children in Dolphin Class begins at 8.30am and finishes at 3pm. The classroom has its own dedicated entrance around the side of the school and into the dedicated outdoor environment. The school day is staggered from the rest of the school to ensure a calm and quiet start and finish to the school day to support children's emotional regulation.

Throughout the day children are provided opportunities for sensory and experiential play, alongside dedicated carpet sessions, adult directed tasks and targeted support to meet individual EHCP targets using both the inside and outside environments. Children are encouraged to develop their independence and build their confidence to communicate from a range of strategies and tools available.

Children in Dolphin Class, dependent on their needs, may have playtimes with the main school, supported by familiar adults from the classroom. Lunch is eaten within the classroom in the children's safe and familiar environment. Children are welcome to eat a hot meal prepared by Aspens, our school meal provider or a lunch box from home. Meals provided by Aspens are free for all children as part of the universal free school meal offer. Children will also receive a free fruit/vegetable snack each day or a snack of parental choice provided from home.



Our Curriculum

As a Unit we use the Equals Curriculum to support the provision and meeting individual needs. We have broad overarching half termly themes based upon 'the world around us' alongside concepts that we revisit throughout the year. This enables us to maximize children's interests a vehicle for learning.

	Over Arching 'The World Around Us' Theme	Whole Year Concepts
Autumn (1)	People	Seasons
Autumn (2)	Food / Clothing	Festivals
Spring (1)	Water	Weather
Spring (2)	Life cycles	Passing of time
Summer (1)	Recycling / looking after the environment	Use of technology
Summer (2)	Materials	

To provide a broad and holistic development for each child, each half term all children have 8 bespoke targets, linked to their EHCP and individual needs for the following areas:

- Communication
- Relationships and play
- Independence
- Thinking and Problem Solving
- Well being
- Overarching Theme
- Phonics/Literacy
- Maths/Numerical Patterns

For each target/skill area, children are assessed along a 10 point scale for independence, fluency, maintenance and generalization.

<i>from</i> dependent		INDEPENDENCE						<i>to</i> independent	
		Learners complete tasks independently							
The task is carefully scaffolded and the learner is fully prompted throughout.		Some elements of the task are completed without support (or the overall level of support is lighter, for example physical help is replaced by gestural help).		The learner performs the task with minimal support. Encouragement may be given, and prompting may be needed to initiate the relevant skill(s).		The learner initiates the appropriate action and completes the task independently without prompts or other external cues.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>from</i> approximate		FLUENCY						<i>to</i> accurate	
		Learners reach a level of mastery combining speed and accuracy							
The skill is approximate and the learner's behaviour needs considerable shaping in order to accomplish the task. Performance is slow and halting.		The learner's performance is increasingly purposeful and coordinated, but it is not yet sufficiently accurate to effectively accomplish the task.		Performance is sufficiently accurate to meet the requirements of the task which is completed with little faltering or hesitation.		The skill is smooth, swift and accurate. No further refinement is needed.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>from</i> inconsistent		MAINTENANCE						<i>to</i> consistent	
		Learners maintain competency over time through repetition. They remember how to do a task after a break							
The skill has been observed on a single occasion or, at most, on sporadic and isolated occasions.		The skill is demonstrated on repeated occasions. Performance is not yet sufficiently consistent to be reliably anticipated.		Performance of the skill is consistent and can be reliably anticipated. The skill needs refreshing after a break.		The skill is consolidated and maintained over time. It is remembered after a break, and any loss of quality is quickly recovered with practice.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>from</i> single context		GENERALISATION						<i>to</i> many contexts	
		Learners achieve mastery in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or with different staff.							
The skill is demonstrated in a single setting or context, with limited stimuli or materials and with the same staff.		The skill is repeated but with some variation in setting, context, materials or staff.		The skill is demonstrated in different settings or contexts, with different stimuli or materials and with different staff.		The learner applies the skill to meet the demands of a new situation.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

This is reviewed regularly and used to inform provision and planning.

