



**DARWEN  
VALE**

An Aldridge Community Academy 

# SEN Information Report

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Policy Upholder:	Sharron Pollitt

## **What specialist services and expertise are available at, or accessed by, the school/setting?**

### **Faculty Team:**

**SENCO:** Sharron Pollitt

**HLTA:** Reading Recovery/Librarian: Rose Addicott

### **Level 3 TAs:**

Tracy Warder: Guidance Counsellor and SPLD support

Helen Holmes: PD, VI and HI (Physical, Visual and Hearing Impairments)

Zoe Godby: Emotionally Based School Refuser Programme

### **Level 2 TAs:**

Sophia Sidat: EAL (English as an Additional Language)

Nicola Morini: ASD/Sensory Needs Specialist

### **Mentors - Reflect - Endeavour:**

Jennifer Keeler: Qualified teacher - Endeavour

Rebecca Loudonsack: Pastoral Mentor - Endeavour

Donna Gray: SEMH Specialist/Mentor - Reflect

### **Vison/Aims:**

- Preparation for adulthood is at the centre of the SEND provision at Darwen Vale.
- The SEND Department knows every pupil's Special Education Needs in depth.
- Personalised Provision Plans are co-produced by staff, pupils and parent/carers to meet these needs.
- All interventions, including support by Assistant Teachers, have a direct impact on outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- All provision is reviewed regularly to ensure a pupil is making progress and all identified needs are being met.
- Reviews of statutory plans are robust.
- The involvement of specialists is strategic and planned to ensure pupils' SEN is identified across all four areas of need and staff receive support and advice from specialists which directly improves the quality of SEND provision.
- Pupils with SEND report they are involved in shaping their provision, perceive the benefit of the provision and feel supported as they prepare for adulthood.
- All staff feel they are confident in contributing to SEND provision which is good or better.
- Transition arrangements – both KS2-3 and KS4-5- are strategically planned with a high-profile input from the SENCO and her/his team. Linking directly to robust Personalised Provision Planning.
- Information exchange with feeder primary schools are robust.
- All pupils with SEND participate in a broad and balanced curriculum. Personalised arrangements for access and engagement in enrichments days'/career forums/trips and visits etc. are planned in advance reflecting the needs of the pupils as recorded on their Personalised Provision Plans.
- All departments collaborate in a joined-up approach to ensure SENs are identified, provision is well matched and linked to shared outcomes for pupils

- Pupils with SEND make progress tracked by aspirational personal outcomes.
- Parents/carers report they are very satisfied with the SEN provision at Darwen Vale.
- Pupils feel safe and confident to attend school, knowing that they have the support they require in order to enjoy learning

### **Interventions - How they work:**

Pre-tests are carried out to identify pupils for interventions. These could include screeners, 1:1 or group tests. Needs and gaps in learning are identified and discussed with teachers and parents before a personalised 6-week program is built and delivered. These are usually in 20 – 45-minute slots so that pupils do not spend too much time out of the classroom. Post-tests are carried out to check progress and next steps are planned for.

### **Where will they take place?**

#### **The Hub**

The Hub is based on the ground floor. This provides a comfortable space with specialists in Specific Learning Difficulties and Speech, Language and Communication Needs, to work on bridging gaps in learning, allowing pupils to fully access their broad curriculum.

Reading interventions are provided for all pupils with a reading age below 9 years old following GL Assessments. These are bespoke to the needs of the student and include: Catch up reading, IDL, Rainbow Reader and Read, Write, Inc. and Inference Training. All interventions are delivered by fully qualified and trained support staff.

The Hub also houses our school guidance counsellor and mental health support team, EAL support and a safe space for pupils on the Emotionally Based School Refuser programme. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDSCO) is a qualified Mental Health First Aider, and can also be accessed in The Hub.

#### **Classroom Support**

Whilst we value some in-class support, we also take our duty to develop pupils into independent young adults very seriously and look to achieve this through Quality First Teaching. We use ICT to support where possible: this could include the use of a reading pen, laptop or voice recognition technology.

