SEND Information Report
2026/27

Arrangements to meet the needs of students with Special Educational Needs and disabilities

At The Highcrest Academy we have a strong ethos of Inclusion and our teaching methods embrace this, enabling students to make the best possible progress. As an Inclusion Quality Mark Flagship School we endeavour to apply this ethos to all elements of Academy life, supporting students with communication and interaction difficulties, cognition and learning needs, social emotional and mental health requirements and sensory and disability difficulties. The overall aim being to enable students to go on to the next phase in their education and to prepare for adulthood ensuring students are; thoughtful, articulate, confident and responsible members of society.

We currently offer support around the four broad areas of need:
Cognition and Learning
Communication and Interaction
Social Emotional and Mental Health
Sensory and or physical (please also refer to our accessibility policy)

The Academy will ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil with SEN.

Transition
How will the school help my child to move to The Academy/a new class/year group or to a different school?

Starting in Year 7 (primary → secondary)

- We offer an enhanced transition programme for pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans and for other pupils who would benefit from additional transition support. Where an EHC plan names Highcrest Academy, our SENDCo will contact the child's primary school and parents as soon as the school is confirmed to begin transition planning.
- In the summer term before transfer we run:
    - up to six small-group transition workshops designed to build resilience, develop friendships and introduce pupils to key staff and routines; and
    - an extended afternoon visit for pupils who would benefit from an extra, quieter introduction before the main transition day.
- Where appropriate, the SENDCo aims to attend Year 6 Annual Review meetings (with parental consent) to ensure the EHC plan and provision are understood and acted on.

All incoming pupils with SEN

- For every pupil joining Highcrest Academy with identified SEN, we gather and review information from the previous school to determine the most appropriate support. The SENDCo, Heads of Learning or Assistant Heads of Learning complete initial visits to the pupil in Year 6 or at the previous setting where feasible.

- We use the information gathered to produce a personalised SEND Passport for each pupil. These passports summarise the pupil's needs, successful strategies and agreed reasonable adjustments; they are shared with the pupil (where appropriate), parents/carers and all staff who teach or support the pupil.

In-year transfer to Highcrest Academy

- For pupils transferring into the Academy mid-year, we offer a transition meeting involving parent/carer, the pupil (where appropriate), the SENDCo and relevant pastoral staff. Additional visits and tailored support can be arranged to help the pupil settle.

Detailed/complex transitions

- Where a pupil has complex needs or additional vulnerabilities we will arrange multi-agency transition meetings (with parental consent) to put in place a detailed transition plan. This plan may include joint visits with the previous setting, specialist assessments, temporary timetables or curriculum adjustments, and coordination with health or therapy services.

Parent communication and meetings

- Parents of pupils on the SEN register are offered a dedicated meeting with the SENDCo at least once per year (this is available virtually through School Cloud). The SENDCo is also available at other parent events and can be booked for additional meetings as needed.

Statutory duties

- Highcrest Academy is committed to meeting its statutory duties under the SEND Code of Practice and to working closely with parents, primary schools and external specialists to ensure transitions are safe and effective.

Roles and responsibilities

Who should I contact if I have a concern about my child?

Form Tutor/Subject teacher	If you have concerns about your child, you should speak to your child's class teacher/ form tutor **first** as they are responsible for; • Adapting and refining lessons and learning activities to respond to strengths and needs of all pupils • Checking on the progress of your child and identifying, planning and delivery of any additional support required to support progress within everyday teaching Depending on the outcomes of these discussions you **may** have a follow up meeting with the SENDCO.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) Name: Mrs Sue Charlesworth Email: Scharlesworthighcrestacademy.org.uk	Responsibilities include; • Coordinating provision for children with SEN and developing the Academy's SEN policy • Ensuring that parents are: • Involved in discussions to identify key strengths and areas of difficulty • Involved in planning provision to overcome barriers to learning • Regularly included in reviewing how well their child is doing • Consulted about planning transition to a new class or school • Liaising with a range of agencies outside of school who can offer advice and support to help pupils overcome any difficulties • Providing specialist advice and facilitating training to ensure that all staff are skilled and confident about meeting a range of SEN.
Mental Health Lead **Name:** Sue Charlesworth	• Works alongside the Well-Being Team and will complete referrals to external agencies. • Will conduct interventions or arrange for intervention to take place for vulnerable students. • Works alongside outside agencies to achieve the best results for our students.

The Principal Name: Mr Glen Burke	Responsible for; • The day to day management of all aspects of the Academy, including the provision made for pupils with SEN

SEN Governor Name: Ashfa rani Email: arani@highcrestacademy.org.uk	Responsible for; • Supporting school to evaluate and develop quality and impact of provision for pupils with SEN across the school.

