



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information

Report 2025-2026

WHAT IS SEND?

SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and a child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Here at Hexham Middle School, our overall aims are to ensure that every student lives and breathes the values and ethos of our school: *respect, engage, and aspire*. We are committed to helping our young people thrive and flourish, promoting high standards for all students, regardless of their particular needs or abilities.

HMS is committed to a policy of inclusion where students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are valued equally, with individual needs recognised and met through flexible and varied provisions across the curriculum and wider school provisions.

THE SEND DEPARTMENT

All staff at HMS endeavour to provide a safe and fully inclusive learning environment in which all students have access to broad and balanced educational and social opportunities

Our SEND Department is focused on providing support for those whose academic, physical, social or emotional development is hindering their progress and achievement, endeavouring to provide appropriate support so that they can become individual, independent learners and fulfil their potential through high attainment and achievement.

Who We Are:

- SEND Trustee – Dr Florrie Darling

- Executive Headteacher – Mr Graeme Atkins
- Head of School – Mr Liam Watters
- Assistant Headteacher: Inclusion – Ms Ankita Karn
- SENDCo – Mr Harry Morgan
- Assistant SENDCo – Mrs Jen Ballantyne
- Learning Support Assistants
- Learning Mentors
- Pupil Support Workers

WHAT KINDS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR AT HMS?

Students identified as having a special educational need or a disability, including those with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will, like all students at HMS, be entitled to access the full school curriculum and be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the school to achieve their full potential in all areas of school life. The kinds of SEND for which provisions are made include:

- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH)
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD): dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
- Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)
- Sensory Processing Difficulties (SPD)
- Physical Disabilities (PD)
- Medical Conditions

The wide range of needs requiring extensive provision are categorised in the following way:

- **Communication and Interaction:** learning difficulties or disabilities including speech, language and communication needs and also those with ASC.
- **Cognition and Learning:** learning difficulties or disabilities including moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Issues** learning difficulties or disabilities including social and emotional difficulties and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs:** learning difficulties or disabilities including hearing or visual impairments, cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL IDENTIFY STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)?

Upon transition, HMS works closely with first/ primary schools and parents/carers to help identify SEND and other needs to effectively plan for provision. Student Support and SEND teams have close liaison with first school SENDCos, pastoral teams and families to ensure that transition is as comfortable as possible for our students. Advice from any other professionals working with the student also aids planning. In year transfers also comply with this procedure, making sure that all SEND information is passed on and responded to when planning a student's curriculum and support.

During their time at HMS, student progress and attainment is closely monitored by class teachers, Curriculum Leads and Heads of Year; this allows identification of students who are not making expected progress and therefore may have special educational needs. All staff are able to refer concerns to the SEND department, who will then follow the graduated approach - 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' - to identify barriers to learning and determine if there is a special educational need. If appropriate, the SEND team will seek advice or assessment from external professionals, such as Educational Psychology, Speech and Language and Mental Health practitioners, to best inform suitable support and provision for the student.

When a student is identified as having special educational needs, both the student and parents/carers are notified and involved in decisions about their support. A Pupil Profile is created and the student is added to the school's Special Educational Needs Register or Monitoring List, and Special Exam Arrangements Register where appropriate. If a student requires targeted intervention in addition to reasonable adjustments, they will follow a SEND Support Plan. Positive and constructive relationships are made through regular communication face-to-face, over the telephone and/or via email and reviews of support provisions take place at scheduled times across the academic year.

The HMS SEND Policy is available on the school website.

HOW WILL STAFF AT HMS SUPPORT MY CHILD?

At HMS, every teacher is a teacher of SEND and, for the most part, students with SEND follow the broad curriculum offer across each key stage, accessing inclusive mainstream classroom environments. Teachers are responsible for providing relational, high-quality adaptive teaching within their classroom to ensure all learners' needs are understood and met, including effective deployment of LSAs who are present to support students with SEND.