All of our classrooms are dyslexia-friendly, language rich environments and our staff are trained in SEMH strategies. The support we offer is based on a satellite model, keeping one to one support to a minimum. Where one to one support is absolutely necessary, pupils are supported in a non-invasive way, guiding learning so that the full curriculum can be accessed by all pupils.

#### **Endeavour @ Vale: A School within a School**

Pupils who find mainstream school challenging are supported by our team of Pastoral staff, mentors and trained teaching assistants. Following a stringent programme of assessment and intervention, a student may be invited to complete a six-week period in Endeavour. The aim is to re-engage the pupil, fostering a love of learning through alternative teaching methods. Parents and carers play a key role in this programme. Students are reintegrated, monitored and supported

carefully as they return to mainstream lessons. The curriculum delivered in Endeavour ensures that pupils have not fallen behind.

## **Reflect**

Pupils with SENs needing a safe space, time out or support with social skills can access reflect with our SEMH mentor. This is a nurturing space to work and learn together. It's also a place to discuss aspirations, hopes and dreams. Some pupils find a full curriculum too much at times. When this is the case, we are able to offer bespoke timetables and alternative learning environments while pupils access the support they need to enable them to return to mainstream learning.

## **Nurture**

The Hub can be accessed from 8:15am in the morning for breakfast and Nurture. We offer this space to pupils on a personalised basis. Some pupils need to access us throughout the day, others just need a safe space with friends at break time and lunch time.

## **What training and experience have the staff supporting children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities had, or are having?**

Sharron Pollitt, the school's SENDCO, has worked at Darwen Vale for over 12 years. She is a strong English teacher who has specialised in SEND since beginning her career. She is a NASEN member and has completed the National SENCO Award. She is also a Qualified Mental Health First Aider.

Sharron is now working towards the NPQSL Award. She believes in life-long learning and reads constantly so that she is always up-to-date with the most effective methods to support the children in her care.

Alongside the Academy's SENDCO is a team of dedicated and highly trained professionals, all accomplished in their areas.

The Academy's Teaching Assistants have chosen to specialise in specific areas of the four main categories of need set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. This ensures that their training is targeted and that pupils receive the best possible support.

Staff are highly trained and accomplished in ASD and sensory needs strategies, Speech, Language and Communication Needs, Specific Learning difficulties.

Two members of staff are also now trained by SEND Support Service to work with pupils with HI.

Our EBSR Teaching Assistant has been trained by the Educational Psychology Team at Blackburn with Darwen and follows a programme written and supported by them. We also have two ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) who have also been trained by the Educational Psychology Team.

Our Guidance Counsellor is fully trained to Level 4.

Classroom teachers receive regular professional development training so that they are fully skilled to work with the needs of the pupils in the school. All classrooms provide support for SpLDs (all classrooms are Dyslexia-friendly), SLCN through pre-teaching vocabulary, and are SEMH friendly. The SENDCO and SEND Support Team continue to provide CPD for all members of staff.

Teaching Assistants attend the same training as the Academy's teaching staff to ensure that we work as a team around your child.

## **How do you know if my child/young person needs extra help?**

When pupils transition in year 7, we test using CATS (Cognitive Ability Tests), Reading and Spelling Assessments. These are analysed and personalised and appropriate interventions are initiated where required.

Pre-tests are carried out to identify pupils for specific interventions. These could include screeners, 1:1 or group tests. Specific needs and gaps in learning are identified and discussed with teachers and parents before a personalised 6-week program is built and delivered. These are usually in 20 – 45 minute slots so that pupils do not spend too much time out of the classroom.

Post-tests are carried out to check progress and next steps are planned for.

If it is felt that a pupil would benefit from additional support, this is discussed with pupils, parents and teachers.

We may decide to refer to an external professional for additional support and advice.

## **What should I do if I think my child/young person may have special educational needs?**

As parents, your input is incredibly valuable for the effective support of your child.