Supporting Emotional Wellbeing

Our team supports children by:

- Building relationships and getting to know each child as an individual
- Using visual timetables
- Creating calm, predictable routines
- Offering sensory breaks and sensory circuit opportunities around the school
- Teaching emotional regulation strategies – all children across the school use Zones of Regulation to develop their understanding and share their emotions with others. We have a number of different regulation stations around the school which provide a space and strategies to help children regulate their emotions.
- Providing key adults for reassurance

Specialist Support

Depending on your child's needs, they may have access to:

Speech and Language Therapy (internal and/or external support)

Occupational Therapy

Educational Psychology

Autism Outreach or Support Services

Draw and Talk Therapy

Trust Parent and Family Support Advisor

A range of interventions / targeted support strategies

We work collaboratively with these professionals to ensure joined-up care.

Communication with Parents

We value strong partnerships with families. You can expect:

- Daily contact through your child's communication book
- Regular progress updates, including parents consultations
- Open-door policy for quick chats or concerns
- Parent workshops
- Celebration events
- Use of the school app and website to keep you up to date with school events and messages.
- More information can be found on our school website at <https://www.burnhaminfants.com/>

Please don't hesitate to contact us by phone, email, or message if you have any questions.

Starting School in Dolphin Class – Our Transition Timeline

Stage	What Happens	Who's Involved
Before joining	Visits to the SEN Unit / Transition meetings, School Entry Plan Meeting and Plan created, short taster sessions for children	SENCo, parents, current school/nursery, SEN staff, child
On starting	Gradual start or full-day placement (depending on need)	SEN staff, parents
End of first half term	Review meeting to discuss how your child is settling	Parents, SENCo, class teacher

If your child requires a more bespoke transition into school this will be discussed and planned as part of the school entry plan meeting. This meeting is held with parents, current setting and any supporting agencies with your child and what they need placed at the center.

Preparing Your Child for Starting School in Dolphin Class

Here are some ways to help your child feel ready:

- Talk positively about their new school and teachers.
- Look at pictures of the classroom and staff (included in this booklet).
- Practice routines such as putting on a coat, opening lunch boxes, and using the toilet independently (if appropriate)
- Read social stories about starting school in Dolphin Class (shared by school once your child is allocated a place with us)
- Visit the school. Please contact the school office to make an appointment.

What Your Child Will Need

- Comfortable school uniform (labelled with their name). Our provider is Price and Buckland.
- Packed lunch or school meal arrangement
- Water bottle
- Spare clothes (if appropriate)
- Communication book (provided by school)
- Welly boots and outside play suit/waterproofs (we go outside in all weathers!)

Important Dates and Contacts

Contact	Role	Email	Phone
Shirley Marriott	SENCo	senco@bosi.theplt.org.uk	01278 782342
Carly Hatch	Headteacher	Carly.hatch@bosi.theplt.org.uk	01278 782342
School office	Admin Office	office@bosi.theplt.org.uk	01278 782342

Term Dates 2025 - 2026

Term 1	<p>Start Monday 1st September 2025 End Friday 24th October 2025.</p> <p>Inset day Monday 1st September. Children return to school Tuesday 2nd September.</p>
Term 2	<p>Starts Monday 3rd November 2025 Ends Friday 19th December 2025</p> <p>Inset day Monday 3rd November. Children return to school Tuesday 4th November</p>
Term 3	<p>Starts Monday 5th January 2026 Ends Friday 13th February 2026</p> <p>Inset day Monday 5th January. Children return to school Tuesday 6th February.</p>
Term 4	<p>Starts Monday 23rd February 2026 Ends Thursday 2nd April 2026</p> <p>Inset Day Monday 23rd February. Children return to school on Tuesday 24th February</p>
Term 5	<p>Start Monday 20th April End Friday 22nd May 2026</p>
Term 6	<p>Start Monday 1st June End Tuesday 21st July 2026</p> <p>Inset day Monday 1st June. Children return to school on Tuesday 2nd June.</p>

Final Thoughts

We are delighted to welcome your child into our Dolphin Class, SEN Unit family.

Every child's journey is unique, and we are committed to helping them thrive — academically, socially, and emotionally.

Together, we can make this transition a happy and successful experience.