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Special Educational Needs Information Report

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Dear parents and carers,

The aim of this information report is to explain how we implement our SEND policy. In other words, we want to show you how SEND support works in our academy.

If you want to know more about our arrangements for SEND, read our SEND policy.

You can find it on our website [here](#).

Note: If there are any terms we've used in this information report that you're unsure of, you can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the report.

1. What types of SEN does the academy provide for?

Blackthorns provides for children across a broad spectrum of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. In our academy we support children with communication and interaction difficulties, such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Speech and Language challenges. Within cognition and learning, we support dyslexia, dyspraxia and a range of moderate learning difficulties. In terms of Social and Emotional needs, we support children with ADHD and ADD. We have significant experience supporting children who have suffered infant trauma, adopted children and children with complex emotional backgrounds. Sensory and physical needs are addressed and supported on a bespoke basis. We run a specialist alternative provision facility, 'The Hive' for children who have an Education and Health Care Plan. This provision is available for some children in Key Stage 2.

Our academy provides for pupils with the following needs:

AREA OF NEED	CONDITION
Communication and interaction	Autism spectrum disorder
	Speech and language difficulties
Cognition and learning	Specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
	Moderate learning difficulties
	Severe learning difficulties
Social, emotional and mental health	Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD)
	Attention deficit disorder (ADD)
Sensory and/or physical	Hearing impairments
	Visual impairment

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	Multi-sensory impairment
	Physical impairment

2. Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had?

The Special Educational Needs team at Blackthorns is lead and managed by Anna Montiel, the Inclusion Leader and SENCO. Anna has 25 years of teaching experience across five key stages. She has a strong background in Special Educational Needs, having worked in the field for a decade now. Anna managed the Primary Alternative Provision Unit in Burgess Hill before running the Hive at Blackthorns. She oversees the provision of Special Educational Needs across our academy. Anna obtained the National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination in 2018. She is the deputy Safeguarding Lead and has significant experience working with children across the spectrum of additional needs. She works three days a week at Blackthorns.

We have a team of skilled Teaching Assistants who work either in the Hive, in the classroom on a 1:1 basis. The team know each child in detail and they tailor and adapt strategies on a dynamic and evolving basis. Our Learning Mentor supports the emotional and behavioural needs of the children through therapeutic small group interventions and 1:1 sessions.

Blackthorns also employs the expertise of a private Speech and Language therapist for one morning a week. Additionally we have a psychotherapist from Your Space therapies who works with some of our most vulnerable children on a long-term basis.

External agencies and experts

Sometimes we need extra help to offer our pupils the support that they need. Whenever necessary we will work with external support services to meet the needs of our pupils with SEN and to support their families. These include:

- Speech and language therapists
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- GPs or paediatricians
- Academy nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services and other LA-provided support services
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Autism and Social Communication Team
- Learning Behaviour Advice Team

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3. What should I do if I think my child has SEN?

Tell us about your concerns

We will invite you to a meeting to discuss them

We will decide whether your child needs SEN support

If you think your child might have SEN, the first person you should tell is your child's teacher. Teacher's can be contacted by email or by calling the academy office on 01444 454866 and requesting a call back. They will pass the message on to our SENCO, Anna Montiel, who will be in touch to discuss your concerns. You can also contact the SENCO directly on a.montiel@blackthornsprimaryacademy.org.uk

We will meet with you to discuss your concerns and try to get a better understanding of what your child's strengths and difficulties are.

Together we will decide what outcomes to seek for your child and agree on next steps.

We will make a note of what's been discussed and add this to your child's record. You will also be given a copy of this.

If we decide that your child needs SEN support, we will formally notify you in writing and your child will be added to the academy's SEND register.

4. How will the academy know if my child needs SEN support?

All our class teachers are aware of SEN and are on the lookout for any pupils who aren't making the expected level of progress in their schoolwork or socially. These indicators include attainment in baseline assessments, phonics screening

If the teacher notices that a pupil is falling behind, they try to find out if the pupil has any gaps in their learning. If they can find a gap, they will give the pupil extra tuition to try to fill it. Pupils who don't have SEN usually make progress quickly once the gap in their learning has been filled.

If the pupil is still struggling to make the expected progress, the teacher will talk to the SENCO, and will contact you to discuss the possibility that your child has SEN.

The SENCO will observe the pupil in the classroom and in the playground to see what their strengths and difficulties are. They will have discussions with your child's teacher/s, to see if there have been any issues with, or changes in, their progress, attainment or behaviour. They will also compare your child's progress and development with their peers and available national data.

