



Special Educational Needs Information Report¹

1. About this report

The Children and Families Act 2014 says that all schools and academies must publish a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report every year. This report explains how our academy meets the needs of children with SEN. It will be published on the academy website and as part of West Sussex County Council's 'local offer' ([West Sussex County Council SEND Local Offer](#)).

In the report, we explain how we meet our duties towards pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. This report complements the University of Brighton Academies Trust and Hastings Academies Trust's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy [University of Brighton Academies Trust policies](#)

We will keep this report up to date. The academy's Local Governing Body will also review this report every year, and will involve pupils and parents/carers. If you want to give us feedback about the report, please contact the academy office.

2. Who do I contact about my child's special educational needs?

Your first point of contact at the academy is the child's class teacher (with, if necessary, the involvement of the Inclusion Manager and Inclusion support staff).

The Inclusion Manager is responsible for managing and co-ordinating the support for children with special educational need, including those who have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. They also provide professional guidance to academy staff and work closely with parents/carers and other services that provide for children in the academy.

The key contacts at our academy are:

Principal	Mrs Marianne Brand
Vice Principal (Inclusion Manager)	Mr Tom Jordan
Chair of Local Governing Body	Mrs Jacqui Read
Nominated Member of the Local Governing Body for SEND	
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Marianne Brand
Designated Person for Looked After Children	Mrs Marianne Brand

Contact details:

Telephone: 01444 454 866 Email: office@blackthornsprimaryacademy.org.uk

3. Which children does the academy provide for?

We are a primary academy and we admit 240 pupils aged 4 to 11 years.

We are an inclusive school. This means we provide for children with all types of special educational needs. The areas of need that are described in the SEND Code of Practice are:

- **Communication and interaction** – this includes children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and those with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) including Asperger's Syndrome.
- **Cognition and learning** – this includes children and young people with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). This also includes children and young people with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties** – social, emotional and mental health difficulties may manifest themselves in many ways including becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder
- **Sensory and/or physical needs** – this includes children and young people with visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI) and physical disability (PD)

Children and young people with any of these needs can be included within our academy community. Whilst these four categories broadly identify the primary areas of need for children and young people, our academy will consider the needs of the whole child or young person and not just their special educational needs.

If you want a place at our academy for a child with a statement or Education, Health and Care plan, this can be considered during the annual review process and/or during the admissions process. If you want a place for any other child with special educational needs, you should apply as normal, and your application will be considered in the same way as applications from children without special educational needs.

Our Admissions Policy is available on our website. Other useful information is available from:

- [school admissions- West Sussex](#)
- contact Pupil Admissions Office for admissions advice 033 301 42903

4. Summary of how the academy meets the needs of children with SEN and disabilities

The key aim of the University of Brighton Academies Trust and each of its academies is to help all pupils– including those with SEN and disabilities - to achieve their very best and become successful, well-rounded individuals. We believe that all children should have high quality teaching, adjusted to meet their individual needs, in accordance with our statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equalities Act 2010. Our academy regularly assesses all of our pupils so that we can see who has special educational needs as early as possible.

We follow an 'assess, plan, do, and review' cycle to ensure that we meet the needs of children with special educational needs.

Where a child makes less than expected progress, the class teacher, in conjunction with the SENCO, assesses whether the child has SEND. Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the academy will plan (in conjunction with the pupil and parent/carer) the child's teaching by identifying the outcomes that are being aimed for, and by identifying and planning the provision needed to meet the outcomes. The resulting SEN support plan will then be implemented, and regularly reviewed, at least three times a year.

The 'assess, plan, do, and review' cycle helps everyone to work together to continually improve the support so that the child makes good progress.

If the child is looked after by the local authority they will have a Care Plan including Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Health plan. We will co-ordinate these plans with the SEN support plan and will involve parents and carers as well as foster carers or social workers in discussions.

5. How does the academy identify children's special educational needs

We aim to identify children's special educational needs (SEN) as early as possible, so that they have the best possible outcomes. A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.

Our academy will assess each pupil's current skills and level of attainment on entry to the academy. We will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These will seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This is progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline;
- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress;
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers;
- widens the attainment gap.

The first response to less than expected progress will always be high quality teaching targeted at the pupil's area of weakness.