If you have concerns, you should contact the school SENDCO, Sharron Pollitt. She will listen to your concerns and advise you of the next steps. This may include some testing in school or a referral to an appropriate professional. Either way, you will be fully involved at all stages of the process.

If you require further advice or support, you can contact SENDIASS and speak to Jane Partington. She has close links to Darwen Vale and can attend any meetings with you for support.

## **How will staff support my child/young person?**

### **What Provision can we offer?**

- Break/Lunchtime nurture groups
- In-class support where required
- Reading Recovery support at the appropriate level
- Academic Mentor support
- Breakfast or homework clubs
- 1:1 or Group withdrawal for intervention
- An Alternative Curriculum Pathway or Personalised timetable
- Recovery Time card to access a school mentor or Reflect
- Toilet or Medical Pass
- Access to counselling or a designated Mentor
- Access to outside agency support such as an Educational Psychologist, East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Services or the SEND Support Service
- A referral to Endeavour – our School Within a School. This would follow a full PSP and SNAP assessment
- EBSR Support programme
- ELSA interventions
- Guidance counselling
- Dyslexia friendly strategies in all classrooms
- Pre-teaching vocabulary in all classrooms
- SEMH friendly classrooms
- Physical support for pupils with PDs
- Laptops and IT support for pupils who require it to access lessons

The National Curriculum sets out three key principles for inclusion, to be considered at all levels of curriculum planning:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to students' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students

At the Academy we aim to provide a universal graduated response which includes a range of strategies along the continuum of SEND. All staff have been trained to deliver this response.

In the classroom, teachers provide programs of work that are matched to each student's ability. If, despite these inclusive strategies, the student is experiencing significantly greater difficulty in accessing the National Curriculum than their peers, increased levels of support will be provided.

The stages of the graduated response are as follows:

### **WAVE 1:**

Class Teacher/Form Tutor/Parent identifies a need.

- Academic
- Emotional

- Attendance

**PLANNING STAGE:**

Class teacher to communicate with: Subject lead, pastoral team, SENCO, parent depending on the nature of the need e.g. behaviour, emotional, academically low ability.

**Teacher asks SENDCO for support and strategies**

**DO STAGE:**

Class teacher implements classroom -based interventions

**REVIEW STAGE:**

Half termly Review of impact to be carried out with class teacher and Subject lead, pastoral team and SENCO. If the intervention was successful, continue to monitor and log outcomes. If unsuccessful, a Cause for Concern is logged with the SENDCO and pupil graduates onto level 2.

**WAVE 2:****ASSESS STAGE:**

Refer to SENDCO. Class teacher to indicate the need, interventions tried and outcomes.

**ASSESS/PLAN STAGE:**

Further testing will be carried out by SENDCO for SEMH, SpLD, SLCN and a plan/ILP written if necessary/PSP/SNAP.

**DO STAGE:**

Class teacher, TAs & Pastoral Staff (as required) will implement the plans using strategies provided – monitor and log outcomes.

**REVIEW STAGE:**

Half termly Review with SENDCO (Including PSP Reviews). If interventions have been successful, continue and log. If unsuccessful, continue to Wave 3

**WAVE 3:****ASSESS STAGE:**

Support will be sought by a referral to an outside agency: ELCAS, GP, Pediatrician, SEND Support Service, Speech and Language, advisory teachers or Social Care who will supply strategies.

**PLAN STAGE:**

ILP will be updated and distributed to staff on class charts.

**DO STAGE:**

Relevant staff (teachers, TAs, Pastoral) implement advice and strategies.

**REVIEW STAGE:**

Half termly Review with SENDCO, teachers and Pastoral. Parents involved.

**Next Steps:**

If unsuccessful, referral to Educational Psychologist will be considered for further strategies. These will be implemented for a further half term before reviewing again.

At this stage, we can consider an application for an Educational Health Care Plan. This provides funding to implement further strategies for support.