SEN Support – The Graduated Response Assess, Plan, Do and Review

How will the school decide if my child needs extra help? How can I find out about how well my child is doing?

- We monitor the progress of all pupils each term. Where a pupil is not making expected progress in key areas, staff may carry out further assessment to identify barriers to learning and any additional needs. For pupils receiving SEND support, parents/carers will be offered at least three review conversations each year. These will normally be provided through a combination of:
    - Parent Evenings
    - the Academy's Information Evening, and
    - Virtual SEN parent evenings (dedicated meetings with the SENDCo).

- In addition, a review meeting can be arranged at the request of the SENDCo, pastoral staff or parents/carers where there are emerging concerns or where more frequent monitoring is needed.

- The Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle will be used to plan and evaluate support:
    - Assess: the pupil's needs are reviewed using teacher assessment, progress data, behaviour and attendance records, and information from parents, the pupil and any previous settings.
    - Plan: the SENDCo, class teacher/form tutor and relevant pastoral staff agree outcomes, interventions and success criteria. Parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil are involved in setting the plan.
    - Do: agreed actions are put in place by classroom teachers and support staff; staff are responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments and monitoring day-to-day progress.
    - Review: progress towards the agreed outcomes is reviewed at least three times a year (aligned with our review cycle). The review records what has changed, what has worked, and the next steps.

- If social, emotional or mental health needs are affecting progress, these will be assessed and included in the pupil's support plan.
- Where appropriate, the pupil will be invited to contribute to reviews. If the pupil cannot attend, we will gather their views by other means and include them in the record.
- All targets, actions and evidence of impact will be recorded in a personalised support plan, a SEND Passport. This record will be shared with parents/carers and stored on our management information system.
- If a pupil is not making expected progress despite effectively implemented, evidence-based support, we will consider involving external specialists (for example educational psychology, speech and language therapy or CAMHS) with parental consent.
- Where the severity and complexity of need indicate that provision beyond our Ordinarily Available Provision is required, the school (or parents) may request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. Before a request is made, we will show you the evidence of the steps taken and the impact of the additional support.

- The SENDCo will explain the process for referrals and EHC requests, and will provide details of local parent support organisations and sources of further information.

Tests and Examinations: Access Arrangement

<u>What is the process?</u>

- Exam access arrangements (EAA) are adjustments agreed before an assessment to allow pupils with specific needs to access external examinations without changing the assessment's integrity. Examples include extra time, rest breaks, a scribe, or a reader. We adhere to the regulations issued by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications).

- Identification and evidence:
    - The SENDCo gathers a detailed history of need and classroom evidence (for example: curriculum outcomes, assessment data, records of the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle, in-class adjustments and specialist reports) and normal way of working when there is a concern that a pupil may require access arrangements.
    - We will issue a letter informing parents/carers a young person has been assessed for EAA.

- Assessment:
    - Highcrest Academy uses an external, independent assessor (or other qualified assessor appointed by the Academy) to carry out formal assessments to determine whether access arrangements are appropriate. This process usually takes place in Year 10.
    - If the assessor and the SENDCo judge there is sufficient evidence of need, the pupil will be put forward for the relevant access arrangement(s).

- Implementation:
    - Agreed access arrangements are put in place for internal and external assessments as appropriate and are recorded on the pupil's SEND Passport/Personal Support Plan and on the Academy's examination systems.
    - Staff who support pupils in exams (for example readers, scribes or invigilators) receive training and guidance on their role.

- Appeals and changes:
    - If parents or pupils disagree with an access arrangement decision, they should contact the SENDCo in the first instance. They will be initially signposted to JCQ guidance on access arrangements. The SENDCo will explain the evidence considered and will review the decision where appropriate.
    - Access arrangements for public examinations are made in line with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidance. Highcrest Academy uses an external, qualified assessor to carry out formal assessments and submits arrangements to awarding bodies in accordance with JCQ procedures and deadlines.
    - External specialists (for example CAMHS clinicians or medical consultants) may provide valuable reports or clinical evidence about a pupil's medical or mental-health needs. Such reports are used as part of the evidence base but do not by themselves determine an access arrangement; the statutory JCQ criteria and the assessor's findings along with teacher evidence are used to decide whether an arrangement is appropriate.

There is a detailed exam policy available on the school website.

Curriculum and Teaching Methods (including groupings and interventions)
How will teaching be adapted to meet the needs of my child?