In identifying a child as needing SEND support, the class teacher working with the SENCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs including the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. Equally, attainment in line with chronological age does not necessarily mean that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN.

We are alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. For some children, SEN can be identified at an early age, However, for other children difficulties become evident only as they develop.

We recognise that parents know their children best and listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. Staff also listen and address any concerns raised by the children and young people themselves.

Where it is decided to provide pupil with SEN support, the decision will be recorded in academy records and we will formally notify parents. We are required to make data on the level and types of SEN in the academy available to the Local Authority. This data, which is collected through the School Census, is also required to produce the national SEN information report.

SEN support will be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes.

A school-based SEN support plan is used when, despite the appropriate targeted support, a child or young person continues to make little or no progress or to work at levels considerably below those of their peers. Many of these children are likely to be receiving support from other agencies.

Where, despite taking relevant or purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, consideration will be given to requesting an Education, Health and Care assessment. This request can be made by the academy or by parents.

In considering whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary, the Local Authority will consider the evidence of the action already being taken by the academy to meet the child or young person's SEN. An EHC needs assessment will not always lead to an EHC plan.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure improved outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. The EHC plan also specifies the arrangements for setting shorter term targets at academy level.

6. How does the academy teach and support children with SEN?

In common with all academies in the University of Brighton Academies Trust, we set high expectations for all pupils, whatever their prior attainment. We use assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. We deliver high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised and meets the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this and we use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it.

Teaching and learning strategies include

- Differentiated curriculum, objectives, activities and teaching approaches
- Clarity for pupils about what they are being asked to do, why they are doing it, how they are supposed to do it and how they will know if they have done well
- Use of supportive techniques such as visual timetables, modelling and demonstration
- Clear instructions and simplified language
- Support with key words and subject terminology
- Access to word processors and voice recorders
- Structured routines; task plans and visual timetables used when appropriate
- Regular reminders of whole-school/class rules
- Reward and sanctions systems that work and take account of pupils' SEND

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEND and their progress is a core part of the Trust's performance management arrangements, and our academy's approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

We record evidence of pupil progress, with a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEND support provided. We will record details of additional or different provision made under SEND support. This forms part of regular discussions with parents about the child's or young person's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps.

SEND support takes the form of a four part cycle: assess, plan, do and review. Decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach.

Clear dates for reviewing progress are agreed and the parent, pupil and teaching staff will be clear about how they will help the pupil reach their expected outcomes. The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

EHC plans are used to actively monitor children and young people's progress towards their outcomes and longer term aspirations. They must be reviewed as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews will be undertaken in partnership with the child or young person and their parents, and will take account of their views, wishes and feelings. The review will focus on the child's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan. The review will also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. Parents, an academy representative, a Local Authority SEN Officer, a health service representative and a Local Authority social care representative will be invited to the review meeting.

Before the meeting we will:

- give notice to all parties at least two weeks before the meeting and seek advice and information about the child;
- send out any advice or information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks before the meeting.

We will prepare and send out a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting.

Where a child is looked after by the Local Authority, the academy will endeavour to synchronise EHC plan reviews with social care reviews.

7. How will the curriculum and learning environment be matched to my child's/young person's needs?

All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is suitable for all our pupils. We will set high expectations for all pupils.

We adjust the curriculum for each child with SEN to make sure that they can access the subjects at their own level, and make progress. This is called 'differentiation'. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. We do what is necessary to enable children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes irrespective of whether that is through reasonable adjustments for a disabled child or special educational provision for a child with SEN.

We will look at the child's level of achievement and see what support they need to make good progress and reach their potential. We will use our Assessment Policy to do this. We will talk with children and parents as part of the SEN support cycle (assess, plan, do, review). The Inclusion Manager will often advise class teachers and/or observe children within their classroom. If the child's needs are considered to be at an appropriate level, the child may, in conjunction with the parents, be added to the school's SEND register. Children will be placed on the register as needing 'Additional School Support'. Interventions to support children are detailed on Individual Provision Maps, where targets are also set and progress monitored (six times a year). If significant concerns regarding progress remain despite the additional school support, the school will ask for further professional involvement from Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists or the Behavioural Support Team. The external specialist may visit the school and conduct assessments or observations of the child and provide the school and parents with a report of their findings and recommendations.