**Students with IPRA's (Individual Pupil Resourcing Agreements - until they are phased out)**

The Academy receives funding from the LEA for students with IPRA's. This funding has traditionally been used to provide in-class support from a Support Assistant for the student; however, changes to the funding arrangements mean that this can be more flexible e.g. buying specialist equipment or offering a personalised curriculum.

Students who have an IPRA will have an Individual Learning Plan which outlines key information and the intervention that is in place. This is a planning document, highlighting the students' learning and/or behavioural needs and suggesting the possible provision to overcome these needs.

Copies of the ILP are sent to all of the child's teachers via Class Charts and parents/carers and pupils are asked to comment on these. The ILP is reviewed termly. All ILPS are written and updated by the SENDCO and her specialist team.

**Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

An EHCP outlines a student's needs in terms of Education, Health and Social Care.

*How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?*

Students in the Academy follow the National Curriculum. The Academy's 'core business' is teaching and learning and we ensure that this is of the highest standard.

Some of the main differences noticed by the students are in how the curriculum is structured, the regular assessment and emphasis on themes of entrepreneurship. The Academy curriculum provides entrepreneurship both as a discrete subject and as a theme underpinning every area of the curriculum.

Students who struggle to access mainstream curriculum pathways are supported in a number of different ways.

1. The first stage of differentiation is quality first teaching as described in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. All staff are provided with information and guidance on teaching and supporting each individual child and their differing needs via Class Charts. If a child is still struggling to make progress, the SEND department will provide training or additional resources for members of staff.
2. Stage two involves specific targeted intervention and support for individual students and/or groups of students. This may involve the use of specialist equipment, in class support or withdrawal intervention. Our EBSR Teaching Assistant may initiate the EBSR programme. A SNAP assessment will be carried out and a PSP put into place.
3. Stage 3 may involve a referral to Endeavour. Any changes to a student's curriculum will be discussed in full with the students and their parents/carers.

Further advice is sought where appropriate from outside agencies to ensure that the curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the students' needs.

### **How will the curriculum be matched to my child's/young person's needs?**

Pupils are placed in groups which reflect their ability, confidence and nurture requirements.

Each pupil is an individual and wherever possible, we will personalise timetables accordingly.

Staff will differentiate and, importantly, extend learning as appropriate.

### **Extend learning:**

We value reading highly at Darwen Vale and work hard to ensure that any texts used are accessible to all pupils. Alongside this, we monitor reading development closely and encourage children to develop a love of reading and learning.

At the end of Year 9, pupils will be able to choose from a variety of option subjects to study for their GCSEs.

### **How will teaching approaches be modified to support my child/young person?**

All teaching staff receive advice and guidance both on general strategies to support a child's learning (e.g. dyslexia friendly, language rich classrooms) and specific strategies for individual students.

Quality first teaching ensures that classroom practice reflects the needs of the children.

This is monitored regularly via observation, work scrutiny, learning walks and pupil tracking.

Teaching Assistants work closely with teaching staff to plan and adapt learning activities for the needs of the different students.

### **How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing?**

The Academy's whole school approach involves termly progress updates and an annual written report.

Parents are also invited in for formal parent's evenings and informal discussions throughout the Academy year.

Additionally, the iClass faculty reviews progress termly through the use of provision mapping and ILPS.

Parents are invited in as part of the review process to discuss progress and set future targets.

For some students, more regular, informal updates have been the key to successful communication. This can be done by telephone or email.

Students with IPRA's or Education, Health and Care Plans will have a statutory annual review led by the school where all stakeholders are invited.

### **How will you help me to support my child/young person's learning?**

We are here for you as well as your child. The SEND Team can signpost you to a number of professionals who can help you in supporting your child's learning and well-being. We are always just a phone call away.

We use a classroom tool at Darwen Vale called Class Charts. It is an online system which teachers use to not only track achievement and behaviour throughout the school day but also homework and detentions.

We firmly believe in working closely with parents/carers and one of the key benefits of using 'Class Charts' is that we are able to securely share your child(s)' achievement and behaviour with you, keeping you up-to-date in real-time.