Our teachers are able to adapt teaching to meet the diverse range of needs in each class. Daily planning takes into account individual pupils needs and requirements. Differentiation is approached in a range of ways to support access and ensure that all pupils can experience success and challenge in their learning.

Grouping arrangements are organised flexibly with opportunities for both ability and mixed setting to maximise learning opportunities for all.

Additional adults, Learning Support Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants are used flexibly to help groups and individual pupils, with a long term goal of encouraging and developing independent learning skills.

If required, more specific interventions are available to support groups and individuals to develop key areas of their learning and development. Details of the additional support offered to your child will be included in their SEN Personal Support Plan.

We aim to develop a bespoke range of interventions to support the needs of the individual through our identification of barriers to learning and the bridges we build, with the students, to achieve success.

Access

What arrangements are made to enable my child to benefit and take advantage of the full school curriculum and extra curriculum activities?

We have a comprehensive accessibility plan in place to ensure that pupils with SEND can take part in all aspects of Academy life.

The Academy's accessibility was updated in June 2024 and can be viewed on the school website. The plan also outlines actions the school intends to take to further develop access and inclusion for pupils with disabilities.

We undertake additional planning and risk assessments to ensure that pupils with SEN can take part in the wide range of extracurricular activities the school offers, including school outings and residential trips.

We monitor attendance at morning and after school clubs to make sure that pupils with SEND are able to access these enrichment activities.

Staff Expertise

How skilled are staff in meeting the needs of my child?

Provision for pupils with SEND is included in our regular monitoring of quality of teaching across the school. This helps to identify priorities for our ongoing programme of CPD to support whole school inclusive practice and to support new and less experienced staff.

Over the last three years, thirty members of staff have independently chosen to take level 2 qualifications in topics such as Understanding Autism, Mental Health and Equality. Assistant Heads of Learning are qualified mental Health First Aiders.

The Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Belonging holds The National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination and Line Manages the SEN Department.

We have two Higher Level Teaching Assistants in the Learning Support Department
We have one qualified ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant.

Our vibrant CPD programme offers staff the opportunity to obtain knowledge and understanding across a wide range of topics with many focusing on SEN as outlined below:

- Understanding Autism and the barriers in the classroom
- Supporting pupils with weak Dyslexia and weak literacy
- The Code of Practice (section 6 schools) and the teacher's role as a teacher of SEN
- Working with your LSA – Maximising effectiveness
- 'Exam Access Arrangements' the different arrangements, understanding the process of gathering evidence and the role of the teacher in facilitating exam support in the classroom.

We work with staff internally and externally with specialised expertise and qualifications including:

- Restorative Justice
- Understanding Autism Level 2
- PGC Autism
- Counselling
- Youth Mentoring Level 3
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Specialist teaching services
- Forest School Practitioner qualified to Level 3

External partnerships

What support from outside does the school use to help my child?

Our SENDCO actively engages in a range of opportunities to share best practice and keep abreast of current local and national initiatives and policy to support pupils with SEN.

The school also seeks advice and guidance from other relevant agencies to help school staff meet the needs of each child:

- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Specialist teaching services
- Educational psychologists

The SENDCo, our Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Belonging works closely with the SEN Team at the local authority and attends a weekly meetings with them to ensure outcomes are met for our students with Education, Health and Care Plans. At Highcrest Academy we have three Education, Health and Care Co-ordinators allocated to use from the Local authority.

- One for Students who have had an Annual Review
- One for students undergoing statutory assessment
- One for Post 16 provision

We pride ourselves on strong working relationships with a wide range of external organisations. Advice and support is requested to ensure the needs of the students are fully understood and met.

Examples of agencies we work with are shown below, this list is not exhaustive:

Agency	What they offer
Occupational Therapy	OT (occupational therapy) may be able to help you with areas such as: Self-care Organisation and planning Touch typing skills Handwriting Self esteem Try these strategies with support from your parents and school for the recommended period of time.
Speech & Language Services	The Buckinghamshire Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service works with children and young people from 0 – 25 years. We work in partnership with staff at schools and Early Years settings. We can provide training, liaison and advice to staff working directly with the child or young person. This upskills the key people in the child's environment, who are then able to develop his/her communication on a daily basis. Where appropriate, we may work in the classroom, in small groups or individually with children on specific targets agreed jointly with school. To cope with demand currently, Bucks are using The Owl Centre, to deliver therapy. This is delivered online via Teams.
Specialist Teaching Service	The Specialist Teaching Service (STS) aims to give school-based staff across the county the appropriate skills to enable them to meet the varied SEND needs of Buckinghamshire Pupils. This is done through a range of appropriate training delivered by a trained specialist in different areas of SEND.
Educational Psychology Service	We offer a consultation service to schools where a student's learning and/or development is giving significant cause for concern despite early intervention. Parental consent is essential for our involvement.
Virtual School	This is a team who are there to ensure that Looked After Children (LAC) and children who have left care achieve their full potential at school.
CAMHS	CAMHS helps young people overcome emotional difficulties in their lives.
Pupil Referral Unit (Aspire)	Provide Outreach support as well as Engagement Programmes. Also facilitate home tuition.