The SENCO will ask for your opinion and speak to your child to get their input as well. They may also, where appropriate, ask for the opinion of external experts such as a speech and language therapist, an educational psychologist, or a paediatrician.

Based on all of this information, the SENCO will decide whether your child needs SEN support. You will be told the outcome of the decision in writing.

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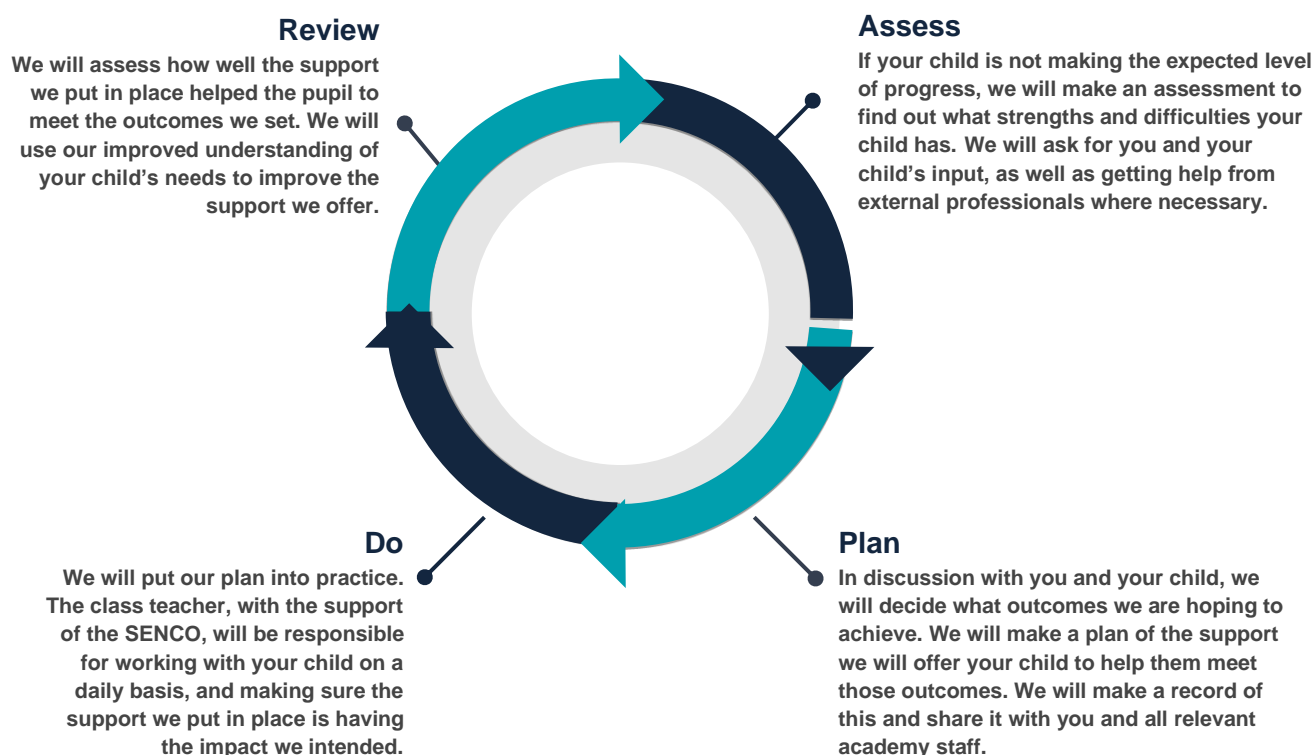


If your child does need SEN support, their name will be added to the academy's SEN register, and the SENCO will work with you to create a SEN support plan for them.

5. How will the academy measure my child's progress?

We will follow the 'graduated approach' to meeting your child's SEN needs.

The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.



Whenever we run an intervention with your child, we will assess them before the intervention begins. This is known as a 'baseline assessment'. We do this so we can see how much impact the intervention has on your child's progress.

We will track your child's progress towards the outcomes we set over time and improve our offer as we learn what your child responds to best.

This process will be continual. If the review shows a pupil has made progress, they may no longer need the additional provision made through SEN support. For others, the cycle will continue and the academy's targets, strategies and provisions will be revisited and refined.

As a part of the planning stage of the graduated approach, we will set outcomes that we want to see your child achieve. All children on our SEND register have an Independent Learning Plan which contains a target sheet for that term. The ILP contains evidence of progress towards that target.

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6. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?

We offer termly SEND Consultation evenings. The purpose of this meeting is to agree a set of three SMART targets which your child will then work on for an agreed period of time. Teachers work in close collaboration with parents and Mrs Montiel to design an appropriate plan of support. Progress reports are sent out termly. An important part of this conversation is the support that parents offer at home to enhance progress. We are always available to re-evaluate these targets and to discuss your child's progress.

7. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?

The level of involvement will depend on your child's age and developmental stage. We recognise that no 2 children are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input. As part of the Independent Learning Plan monitoring system, there is an opportunity for children to reflect on their progress towards targets, on a weekly basis. Pupil voice is very important at Blackthorns and we regularly discuss children's targets with them.

8. How will the academy adapt its teaching for my child?

Your child's teacher/s is/are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class.

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs. We will make sure that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum in every year they are at our academy.

We will differentiate (or adapt) how we teach to suit the way the pupil works best. There is no '1 size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child.

These adaptations include:

- Differentiating our curriculum to make sure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1-to-1 work, adapting the teaching style or content of the lesson, etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Teaching assistants will support pupils on a 1-to-1 basis when an that pupil has this level of support stipulated in their Education and Health Care Plan.
- Teaching assistants will support pupils in small groups when small group intervention is needed to consolidate learning.

We may also provide the following interventions:

AREA OF NEED	CONDITION	HOW WE SUPPORT THESE PUPILS
Communication and interaction	Autism spectrum disorder	Visual timetables Social stories

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	Speech and language difficulties	Speech and language therapy Speaking and Listening games
Cognition and learning	Specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia	Writing slopes ABC dictionaries Coloured overlays / different coloured paper Voice to text software Clickr 8
	Moderate learning difficulties	
	Severe learning difficulties	
Social, emotional and mental health	ADHD, ADD	Quiet workstation Sensory breaks Sensory Circuits
	Adverse childhood experiences and/or mental health issues	Nurture groups Learning Mentor support
Sensory and/or physical	Hearing impairment	
	Visual impairment	Limiting classroom displays Adapted classroom – yellow highlighting / textured key items – eg – pegs.
	Multi-sensory impairment	
	Physical impairment	

These interventions are part of our contribution to West Sussex's local offer.

9. How will the academy evaluate whether the support in place is helping my

We will evaluate the effectiveness of provision for your child by:

- Reviewing their progress towards their goals each term at SEND Consultation evenings.
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after 6 weeks and monitoring work in ILP books.
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO

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- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding an annual review (if they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan)

10. How will the academy resources be secured for my child?

The school budget received from the Local Authority includes money for supporting pupils with SEN. The Leadership Team decides on the budget for SEN in consultation with school governors and based on the needs of pupils in the school. Our reviewing process, which completes the cycle of ‘assess, plan, do and review’ looks closely at any intervention in terms of greater inclusion for a child and best use of resources. Sometimes children need extra equipment, more teaching assistant hours or external specialist expertise. We seek additional funding from the Local Authority when the budget needs exceed £6000.

11. How will the academy make sure my child is included in activities alongside pupils who don't have SEND?

All pupils are encouraged to go on our academy trips, including our residential trip to the Isle of Wight and Bowles. All pupils are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including sports day, school productions, special assemblies and workshops.

School trips are planned with regard to the needs of all children. Risk assessments are carried out for school visits including residential trips and reasonable adjustments will be made where required. Where needed, the risk assessment would include a meeting with parents as well as taking account of any medical advice. On some occasions an individual member of staff may be assigned to support a small group or individual child if the risk assessment indicates that this is necessary.

After school clubs are available to all pupils. Vulnerable pupils are given priority and adjustments will be made to support their participation. Health and safety audits are conducted to ensure that the school provides a safe environment for all pupils.

12. How does the academy make sure the admissions process is fair for pupils with SEN or a disability?

- All pupils/students with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the academy will be admitted to the academy before any other pupils/students, if we feel that we can meet the needs of that child.

Oversubscription criteria are not based on any factor which would unfairly disadvantage prospective pupils with a disability or special educational needs – further details are published on the Trust website [here](#)

13. How does the academy support pupils with disabilities?

We have a disability and accessibility action plan and policy that is available on request. There are limitations to both our site and buildings, and whilst we do our very best to meet the needs of children with physical disabilities, it has to be recognised that our physical environment presents us with some difficulties, that may need to be discussed personally.

14. How will the academy support my child's mental health and emotional and social development?

We provide support for pupils to progress in their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils with SEN are encouraged to be part of the academy council



- Pupils with SEN are also encouraged to be part of extra-curricular club to promote teamwork/building friendships
- We provide a Learning Mentor who works 1:1 and in small groups with children. She is responsible for supporting the emotional needs of the children.
- We run a Lunch Club for children who require extra support during lunchtime.
- We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying. We prevent bullying in the academy by encouraging our Ready, Respectful, Safe policy.

15. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings or in preparing for adulthood?

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEN and take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible. The key is good communication with those involved and working with the child to dispel their concerns with practical measures such as extra visits.

Between years

Within school, teachers work closely with the learning mentor as necessary to support transition between classes. A transition book providing photographs of the new setting and people involved can make a huge difference to a child over the summer holidays.

Records of all previous provision, targets, achievement and interests follow the child through the school, so that new teachers have a very good picture of the child's strengths and weaknesses as they start the new term. This gives them some time to review and prepare the future provision at the autumn half term, and then around the spring and summer half term. Termly meetings assess data and outcomes achieved and aim to put in place the necessary provision to achieve the next steps. Should your child change schools during their primary journey, detailed information will be shared with their next school.

Between schools

In Reception, there are induction events during the summer term for all children who are joining the foundation stage in September and visits to family homes by the Reception teacher and teaching assistant. A child entering school with identified special educational need or disability may require a visit to their Nursery setting by the class teacher and SENCo. Transition points are always discussed at annual reviews, and a joint meeting across agencies is called if there are complex issues, which need to be addressed.

Between phases (for primary academies)

The SENCO of the secondary academy will come into our academy for a meeting with our SENCO. They will discuss the needs of all the children who are receiving SEN support. Pupils will be prepared for the transition by practising with a secondary academy timetable, learning how to get organised independently and by plugging any gaps in knowledge

16. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEN?

Teachers and parents will work with Anna Montiel, our SENCO, to make sure that all teachers understand how a looked-after or previously looked-after pupil's circumstances and their SEN might interact, and what the implications are for teaching and learning.

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Children who are looked-after or previously looked-after will be supported much in the same way as any other child who has SEND. However, looked-after pupils will also have a personal education plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEN support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

17. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?

Complaints about SEN provision in our academy should be made to the SENCo in the first instance. They will then be referred to the Trust Complaints policy which can be seen [here](#)

If you are not satisfied with the academy's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

If you feel that our academy discriminated against your child because of their SEND, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-academy/disability-discrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal. Details of how to contact this service can be seen [here](#)

18. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEND, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at West Sussex local offer. West Sussex Local Authority publishes information about the local offer on their website:

<https://westsussex.local-offer.org/>

Our local special educational needs and disabilities information advice and support services (SENDIASS) organisations are:

<https://westsussex.local-offer.org/services/7-sendias-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-information-advice-and-support-service>

National charities that offer information and support to families of children with SEND are:

- [IPSEA](#)
- [SEND family support](#)
- [NSPCC](#)

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➤ [Family Action](#)

➤ [Special Needs Jungle](#)

19. Glossary

- **Access arrangements** – special arrangements to allow pupils with SEND to access assessments or exams
- **Annual review** – an annual meeting to review the provision in a pupil's EHC plan
- **Area of need** – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a pupil with SEND can have. The 4 areas are communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- **CAMHS** – child and adolescent mental health services
- **Differentiation** – when teachers adapt how they teach in response to a pupil's needs
- **EHC needs assessment** – the needs assessment is the first step on the way to securing an EHC plan. The local authority will do an assessment to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan.
- **EHC plan** – an education, health and care plan is a legally-binding document that sets out a child's needs and the provision that will be put in place to meet their needs.
- **First-tier tribunal/SEND tribunal** – a court where you can appeal against the local authority's decisions about EHC needs assessments or plans and against discrimination by a academy or local authority due to SEND
- **Graduated approach** – an approach to providing SEN support in which the academy provides support in successive cycles of assessing the pupil's needs, planning the provision, implementing the plan, and reviewing the impact of the action on the pupil
- **Intervention** – a short-term, targeted approach to teaching a pupil with a specific outcome in mind
- **Local offer** – information provided by the local authority which explains what services and support are on offer for pupils with SEN in the local area
- **Outcome** – target for improvement for pupils with SEND. These targets don't necessarily have to be related to academic attainment
- **Reasonable adjustments** – changes that the academy must make to remove or reduce any disadvantages caused by a child's disability
- **SENCO** – the special educational needs co-ordinator
- **SEN** – special educational needs
- **SEND** – special educational needs and disabilities
- **SEND Code of Practice** – the statutory guidance that schools must follow to support children with SEND
- **SEN information report** – a report that schools must publish on their website, that explains how the academy supports pupils with SEN
- **SEN support** – special educational provision which meets the needs of pupils with SEN
- **Transition** – when a pupil moves between years, phases, schools or institutions or life stages

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