The SENDCo oversees the strategic aims and coordination of provisions for students with SEND, and the Assistant SENDCos oversee day-to-day support. They also oversee the statutory process for all learners with an EHCP. All students on the SEND register or monitoring list will have a Key Worker and depending on need, an LSA will be available for some students both in class and for 1:1 or small group support out of lessons. The Student Standards and Support Team, Learning Mentors and Behaviour Mentors address and support pastoral needs which present barriers to learning for students with SEND.

Coordinated support and interventions for student with SEND may include:

- in-class support where an LSA will help students to access the curriculum
- access arrangements facilitated by teaching staff and LSAs
- 1:1 or small group support as appropriate to need where the LSA/Learning Mentor works with students, offering curriculum support or delivering social, emotional and personal development interventions
- homework club supervised by teaching staff who are available to help students access curriculum homework tasks
- medical – the school nurse keeps an up-to-date record of all medical conditions and shares regularly with staff
- provision and access for pupils with physical disabilities is made, as appropriate to individual need
- LSA support at extra-curricular activities or school clubs, where necessary
- access to a flexible/reduced curriculum, as appropriate to individual need
- access to an alternative provision, as appropriate to individual need

Provisions for students with a statutory assessment will be determined by their EHCP.

HOW WILL I KNOW HOW MY CHILD IS DOING?

At HMS we firmly believe students and parents/carers should be central to discussions and outcomes regarding student progress. Termly monitoring sessions throughout the academic year allow curriculum departments to monitor and track student progress and the SENDCo, alongside the Curriculum Team, monitors and analyses student data to best inform provisions and support for students with SEND.

Monitoring for students with SEND who receive additional provisions and support through the SEND Department will take place across the year; all students on the SEND register/monitoring list will have a Key Worker who will monitor their support and meet with them to review and update their Pupil Profile annually. The Key Worker will discuss the student's experiences across the school and minutes from these meetings will be sent home to parents – parental meetings can be scheduled where requested. Students with a SEND Support Plan will have termly opportunities to discuss and review progress. After each review the SEND team and Head of Year are available should there be any concerns.

Formal annual reviews take place for all students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) to review individual needs and appropriate provisions.

The SENDCo or Assistant SENDCo can be available for meetings and appointments can be made to discuss specific concerns in more detail. In addition to and dependent on individual needs, a student's Key Worker may have regular contact with.

HOW WILL THE CURRICULUM BE MATCHED TO MY CHILD'S NEEDS?

High quality teaching is at the heart of all that we do. All students have access to the National Curriculum, and supported by high quality professional development, subject teachers are responsible for providing Quality First Teaching (QFT) with adaptive pedagogy to meet individual needs. Each year, there may be a small number of students who require a differentiated and personalised curriculum – this may include option choices, additional literacy and numeracy provisions, and intervention programmes.

LSAs will provide support within the classroom and with small groups or 1:1, based on individual needs. LSAs are encouraged to support all students in lessons, not merely just those with SEND; this means the subject teacher can be available to support those students who require targeted support from the subject specialist.

The needs of students with SEND relating to curriculum access will be discussed regularly at senior leadership level.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL THERE BE FOR MY CHILD'S OVERALL WELLBEING? WHAT MULTI AGENCY SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND?

Students' wellbeing and happiness is paramount at HMS. The Student Standards and Support Team and the SEND department work very closely together to support students' wellbeing. Some SEND students have the support of a LSA in their classrooms and during unstructured times (breaks and lunchtimes). If support is needed, the Restore is always staffed and students are welcomed there, and interventions for social and emotional literacy or personal development can take place. The Key Worker will have regular contact with the student and home, and will be a daily 'go-to' person for the student and parents/carers regarding any SEND issues.

Pupil Support Workers work to support the well-being of pupils as they grow in the school environment, offering support on issues relating to SEMH, bullying issues, organisational concerns and school pressures.

The Attendance Officer and Family Liaison Officer works closely with the school and families to ensure students' attendance stays well above the national average, and offers support and guidance for parents/carers whose child is struggling to engage with the school environment.

