

## -Resource Base Review Report

<b>School:</b>	Allens Croft Maintained Nursery School
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Executive Headteacher:</b>	David Aldworth
<b>Review Team:</b>	Terri Cawser (LL&SS) Eleanor Bilton (EPS)

### **Context of the Review:**

Allens Croft Nursery is a maintained nursery school with a commissioned Resource Base (RB) for Cognition and Learning Difficulties. In September 2025, the school were commissioned for 6 places, although only 2 of the commissioned places are currently filled.

In September 2025, the indicative place funding was £60,000, top up funding was indicated as £27,105. Nursery Schools do not have a notional budget figure.

The current Ofsted rating for the school is Outstanding, with the last inspection being held on the 28th and 29th January 2025. The reports states that “The school is highly ambitious for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This stems from an exciting curriculum that skilled staff immerse the children in, helping them to achieve extremely well.” And “ The school has the same high expectations for children with SEND as they do for all others. Children with SEND are exceptionally well catered for, including those in the resource base. Adults tailor activities and the learning environment so that children with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers and achieve as well as they can.”

The school has a SEND team consisting of the Deputy Head Teacher (Stephanie Wheatcroft), SENDCo (Sarah Roberts), the Assistant SENDCo (Ann Durrant) Discovery Team Lead (Claire Thorns) and 5 additional Nursery Officers specifically for inclusion, however it is clear that all members of staff in the school play a part in delivering provision for children with SEND, including those with an allocated RB placement in the nursery.

The school operate a model which fully integrates children with an allocated RB place into the mainstream nursery setting. There are specific spaces where targeted work can be carried out, but children access these alongside their peers as appropriate.

The review was held as part of the Local Authorities project to develop a quality assurance framework for commissioned Resource Bases in the city. LA representatives initially met with the Executive Head Teacher and SENDCo to discuss the review format and focus before conducting the review.

On the day of the review the LA reviewers met with the Executive Head Teacher, SENDCo, Deputy Head Teacher, SEND Governor, Assistant SENDCo, Mainstream teacher and Nursery Officer, and a sample of parents. In addition, the reviewers spent time observing across the nursery setting including the outside spaces.

Additional information considered as part of the review included:

Ofsted report

SEND Policy

SEN Information Report

Accessibility Audit and Plan

EHCPs for children with a commissioned RB placement

Samples of Discovery planning

Children's learning journals

## Findings of the Review:

### Views of Children and Families

#### Observations:

The school have a robust offer of support for all parents which includes those parents of children with allocated RB provision. This offer includes:

- Access to Tapestry where information about things their child has done along with pictures and observations relating to their child can be viewed.
- Staff being available at the start and end of the day to talk to parents.
- Stay and Play sessions to support transition into the setting.
- Parental well-being coffee mornings
- Parents WhatsApp group for peer-to-peer support
- Links with local companies and charities to provide additional social and practical support to families.

The school seek the views of parents through:

- Initial meetings
- Stay and Play sessions
- Coffee mornings/workshops
- Information shared on Tapestry
- Ad hoc conversations at start and end of day.
- Feedback forms about the nursery in general but also specifically about the RB.

Parents spoken to as part of the review reported that they found the setting to be “incredibly supportive”. One parent said “They help you to understand your child’s needs and strengths, put the support they need in place and also help to navigate complex SEND processes.” Another parent said “The staff have a way of making you feel like a superhero. They see the child as they exist in the family so they signpost us to the help we need. “

Parents reported that communication is strong. One parent stated “you can reach out to them by phone, email or in person and they always get back to you. This makes you feel heard. All staff go above and beyond and respond without judgement. They’re really approachable and no questions are silly questions.” Other parents spoke about the way the staff will talk to them about what they are doing. Parents felt that the school genuinely wanted their feedback and views. A further parent told us “They’re always wanting to improve the provision, and they ask us for our ideas.”

Parents also talked about the strength of support given to the children, stating “All staff really take time to know our children, and this really influences the support they receive.”

When talking about the coffee mornings and workshops the parents stated that they are “an amazing source of support.” They talked about how parents are invited to carry on attending even after their child had left the nursery. They said the workshops include crafts, speaking to professionals or sometimes just provide a “chance to be”.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Leadership and Management**

**Observations:**

- The strategic oversight of the RB is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher (EHT), Deputy Head Teacher (DHT) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO). It was clear on the day that there is a real team ethos across the setting when meeting the needs of children with an allocated RB placement and all opinions and inputs are equal in value.
- There is a line management structure that everyone is aware of and clear about. There is a focus on staff wellbeing which governors, leaders and school staff commented on.
- The review team met with the Link SEN Governor for the school, who was very clear on his role and responsibilities relating to SEND. He played an active role holding the school accountable for SEND including the RB, and this was reflected in his extensive knowledge of the RB. This is done through termly reports to the governing body as well as regular visits to the setting.
- The RB is specifically referenced within the School Development Plan with a focus on fine tuning the provision.
- The budget for the RB is overseen by the EHT but shared with all relevant staff. Decisions around use of funding for the deployment of staff and bespoke training are shared. The school commented that there are concerns around funding, particularly around the unfilled spaces and

the possibility of a decrease in commissioned places. This would lead to the base being unsustainable.