Students are also able to see their own progress and reflect on their achievement and behaviour.

Each student will be provided with a unique access code to the system and full details of how to log in will be provided.

*We strongly recommend that all parents log in frequently to monitor behaviour and progress.*

Once you have created an account and are logged in, if you have more than one child in the Academy, you can enter additional codes.

More information for parents can be found on the guide that that is attached to this page.

Links to mobile phone apps are also available to parents from this page [www.classcharts.com/parent/login](http://www.classcharts.com/parent/login)

### **What support will there be for my child's/young person's overall wellbeing?**

Alongside nurture, before and during the school day, and the after-school clubs, we have a team of mentors and counsellors who can support your child. We also have two senior members of staff who are Mental Health First Aiders and who are trained to Level 4 in Safeguarding. All Pastoral staff also hold a Level 4 Safeguarding qualification and are able to refer pupils to the Mental Health Support Team.

We deliver assemblies for the whole school to make pupils aware of the support available to them. .

#### **External support**

A wide-ranging team including the SENDCo, Safeguarding Lead and Heads and Assitant Heads of year co-ordinate links with professionals such as:

- The Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Our School Counsellor
- Youth Zone
- ASU
- ELCAS
- School nurses
- Social care teams
- Educational Psychologists
- WISH

and many other support agencies.

## **What activities will be available for my child/young person?**

We fully expect that pupils with SEND at Darwen Vale are able to and encouraged to access the same extra-curricular activities as those without additional needs.

We have an accomplished Faculty of Arts who run a range of extra-curricular clubs. At present these include:

- Dance – the Academy's shows are well-known in the community
- Drama
- Sports including football, rugby, table-tennis, trampolining, netball etc.

We also offer:

- Language clubs
- Homework support with our HLTA/mentors in the library after school where pupils can access computers and printing facilities

In addition, some pupils with SEND are invited to join our Nurture groups at break and lunch times where they can access computers, board games and a safe space with support.

## **How will you prepare and support my child/young person during transitions?**

The SENDCO will attend Year 6 Reviews at primary schools for pupils who are highlighted as needing additional support. This is an opportunity for pupils and parents to meet with her to discuss what support may be required.

Our HLTA leads on a transition programme called MOTHS - "Moving on to high school".

- During these sessions, she and other members of our support staff will visit with and work with small groups of pupils in their primary school during the final term.
- If they, parents or primary staff feel that additional visits would be beneficial, we devise a personalised programme to accommodate these.
- This can be as often as the individual child needs to become comfortable in the setting.
- Ideally, these visits begin before three designated Transition Induction Days so that the pupil feels completely at ease and is able to access all that is on offer.

The MOTHS programme allows pupils to begin to know some names and faces at high school. We then ensure that these staff are on hand during Induction days and for as long as necessary from the September term. MOTHS continues for the first six weeks in September for a fully wrap around transition process.

For those pupils who are still struggling in September, we can offer Nurture on a full-time, part-time or pop-up basis.

### **How are resources and equipment allocated and matched to my child's/youngperson's needs?**

At the Academy we adopt a graduated response to students' needs. Any additional resources (including support staff) are allocated on a needs basis with full discussion with parents/carers and the student. The Academy receives funding from the Department of Education to provide support for students with additional needs.

For high needs students, individual top-up funding is provided from the Local Authority. This is to ensure that their specific needs are met. Annual reviews give opportunities for parents/carers and students to discuss how resources are utilised and identify any further funding needs.

The Academy accesses global services from a number of providers including education, health and social care. The referral to these services are discussed with parents/carers and students. In addition, the Academy buys in services from a number of providers linked to the needs of the students.

### **How are decisions made about what type and how much support my child/youngperson will receive?**

These decisions are made on an individual need basis.

Parents and carers are involved at all stages of this decision-making process.

We will ensure that pupils' needs are met in a way that allows them to retain and build independence for later life.

Please see our school website for further updates.

If you would like to discuss how your child's support has been adapted, please contact Sharron Pollitt, our SENDCO.