**Background & Ethos:** Bensham Manor School is a happy, Good (Ofsted Jan 2018) oversubscribed Maintained Special School located in the London Borough of Croydon catering for pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 with complex needs including autism. It is one of six special schools in Croydon with different designations. Capacity is 200 pupils. There are 222 on roll, 14 post 16. All attending have an EHCP. We strive to give our pupils the best possible education in an environment that is designed to cater for each of their individual needs. We are creative and innovative, providing a stimulating range of experiences for all. We value achievement and encourage independence for all supporting them through a varied, enriched and tailored offer including DoE and work experience.

**Vision:** We ensure that our pupils feel they are successful learners and everything they do is valued. We reward and recognise every step pupils take to reach their full potential. As a school community we celebrate success with pupils in lessons, in the playground, on outings and Residential trips. More formally in assemblies and through accreditation (including GCSE English, Maths, Art, Textiles, BTEC Science & FT) and the wonderful results pupils gain on their personal pathways through school.

**School Composition:** 98% of pupils are resident in Croydon. 60% have ASD diagnosis. Boys (157) significantly outnumber girls (65). 46% are in receipt of Free School Meals. 9 pupils are LAC. The composition of the school is gradually changing and over time there has been a drift towards those pupils with higher levels of need. St Nicholas School in Purley is our “sister” school and main feeder.

**School Organisation:** There are 22 classes. The school is based on one site. All classes are chronological with 8 – 12 pupils per class. All pupils access specialist subject teaching in appropriately resourced classrooms. Learners in Key Stages 4 and 5 follow a ‘14-19 Curriculum’ to allow them to access different options relevant to their career aspirations, abilities and desired Further Education placements post Bensham Manor. All year 11 and Post 16 students access a College link programme as part of their personalised timetables. About 85% of our year 11 leavers go to College. We work extensively with the respective providers to ensure that there are robust transitions to ensure all learners are ‘next stage’ ready. The remainder of leavers join our post 16 for one or two years before going to College. In post 16 students follow accredited Life Skills courses as well as spending one day a week in college and on a work experience placement.

**Staffing:** Bensham Manor has a staff that numbers 94 including 24 teachers & 44 teaching assistants (TAs). Some TAs work exclusively with a class group, others support the specialist teacher in a curriculum area. Unusually for a maintained school we have our own dedicated team of full-time therapists. 2 Speech and Language Therapists and an Assistant, Occupational Therapists, a family support worker, a school counsellor a drama therapist ( 4 days) and a Musician in residence (2 days) all work directly with classroom staff in order to provide an integrated learning and life-skills development experience. Our Speech & Language Therapy team is featured as a case study in the Bercow- ten years on review as an example of best practice supporting the Speech, Language and Communication Needs of children. We have held Investors in People Gold Award for 9 years. Our in house training programme is a real strength which helps retain our highly skilled, ambitious workforce. We have been a Flagship School for Inclusion IQM for 8 years. Since 2013 have had ELKLAN Communication Friendly status. In 2018 we achieved National Autistic Society accreditation.

**Governors:** We have an effective Governing Body with a good mix of long term governors and some newer ones providing fresh insights. Some governors are co-opted, some appointed and some elected by parents/carers and staff. There are positive relationships between governors, Senior Leadership Team and staff in general.

**January 2020**