Close multi-agency working with external professionals enables needs to be addressed by the appropriate professional efficiently. Communication between professionals is organised by the Assistant Head, SENDCo, Assistant SENDCos or Heads of Key Stage. Links are well established with health professionals via the Public Health School Nurses and with mental health professionals at CYPS and Primary Mental Health. Regular Multi Agency meetings take place and, where needed, Early Help Assessments (EHAs) are completed with parental involvement. We also use the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) to ensure swift access to appropriate services/agencies.

WHAT SPECIALIST SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AT OR ACCESSED BY THE SCHOOL?

You can view Northumberland County Council's local offer at <http://www.northumberlandsend.co.uk/>

The school can access a vast range of specialist services including educational psychologists; specialist teachers for autism – behaviour - literacy/numeracy - speech, language and communication; as well as a personal SEND advisor for transition to post 16/careers. The Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer is also used to support the attendance of students with SEND.

Close working relationships are established with the Virtual School for students who are looked after or accessing EOTAS (Education Other Than At School), and the Inclusion Team for students who may have difficulties accessing the provisions available within the school setting.

Links are well established with health professionals via the Public Health School Nurses and with mental health professionals at CYPS/CAMHS and Primary Mental Health. We use the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) to ensure swift access to appropriate services/agencies. Social Care and the local authority Safeguarding Team work in partnership with the school where necessary for individual students.

Alternative provisions can be accessed for students, determined by individual need, including pathway into our internal AP for students with SEMH needs.

WHAT TRAINING DO STAFF RECEIVE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND?

HMS is committed to providing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff and SEND is a regular focus for this. We monitor, review and develop all teachers and support staff's understanding of different SEND and the strategies to effectively identify and support needs. As a school, we work closely with the local authority, as well as inter-school networks, to make sure that we are aware of changes to guidance and can share in good practice from across the region.

HOW WILL THE SCHOOL HELP ME TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

There will be various 'Parents' Evenings' and 'Information Evenings' to explain the curriculum and expectations at that particular point in your child's education. After each evening, the SENDCo or Assistant SENDCo are available for a meeting to discuss progress and potential concerns.

After reports the SENDCo and SEND team will be available to discuss any concerns you have. The SENDCo will consult with Curriculum Leaders after each data round to discuss progress, evaluate interventions and plan future interventions in light of outcomes.

HOW WILL I BE INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PLANNING FOR MY CHILD'S EDUCATION?

Parents/carers will be involved at key transition points during their child's education; namely Year 4 into 5 and Year 8 transition into Year 9. They will be involved in SEND reviews, and formal annual reviews for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Parents/carers will also be central to reviews of Early Help Assessments (EHAs).

All parents/carers of SEND students will be invited to be part of any meetings that take place regarding progress/concerns, and 'Parents' Evenings' and 'Information Evenings' also engage you in planning for your child's education.

Email contact is also welcomed by key staff at HMS. If your child has significant SEN and/or disability, and therefore has a 'Key Worker', this person is always a good start as first point of contact if you have any concerns.

HOW WILL MY CHILD BE INCLUDED IN ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM, INCLUDING SCHOOL TRIPS?

Our focus on Personal Development actively encourages all students to take part in enrichment activities in and out of school, allowing them to develop increased confidence, social skills and a sense of wellbeing and belonging. Extra-curricular activities at HMS are open to all students and all students are encouraged to attend. If additional support is needed for a student with SEND to access an extra-curricular activity, this can be discussed with the SEND Team (for example, additional supervision to attend an after-school activity or trip or visit where an LSA may be allocated to support).

Clubs and subject drop-ins are advertised to students at the start of each year; we encourage parents/carers to promote participation. Please contact your child's tutor if you would like more information about clubs/extra-curricular activities.

HOW ACCESSIBLE IS THE SCHOOL/COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT?

Our new build means that classrooms are accessible to all students. The buildings are also adapted for use by visually impaired students. See also the Accessibility Plan (part of the Equalities Policy) for more details - this covers accessibility in relation to the curriculum, the environment and provision of information.