Further information about our academy's curriculum for each year group is available on our website.

8. How are parents and carers involved in reviewing children's progress and planning support?

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We will:

- Have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of parents;
- Provide parents with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making;
- Support parents in order to facilitate the development of their child to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood;
- Meet with the parents of children and young people at least three times each year;
- Provide regular reports for parents on their child's progress;
- Involve parents in the regular reviews of SEN support plans and, where applicable, in the annual review of EHC plans.

9. How are children involved in reviewing their progress and planning support?

We are committed to involving children and young people with SEN in decisions about their learning. We will:

- Have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people;
- Provide children and young people with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making;
- Support children and young people to support their development and help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

The following table sets out the different opportunities we have for talking to pupils about their learning:

	<i>Who's involved?</i>	<i>How often?</i>
<i>Self assessment</i>	<i>pupil, class teacher</i>	<i>Daily</i>
<i>Class Circle times</i>	<i>pupil, class teacher, learning mentor</i>	<i>Fortnightly</i>
<i>Worry Box/Suggestions box</i>	<i>Pupil, class teacher, learning mentor</i>	<i>In classes to be used when deemed appropriate</i>
<i>School Council</i>	<i>Class, class teacher, learning mentor</i>	<i>Fortnightly meetings</i>

<i>Pupil Voice</i>	<i>pupil, SENCo, class teacher, Senior Leadership Team.</i>	<i>At least once a year</i>
<i>SEN support review meetings</i>	<i>Pupil, parents, class teacher/form tutor supported by Inclusion Manager</i>	<i>Individual Provision Map discussions (when required) Pupil Progress meetings (at least 3 times a year) Scheduled meetings between professionals and parents when required.</i>
<i>Annual reviews (statements and EHC plans only)</i>	<i>Pupil, parents, SENCO, class teacher/ form tutor, support services, local authority.</i>	<i>Once a year Scheduled meetings between professionals and parents when required.</i>

10. How will the academy prepare and support my child to transfer to a new school/ college or the next stage of education and life?

The great majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities, with the right support, can find work, be supported to live independently, and participate in their community. In common with all academies in the University of Brighton Academies Trust, we encourage these ambitions from the start. Our SEN support includes planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education, key stages, year groups and preparation for adult life. We will agree with parents and pupils the information to be shared as part of this process. We support children and young people so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships. This is particularly important when children and young people are transferring from one phase of education to another.

If a child or young person has an EHC plan, this will be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to moving between key phases of education. The review and any amendments must be completed by 15th February in the calendar year of the transfer.

Transitions within and between academic years

Careful considerations for transition are made for children with SEND. Additional support is provided to support a successful transition from one year to the next depending on the need required. The Inclusion Team support staff and class teacher, with liaison with parents; outside professionals (if required) and pupil, will create a timetable for transition to best suit the needs.

11. What training do academy staff have?

We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils including those at risk of underachievement. This includes: identifying particular patterns of need in the academy, reviewing, and where necessary improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students/pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.

Where interventions are required, we ensure staff have sufficient skills and knowledge to deliver the intervention effectively.

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEND, with the progress made by pupils is a core part of the University of Brighton Trust's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

12. How does the academy measure how well it teaches and supports children with SEN?

We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils to make sure no-one underachieves. We look at whether our teaching and programmes of support have made a difference and also their cost effectiveness. We use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. This helps us to develop the use of interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so.

The impact of interventions on progress has to be measurable. Yet this might take different forms due to the nature of the intervention. All interventions, or further provision received, is stated on the pupil's Individual Provision Map and reviewed six times a year. Records and planning of interventions are kept and provided to the Inclusion Manager to review and discuss with staff, pupils and parents.

13. How accessible is the academy and how does the academy arrange equipment or facilities children need?

The University of Brighton Academies Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and its Equality Objectives are available on the Trust's website, as is its Policy for Supporting students and pupils with medical conditions.

Our academy's Accessibility Plan is available on our website.

Further information to support the Academy's Accessibility Plan:

English as an Additional Language

The stimulating environments rich in visual clues and language that our teachers provide benefit all pupils, but particularly pupils for whom English is an Additional Language. These children often learn English very quickly when they arrive in school and are immersed in the new language. However, grammatical structures and technical vocabulary can prove difficult for these children to pick up and, therefore, additional provision and support are necessary.