- There is an intimate care policy in place and evidence of effective use. All staff are appropriately trained in manual handling techniques.
- The effectiveness of the RB is monitored by the EHT, DHT and the SENDCO, however all staff interact with the children allocated RB provision and their views are taken into account in all decision making.
- There is a calendar of monitoring which includes the RB provision. Any Continuous Professional Development which is carried out is added to the monitoring cycle to ensure it is implemented and that people are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The school use in the moment coaching to give feedback.
- Provision is adapted as and when needed based on the monitoring that takes place. There is a clear focus on the child in all decision making.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is informed by the needs of the children in the RB and the provision in section F of the EHCPs. There is a clear link between the training given to all staff in the school and the needs of the children in the base (e.g. Makaton, Attention Autism, SCERTS, My Happy Mind, Helicopter Stories etc)
- In addition to formal CPD, the Discovery Team will model strategies to others. It was clear from all staff spoken with as part of the review that there is a culture of peers supporting peers in the school.
- The EHT and SENDCo regularly interact with the LA through attending HT RB briefings, C&L Leads Network Meetings and the maintained nursery networks.
- There is a clear and unwavering ethos of inclusion shared by all staff working in the setting.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Curriculum**

**Observations:**

- The school do not have a separate RB curriculum as they are following the EYFS and development matters guidance, however the school do identify discovery themes within planning which specifically support those children who require additional support for learning and often more of a focus on building independence. The school's universal offer is informed by the offer for the RB provision as they feel this strengthens the provision for all children with additional needs. There is a real understanding shared across the setting that the RB is not a bolt on to the mainstream.

- The curriculum is supported by the additions of SCERTS, AET Progression Framework, PIC, Wellcomm and the DfE Assessments. The setting use these as indicators that the curriculum is appropriate and having an impact.
- To support the delivery of the curriculum the school use Attention Autism. Leaders feel that this has strengthened the depth of understanding of the practitioners in the setting. During the visit it was clear to see how this is being used to support children to learn and that staff using it understand and engage with it. It was a pleasure to observe the children engaging with Bucket Time and see how the setting use it to deliver the curriculum.
- The school ensure that provision is tailored to meet the individual needs of children, and all staff know the targets that children with allocated RB provision are working towards. Whilst there is time and space allocated to the delivery of activities to support achieving these targets, all staff are so attuned to the children that often targets are worked on incidentally throughout the day, ensuring no opportunities to make progress are missed.
- The discovery staff felt that they had a voice in terms of contributing to discussions regarding the curriculum for children with allocated RB provision and felt that any feedback they shared with leaders was listened to and acted upon.
- The nursery staff spoken to as part of the review felt that they had received a good range of training to meet the needs of their children and that the leadership were always identifying further training opportunities. They shared that they felt well-equipped to support the full range of needs within the RB although they would always like additional resources.
- During observations there was a clear and genuine use of appropriate, well planned and thoughtful use of strategies, resources and approaches to meet the needs. Across the setting there was exemplary use of visuals to support communication, which included communication boards, now and next boards, objects of reference, signs and symbols. There was a clear use of Makaton. The children responded to the use of visuals well, demonstrating the consistency of use.
- The planned activities across the setting were engaging to all children, including those with allocated RB provision and it was evident that this supported the fostering of a love of learning from the children. Staff delivered all teaching activities with a high level of passion and enthusiasm, which the children respond well to.
- There is a purposeful use of consistent routines across the setting, which again the children with allocated RB provision respond to well.
- Progress is measured through the development matters, but with additional layers added in to show smaller steps. Progress against EHCP targets is also carefully monitored.

- There is extensive and robust transition support put in place to enable a smooth transition from the nursery RB to reception. The school play an active part in supporting parents to make appropriate decisions around the type of setting that is best for their child.
- Leaders in the school engage well with the LA SEND services and use the expertise to support strategic development of the provision.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Wider Curriculum**

**Observations:**

- The setting aims to have full participation in the wider curriculum offer and build this offer for the children with allocated RB provision around the needs they have in the wider community.
- There is a focus on the development of life skills and building independence which is built into the curriculum. The school employ creative solutions to teaching children these skills. For example, during the day the reviewers had the pleasure of observing toothbrushing skills being taught through bucket time. Because it was delivered in a way that children were comfortable with, combined with careful thought around the equipment used for each child, the children observed were able to start to independently brush their own teeth and enjoy it.
- The annual reviews of EHCPs are conducted via a Person-Centred Review. This ensures that there is a focus on the whole child and results in meaningful outcomes for the child.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Attendance/Exclusions**

**Observations:**

- Attendance is carefully monitored and Early Help procedures are put in place if any attendance issues are identified.
- The school has no exclusions recorded.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Safeguarding**

**Observations:**

- The EHT, DHT and SENDCO are DSLs for the setting along with 5 other members of staff. The school hold weekly safeguarding meetings to discuss vulnerable children.
- All staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to children in the RB.
- All staff, including governors, have undertaken the statutory safeguarding training

- Staff are further supported through safeguarding memos, staffing meeting messages and the sharing of case studies.
- Staff were well attuned to the individual regulatory activities for each child which resulted in low levels of dysregulation. They understand the non-verbal cues and key workers observe and monitor changes in behaviours. These actions support keeping children safe.
- Staff are supported by appropriate policies such as intimate care and safeguarding.
- Staff have completed appropriate manual handling training.

**Recommendations:**

- There are no recommendations for the school in this area.

**Other Observations**

The school are committed to ensuring that enhanced provision for children in the early years is available. The LA reps acknowledge the level of provision in this school and are keen to look at how this can be showcased without adding additional burden to the school.