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SEND information report 2021-2022:  
Inclusion and progress for all

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**SEND Parent Information Report**

“Raising aspirations by breaking down the barriers to enable every student to develop the necessary skills to access learning and the wider world”.

**What are special educational needs?**

“A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.”

Across the trust we provide SEND support for students with significant needs in the following areas:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory and /or Physical disability.

In addition to the excellent SEND provision at Smith's Wood Academy, there are two schools in our trust with resource bases. Fairfax has a resource base for students with a Physical Disability and Bourneville one for students with Hearing Impairment.

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At Smith's Wood Academy we are committed to the principle that **no child is left behind**. This means that we aim for pupils with special educational needs to make progress in line with all pupils nationally. Progress for young people at Smith's Wood means the standard of their academic work, as well as their attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing.

To achieve this we use quality first teaching, clear assessments of students' needs, and individualised intervention, all of which are in line with guidance provided by the local authority and the Code of Practice

If your child is not making the expected progress, teachers will use the 'Graduated Approach' of Assess – Plan – Do – Review to identify teaching and support strategies that can be used to help your child progress. As part of the Graduated Response, we will monitor a child's progress over a minimum of **2 academic terms** in order to determine the next steps for a child with SEND.

The Inclusion and Access department are available at parents' evenings for you discuss any information related to the school or your child. However, if you have any concerns throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## **What needs can be met at Smith's Wood Academy?**

We provide support for students with special educational needs in each of the following areas:

- Communication and Interaction (including Autism Spectrum Conditions)
- Cognition and Learning (including dyslexia)
- Social, mental and emotional health (including ADHD, and anxiety)
- Sensory and /or Physical disability (including hearing and visual impairments)

All of the work of the Inclusion and Access team is in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014). We use the graduated approach of 'Assess – Plan- Do – Review', in response to a pupil's needs. Quality first teaching is always a key part of our provision for pupils with SEND, and lessons are adapted to meet pupils' needs.

**We are a mainstream secondary school of around 1000 pupils. There are therefore a wide range of needs. At the same time, we expect all pupils to spend most of their time in lessons with one teacher in classes of around 20-30 children.**

## How do we identify and assess pupils with SEN?

*The early identification of students with a learning need is key.*

In Year 7, we work closely with partner primary schools to identify students who will be on the SEND Register at Smith's Wood. This ensures that we can ensure a smooth transition to secondary school and meet the students' needs as soon as they start with us in September. Some pupils with SEND, for example those with ASD, or SEMH needs, will be invited for extra transition work. This focusses on the learning more about each pupil's needs, and teaching them the 'Smith's Wood Way'.

Every year, we use screening tools to consider the academic and emotional needs of all pupils, as well as the progress they have made in the last twelve months. If there is evidence from these annual tests that a child is falling behind, we investigate further with specialised assessments and close analysis of school performance.

If a teacher, or parent, believes a student may have special educational needs, they are encouraged to refer the child to the Inclusion and Access department who will undertake assessment. These are based on observations, analysis of school performance, consultations with parents as well as teachers, and specialist advice where appropriate.

A young person is added to the SEND register and parents / carers are informed when;

- a) we are confident that a young person has greater difficulty in learning than their peers, and
- b) they are receiving support additional to / different from that which is normally

**Who is our special  
educational needs  
co-ordinator  
(SENDCo)**

**How can he/she be  
contacted?**

available.

**Pal Bagry; SENDCo**

[p.bagry@smithswood.fmat.co.uk](mailto:p.bagry@smithswood.fmat.co.uk)

**Sarah McManus; Assistant SENDCo**

[s.mcmanus@smithswood.fmat.co.uk](mailto:s.mcmanus@smithswood.fmat.co.uk)

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**What is our approach  
to teaching pupils  
with SEND?**

Quality teaching and excellent relationships are the keys to meeting young people's needs at Smith's Wood Academy. Teachers take account of students' needs, and make adjustments to ensure learning is accessible.

Our teaching for excellence model encourages lessons to be engaging, varied, and inclusive. The government's basic standards that form a part of every teacher's annual review require staff to account for and meet children's needs.