It is important to emphasise that these difficulties may also be experienced by any child who has one or both parents for whom English is an Additional Language, even if the child does not speak another language. Parents are the most influential role-models for children and if they are exposed to one or both parents with limited English, this will impact upon their understanding of grammar and vocabulary.

Strategies to support these pupils within school include a valuing of their own language and celebrating this and their culture within school. Pupils are also 'pre-tutored' in technical topic-related vocabulary, ensuring that they already know and understand individual terms when they are encountered within the context of their learning.

Blackthorns SSC

Within our academy we have an eight-place Special Support Centre (The Alps) specifically for children who have an EHCP for 'additional' or Speech and Language needs. The staff in this unit are highly trained and experienced in working with a wide range of different needs and the children placed in our unit make very good progress as a result.

14. How will my child/young person be included in activities with other children, including school trips?

We are committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relationships. Through careful planning and reasonable adjustments, pupils with SEN engage in the activities of the academy together with those who do not have SEN, and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the academy and in any wider community activity.

We work with parents and pupils to listen to their views, feelings and wishes to ensure pupils with SEN engage fully in the life of the school and in any wider community activity.

15. What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall well-being, and their emotional, mental and social development?

We support the emotional, mental and social development of children and young people with SEN and disabilities by providing extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to their views and implementing measures to prevent bullying. We make provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

We may work with other services to support children such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS).

Vulnerable Pupils

Pupils may be identified as vulnerable for a wide range of reasons. For example, the child may be experiencing a family separation or bereavement, there may be financial pressures within the family or there may be current or previous involvement from Social Services. There is an ongoing dialogue between the school and the parents regarding these children.

There are a group of children within the school entitled to Free School Meals and the school receives an amount of money to support these pupils, as research shows that this group of children across the country have not historically achieved as well as those children not entitled to Free School Meals. This is called the Pupil Premium and it enables the school to put in additional support for these pupils, as well as contributing towards the cost of school trips and visits and providing additional opportunities for extra-curricular provision. It is important that parents understand that the actual free school meals do not have to be taken up for the child to attract the Pupil Premium payment.

Teaching staff are informed, wherever possible, of these children and the individual concerns we may have and the children are monitored by the whole staff. Mrs Fowler, our Learning Mentor, often works closely with these children to increase their confidence and ensure they have the tools they need within class to make progress.

16. What specialist services does the academy use to support children and their families?

As part of the cycle of SEN support (assess, plan, do, review) we will consider whether we need to involve other services to make sure the child's specific needs are met. Parents are always involved in any decision to involve specialists.

We will always involve a specialist where a child or young person makes little or no progress over a sustained period or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those of pupils at a similar age despite evidence-based SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff. The academy may involve specialists at any point to advise on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions.

We work with parents and agencies to consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions to support the child's or young person's progress. Together, the parties agree the needs of the child or young person, responsibilities and the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which it is reviewed. Records of involvement of specialists are kept and shared with parents and teaching staff.

Where a child is looked after by a Local Authority, we will work closely with the other relevant professionals involved in the child's or young person's life as a consequence of being looked after.

We work closely with the Local Authority and other providers to agree the range of local services and clear arrangements for making appropriate requests. Some services may be commissioned directly.

Further information on the local authority and health services are available from:

[Find support, guidance and information for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND](#)

17. Where can I get information, advice and support?

The 'Local offer' is available here: [West Sussex SEND Local Offer](#)

Impartial advice and help for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their parents and carers is available here: tel 0330 222 8555; email [West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service](#);
website: [West Sussex SEND Local Offer information, advice and support](#)

The contact information for the academy is provided in section 2 above.

18. What do I do if I am not happy or if I want to complain?

If there are any disagreements with parents about SEN support for their child person, we will work with them to try to resolve these. If parents have a complaint they can use the Trust's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

19. Other relevant policies

Other policies that include information that may be important for students/pupils with SEND are:

Trust policies²:

- Data protection
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality Objectives
- Supporting Students and Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Safeguarding in Education and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Admissions Policy

Academy-specific policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Accessibility Plan

² Available on the Trust website <https://www.brighton.ac.uk/academiestrust/how-we-work/our-policies/index.aspx>