The school is now almost all fully wheelchair accessible; this includes access to the outdoor sports facilities. There are disabled therapy, changing and toilet facilities, including a wet room area and a hoist facility.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

We are keen to work with parents/carers if there are any concerns or questions and will seek a solution that is best for the student. For any day-to-day issues, the first point of contact should be your child's Tutor or their 'Key Worker'. For more specific pastoral issues, contact should be directed to the relevant Head of Key Stage.

Specific SEND concerns should be directed to the SEND department at send@hexhammiddle.org.uk If you would like to contact the Local Authority, e-mail sen@northumberland.gov.uk

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH SEN OR DISABILITIES.

The local authority is the admissions authority.

The Local Authority will contact the school regarding applications to HMS and, for those students with SEND, we carefully consider whether we can meet the student's needs. If HMS is the most appropriate setting in which to meet the student's needs, they will be admitted and every care will be taken to ensure appropriate access to a suitable curriculum.

CONSULTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND AND INVOLVING THEM IN THEIR EDUCATION:

AT HMS, students are regularly consulted on their views and this helps individual teachers, departments as well as the school's leadership in making decisions. Students with more complex SEND have a Key Worker who regularly reviews their progress and encourages them to discuss their concerns and any successful strategies. Students with EHCPs contribute their 'Learner's Views' and attend annual review meetings, where appropriate.

The Key Worker liaises with both the student's subject staff and their families regarding any issues raised by the student. Students with additional needs are involved in discussion both with LSAs deployed to their lessons and with subject staff. Heads of Year and Learning Mentors also have a role in seeking out their views about provision.

All students are involved in whole school surveys which gives us valuable information that feed into our development planning process.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND AT TRANSITION POINTS:

At transfer from middle school to high school, intensive support is provided for students with SEND.

Students follow the transition programme which involves 2 full days at QEHS in the spring term and a full day in the summer term. In addition, 1:1 or small group visits take place where a need is identified. The SENDCos of the schools liaise and identify students where additional transition support is needed. The SENDCo or an Assistant SENDCo also attends all transition EHCP reviews.

MEDICAL NEEDS

Information on medical needs is covered in our separate Medical Needs Policy available on the school website.

WHAT ARE SPECIAL EXAM ARRANGEMENTS OR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS?

There are a small number of students who require special access arrangements for exams due to their additional needs. To be eligible for these special arrangements, students must meet criteria set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

For a student to meet the JCQ criteria, standardised assessments must show their needs but there must also be evidence that they have required that particular arrangement/concession regularly in lessons in order for them to make expected progress. If a student makes expected progress in class without special arrangements, then they do not meet the criteria.

The process is co-ordinated between the exams officer and the SEND team. Students and parents/carers are notified of their exam access arrangements and support as it is approved.

THE NORTHUMBERLAND GRADUATED APPROACH FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 states that:

“The majority of children and young people with SEN will have their needs met within local mainstream early years providers, schools or colleges.”

Please follow the link below for information showing how Northumberland County Council wish schools to meet the needs of students with SEND. This includes information about SEN profiles, SEN support plans and Consideration of Statutory Assessment (COSA)

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/SEND/Final-GA-Parents-June-2018-2.pdf>

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) CORE OFFER

The Children’s and Families Bill 2014 and the SEN Code of Practice 2015 require Local Authorities to produce a ‘Local Offer’. The Local Authority Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the support and opportunities that are available.
- To make providing more responsive to local need and aspirations by directly involving young people with SEND, parents and carers and service providers in its development and review.

The Northumberland Local Offer can be found here. www.northumberlandsend.co.uk/

CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS

We strive to forge strong relationships with parents/carers and to involve them fully at every stage. We would encourage anyone with a concern or complaint to contact us and we aim to resolve it swiftly.

If the Key Worker has not been able to resolve an issue initially, any concerns about SEND provision should then be raised with the SENDCo and Assistant SENDCo. Should you still be concerned then please contact Ankita Karn Assistant Headteacher, who is responsible for inclusion in the school.

If the issue is still not resolved then you can follow the school’s complaints procedure (the form is available on our website).