Child Bereavement UK	Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals both when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, and when a child is facing bereavement. Every year we train more than 10,000 professionals, helping them to better understand and meet the needs of grieving families.
amily Support Service	The Family Support Service is a new service designed to improve the lives of children, young people and families. The Family Support Service has been carefully designed to provide better, more targeted support for vulnerable families who face a range of issues or more complex challenges. The service will provide one-to-one support to families and individuals.
R U Safe	We work with children/young people living in Buckinghamshire aged between 10-18 years old who are reported missing and also with those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
YOS Prevention Services	A bespoke package of prevention programmes tailored to individual vulnerable students
Social Care	Support for families in need.

Engagement with Pupils and Families

How does the school involve children and parents in decisions about provision and support?

The Academy fully respects the vital role parents/carers take in supporting their children and how powerful it can be when working together in the best interests of the child. Parents/carers will be contacted if a student is identified as having SEND and copies of the SEN Passport will be sent home.

We will ensure that parents and pupils are included in review meetings to discuss progress and plan provision. Where this is not possible or where more regular updates are required we will agree with you the best way to share information.

Parents/carers/ of students with Education and Health Care Plans are invited to attend Annual Review meetings

Year 8 Options

During Year 8 students begin to prepare for the next key stage and GCSE studies. At this stage in their education, they have the opportunity to study fewer subjects but to a great depth. Students will continue to have a broad and balanced curriculum offer but have the opportunity to select a few 'preferred' options that reflects their interests and abilities.

Year 9 Options

The Highcrest Academy follows a two-year Key Stage 3. During Year 9 students will be given information regarding the GCSE Option process. They will attend a series of assemblies, there will be a Parent Information Event and students will have access to an Options booklet. They will study up to 10 GCSE's depending on their ability. Students will study the core subjects, Maths, English and Sciences. They also have the opportunity to select options from a range of courses, including vocational courses.

For a small minority of students this may include an alternative pathway when selecting options.

Year 11 onwards
The Academy actively promotes and encourages students to become active learners and guides them as they transition into adulthood. Support is offered through Annual Reviews for students with Educational Health Care Plans where preparation for adulthood is considered. There is a comprehensive careers programme in school to guide students towards their chosen pathways. Where required transition support and guidance is arranged.

Supporting Parents
At whole school level the school are also keen to support parents with students with SEND and take their views on how we can continue to develop a positive experience for SEND pupils at the Academy.

Support Available:

- Meeting with the SENDCo to discuss concerns
- Availability of SENDCO at all parent consultation evenings to discuss any issues. There is also a dedicated SEN Parent Consultation Evening, held virtually, for all year groups.
- Letters informing you your child is participating in an intervention.

Annual parental and pupil surveys to take views on current SEND practice and recommendations for further development.

Arrangements for managing complaints
What should I do if I am unhappy about the support my child is receiving?
In the first instance you should speak to your child's class teacher/form tutor. To allow time to discuss the issues you should contact the school office to make an appointment.

Depending on the nature of the concern the SENDCO and other senior leaders may attend this meeting or subsequent meeting.

If you are still unhappy and feel matters are unresolved and we feel that we are fulfilling our duties in respect to your child, we will recommend you seek further advice from the local SENDIAS (SEN Information and Advice) and Mediation Services This service is not linked to the school.
Contact details: sendias@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The school can also make arrangements for parents to discuss concerns with other key professionals.

If your concerns are still unresolved we will advise you to make a formal complaint and direct, you to the School Complaints Procedures on the website.

If your concern is directly related to decisions around an EHC plan assessment of needs or provision this will be managed directly by the Bucks CC SEN team.

The Local Offer

Information on Bucks CC Local offer that provides clear, detailed and accessible information about the services and support available for young people and families can be found here:
https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/care-for-children-and-families/local-offer-for-send/

On the Bucks CC Local Offer Page, you can find information about what is available in Buckinghamshire for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Key legislative documents

Children and Families Bill – The Special Educational Needs (information) regulations (Clause 51)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/pdfs/uksi_20141530_en.pdf

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

The Equality Act 2010: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies in maintained schools and academies.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269341/Equality_Act_2010_-_advice.pdf