We believe in a relational approach at Smith's Wood, which aims to build effective relationships across the school. We understand that learning is a social activity, and that young people cannot learn when under stress. Therefore we employ 'emotion coaching' as an approach across the school to develop a positive environment, and enhance emotional literacy.

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## **What provision is available for students with SEND?**

All teachers are teachers of SEND (SEN Code of Practice 2014). Therefore we are committed to ensuring that all staff have the right skills and strategies needed to support students with a variety of special educational needs and disability. Staff are provided with individual Pupil Profiles (IPP's) for students with additional needs. These highlight the child's strengths and difficulties, as well as provide strategies for teachers to use within the classroom.

Some students will have extra support in lessons from teaching assistants. These colleagues will support your child in accessing learning, and encourage their independence.

There are a wide range of interventions available for students who require further, targeted support. Examples of these include; small group or individual sessions focused on reading and spelling, using Lego to build communication skills, numeracy intervention, teaching breathing and distraction techniques to address emotional needs, and meet and greet sessions on arrival at school.

A small number of students may have changes to their timetable in order to address their special educational needs. There are three pathways in Years 7 and 8.

- A nurturing pathway for 5 lessons per week for students with attachment or identity difficulties.
- An SEMH pathway for 5 lessons per week students with anxiety and other emotional needs.
- A communication pathway for some pupils with an ASD diagnosis for 5 lessons per week.

**Can my child who has special educational needs participate in wider school opportunities?**

We are an inclusive school, and Ofsted recognized this when they visited in May 2019. This means that all pupils are welcome to attend the wide range of clubs, activities, and visits on offer. Reasonable adjustments are always made to accommodate the needs of pupils with SEND. For example, trip organisers are required to complete risk assessments to ensure that students are safe and that their

needs are adequately met.

Examples of some of the extra-curricular activities our SEND pupils have participated in include outdoor education – rock climbing, overnight residentials to the school cottage in Wales, sports day, school sports teams, bespoke swimming lessons, music, link up work with our campus schools Forest Oak and Merstone, and supporting younger pupils as buddies or on transition to Year 7.

**What involvement do pupils have with their education?**

- Log in to record Carrots and claim rewards.
- Talk to form teachers/subject teachers/TAs when they have a problem
- Involvement in the writing of their individualised passports and learning plans, as well as reviews of these.
- Discussions with SENDCo, Assistant SENDCo, and Teaching Assistants about how their education could be improved.
- Feedback on the effectiveness of support and intervention.



**How will I know my child is making progress?**

All of our students have regular assessments and are tracked through a whole school assessment process. Staff collect data on students regularly. This allows us to closely monitor rates of progress. Parents will receive a termly update of their child's academic performance, as well as a summary of their attendance, and behaviour. We can also interpret if your child is making progress by talking with parents, teachers, and the child themselves. These ongoing conversations, and formal meetings, are crucial in knowing how your child is getting on.

There are a range of assessments we use at school to assess needs, and judge the extent of progress over time. For example all pupils in Year 7-9 complete GL assessments annually, which provide information about literacy, numeracy, and attitudes to school and self-esteem. Further specialist tools are used (such as the

Boxall profile, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, and exam access arrangements) where necessary.

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**How will the school support pupils moving between different education provisions?**

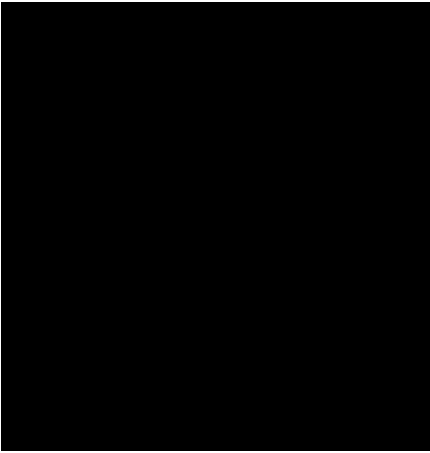
Smith's Wood link closely from Year 5 in some cases with the feeder primary schools. This helps to gain an understanding of the students who will join us in Year 7. It is primary schools' responsibility to ensure that your child's SEND file is sent to the school to ensure that Smith's Wood have a comprehensive understanding of your child's needs. The SEND team will visit primary SENDCos to discuss students so that we have an awareness before they start and can therefore plan to meet their needs. As soon as your child's SEND file is received, we will begin to create their individual learning plan.

