I hope you have all had a brilliant summer holiday and have made the most of the lovely weather we have had. I know the Seals staff are excited to get back to school and to see all of our students. For those of you that have not met me yet, my name is Hayley and I am the manager of our Specialist Provision Centre here at Onchan school until the Easter holidays when Mareli returns from maternity leave. I have been teaching within Specialist Provisions on the island for a number of years and feel truly privileged to be able to work with your children.

We will be continuing to use our communication books to pass on any important information, we therefore ask that you please make sure to read these books regularly. General school information will continue to be sent out via email. If there is anything specific I can help with, please contact me via the school office or find me at the end of the school day.

**Physical and Social Development**

After a rather lengthy closure, we are hopeful that the Glencrutchery swimming pool will be reopening after October half-term. All children will be given a swimming slot and we will advise you of what day your child’s swimming session will be nearer to the time. We will also be attending Riding for the Disabled (RDA) again this term. Unfortunately we are only given 4 places and so not all students will be able to attend this time around. We do however aim to make sure that all children are given the opportunity to attend RDA sessions during their time with us. The children also continue to attend their weekly sessions with MSR at the NSC. One of our main areas of development that we focus on is your child’s social skills. Students in Seals class regularly visit local shops, parks and libraries so that they gain an understanding of how our community works and are able to cope in a range of social situations.

**Literacy and Numeracy**

As always, our Literacy and Numeracy lessons remain highly individualised to the needs of your child. We use a range of strategies to develop their reading and writing skills. Our younger students begin with Write Dance sessions that focus on refining gross and fine motor skills needed for writing. Students also enjoy listening to and joining in with sensory stories on a weekly basis. The older children are encouraged to read regularly and use phonics to support their learning. We have sensory maths lessons as well as more formal maths lessons throughout the week and all of our children access learning at a level that is appropriate to them. We like to encourage independence in our classroom and so, all students have their own workstation that contain tasks to match their IEP targets. The children enjoy taking ownership of their learning and completing their workstations independently.

Specialist Provision Newsletter

September 2021

**Contact Information –** **onchanenquiries@sch.im** **/01624 673465**

Hayley Annett – Specialist Provision Manager

Nicola Foden – Senior Education Support Officer

Kerry Mills – Senior Education Support Officer

Veronica Yuste Camacho – Senior Education Support Officer

Angie Allison - Senior Education Support Officer

**Its Learning**

You will all be invited to join our class page on Its Learning very shortly. This page has been set up to provide you with some ideas for activities you can do at home to support your children’s learning and also to supply home learning in the unfortunate event that your child returns a positive Covid-19 test result. Futher details for this page will be issued through communication books but please let me know if you have any issues logging in to Its Learning.

**Speech, Language and Communication**

Within our classroom, we follow the approach of total communication. In short, this means that we use a variety of methods to help your child express their thoughts. These strategies include Signalong, oral, auditory, written and visual aids. Students are encouraged to communicate in whatever way they can and we embrace all types of communication. The Speech and Language Therapy team will be running a few courses next half-term aimed at supporting parents who have children with speech and language difficulties. This is a brilliant opportunity for you to learn how you can support your children at home and to also meet other parents who may be facing some of the same challenges. Some of you may have already been on this training in the past, but if you are interested in these courses, please get in touch with me for further details.

**Staffing Changes**

Over the summer, we have had some staffing changes. Despite it being her wish to retire quietly and without ‘fuss’, I am sure you will all join me in wishing Claire a very happy retirement and the best of luck with her new endeavours. Hannah also leaves us for pastures new and I would like to congratulate her on securing a teaching post at Ballacottier School. Both Claire and Hannah will be missed by staff and students. On a happier note, I am thrilled to officially welcome Veronica and Angie to the team. Veronica has been working within Seals on supply for a little while now and Angie has been working with us as a lunchtime ancillary. Both ladies have formed brilliant relationships with the children and each bring with them very valuable skill sets. Due to an increase in staffing, we still have a number of outstanding vacancies to fill and we are looking forward to welcoming further new members of the team in the near future.