All children will participate in the Academy's transition days in July. In addition your child may be invited to attend additional days throughout the year alongside their primary peers to have a taster of secondary school life.

If your child is on the SEND register and identified as vulnerable then they may also be invited to an additional transition morning where we invite parents to come in with their children for a breakfast morning, meet the SEND team and the House teams, talk to us, meet other parents, see the school, meet other children in the school and get further information about what we do. We also encourage the students with some 'getting to know you activities' as well as meeting key members of staff.

Some students will also participate in an extended transition programme where the focus will be on students who may be coming to Smith's Wood and require support to develop their social skills or who will be attending as sole students from their primary school.

*In Year 10 and 11 all students will have access to support from our Careers Advisor, Ms O'Donnell. She will work with them to understand their aspirations and what is*



available Post 16. This process starts in Year 9 in order to help determine which options may be appropriate. Vulnerable students are prioritised. Where possible Ms O'Donnell will provide extra- curricular opportunities for students in areas of interest. For those with a statement of SEND or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Ms O'Donnell will meet with your child and feed into the Annual Review where actions are determined. The school will help support any child with SEND in visiting colleges/employers etc prior to making an application.

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**How will the school support my child's emotional and social development?**

The relational approach we have in school, and our use of emotion coaching demonstrate our commitment to enhancing the emotional and social development of all pupils.

Pupils who have an identified need in this area have access to many types of support. Teaching Assistants work closely with many young people to teach them how to use 'time out' of classrooms effectively. Small groups also work on social skills and emotions with the SENDCo, and other adults. There is a range of mentoring opportunities available through Foundations for the Future. We also employ a number of agencies to provide counselling, and mentoring for bereavement, anxiety, and other issues. We host an ADHD clinic in school, and facilitate ongoing intervention from CAMHS (SOLAR, or Forward Thinking Birmingham). In addition we fund a specialist SEMH teacher for weekly sessions, and project work in school, as well as an Educational Psychologist.

The House system is also part of developing a young person's character. There are four houses at Smith's Wood Academy, based on inspirational people who demonstrate our core values. These are Stephen Hawking, Martin Luther King, Emily Pankhurst, and Rosa Parks. Your child will be involved in house activities on a regular basis, which provides a sense of belonging, and a network of support. In addition each year group has an Excellence Leader, and a Deputy Excellence Leader who provide day to day pastoral care.

## What training or expertise do your staff have?

All teachers are teachers of SEND (*SEN Code of Practice 2015*). Therefore, we are committed to ensuring that all staff have the right skills and strategies needed to support students with a variety of special educational needs and disabilities. Regular training and updates are provided (for example all new staff have a SEND induction, and attend AET Level 1 training). In addition all teaching staff have a clear SEND focus as part of their performance management process.

Teaching Assistants have regular training and support from Local Authority specialists. In the last year, this has included termly supervision with an Educational Psychologist, sessions on reading, writing, and spelling, as well as training focused on mental health and anxiety.

- SENDCo attends the termly SENCO update run by Solihull Local Authority
  - Assistant SENDCo attends termly ASD updates from the Local Authority.
  - There is an Associate with specific responsibility for SEND.
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**What support agencies do you work with?**

Smith's Wood Academy has a wide variety of expertise in house. Alongside the Inclusion and Access team who have extensive experience of a variety of needs, there is also the Behaviour Support team, Safeguarding team, and Pastoral Support team.

Where a child's needs go beyond in-school support, the school works closely with the Local Authority (Solihull and Birmingham) to help support them. Who we work with depends on the nature of the child's needs. Below is a list of the most common agencies we work with:

- Solihull and Birmingham Local Authority
  - CAMHS (Solihull SOLAR, Birmingham Blakesley Centre)
  - SISS – Solihull Inclusion Support Service. We currently buy into the services
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## What should I do if I have a complaint?

from the Communication and Learning Difficulties (SISS CLD), ASD Team (SISS ASD), Physical Impairment (SISS PI), Hearing Impairment (SISS HI), Social and Emotional Mental Health (SISS SEMH). Please click here for links to the 'local offer'.

- LACES – Looked After Children's Education, Birmingham, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire and Solihull
- Meadows Centre
- NHS – Paediatricians and Consultants
- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Engage
- Social Care

Please contact the SENDCo if the complaint is related to SEND provision.

Please follow the standard school complaints procedure. This is found on the school website.

**Where can I find more information or advice?**

- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council [www.solihull.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/localoffer)
- Birmingham City Council [www.birmingham.gov.uk/senparents](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/senparents)
- Council for disabled Children [www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)
- Independent Parental Special Education Advice [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)
- Advisory service for parents <https://www.family-action.org.uk/solihullsendias>
- British Dyslexia Association (BDA) [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)
- National Autistic Society (NAS) [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)
- Autism Education Trust (AET) [www.autismtducationtrust.org.uk](http://www.autismtducationtrust.org.uk)
- RNIB [www.rnib.org.uk/](http://www.rnib.org.uk/)
- National Deaf Children's Society [www.ndcs.org.uk/](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/)

**This is not an exhaustive list, other sources are available.**

**Where can the Local Authority's local offer be found?**

<https://socialsolihull.org.uk/localoffer>



## How can I support my child's learning?

- Visit the school website and the links to relevant information
- Support with study tasks (homework) by asking questions, testing your child for key information, and providing access to further information related to the topics being studied
- Encourage your child to attend extra-curricular clubs, and activities.

## Does my child need to have a SEND diagnosis in order to receive support?

- Know your child's targets from their individual plan, and actively encourage your child to work towards them
- Follow advice given by staff/external agencies
- Attend planning and review meetings
- Read with your child for a few minutes every day

No. Although formal diagnoses may provide us with a greater knowledge about your child's difficulties these are not needed in order to access support. To be placed on the SEND register, a child will display greater difficulty in learning than their peers, and receive some level of additional, or different support in school.

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## How do you ensure access for pupils with Physical Disabilities?

Our building is fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities. We have excellent access to our main building reception, we have automatic front doors, a large circulation space in reception and easily accessible area to the front doors. We have meeting rooms and toilets within easy reach of the Reception area and we can easily accommodate wheel chairs and visitors with reduced mobility around the school. Additional facilities include:

- Disabled toilets throughout the school
- Internal lifts to all floors
- An EVAC chair on both sides of the building in case of an emergency evacuation.
- Ramps to external onsite buildings, dining hall, theatre and sports facilities for easy access.
- Audio Induction loop to assist individual with hearing difficulties.
- Please see you Accessibility Policy for more information.

**What steps does the school take to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than others?**

Below are some of the steps that Smith's Wood Academy take to prevent disabled students from being treated less favourably than other pupils:

- Appropriate Access Arrangements for exams in line with JCQ guidelines.
- Ensuring that all students have access to all school trips. Where adaptations to trips have to be made, for example Geography field trips, these are made with parents / guardians.
- Monitoring of attendance and early intervention to support if there are any long, planned absences.
- House events that are accessible to all, irrespective of need.

**How will you let me know about my child's support?**

We are committed to excellent communication with parents, and carers. This takes many forms, and includes the following;

- Annual Parents evenings
- Meet the teacher events in the Autumn term for Year 7 and Year 9 children and families.
- Annual written report
- Termly report on student progress
- Meetings with SENDCo, or TA to review and plan for individual needs.
- Formal letters detailing Exam Access Arrangements for your child, where

**How are the school's resources / funding allocated and matched to children's needs?**

relevant.

- An expectation that staff will return calls, or emails within 72 hours.

The school is funded on a national formula per pupil. Schools are expected to fund the first £6000 from within the school's budget to support pupils with SEN. The school can apply for "top up" funding, based on strict criteria, if it is felt that a child's needs exceed that which can be provided through the £6000. The school uses the funds to put appropriate support in place to meet the child's needs. The SENDCo takes advice from all professionals involved with the child, alongside the views of the parents to decide on the best support plan.

The school has an open door policy and we welcome parental involvement. Parents are kept informed about teaching and other events through regular newsletters, the school website, open days and parent consultation evenings. We always welcome your feedback, so please do contact us at school should you have queries, or questions about your child's progress, or the special needs provision.