

SEND Information Report: September 2024

The following report sets out information about our provision for children with SEND. The report should be read in conjunction with our prospectus as well as key documents and policies that can be found on our website.

About our school

Northern House Academy is a special school for children aged 5 to 11 who have been identified as having Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties. Many of our students have a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and/or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). We also have students who have additional needs such as Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), Cognition and Learning needs (e.g. dyslexia or dyscalculia) and sensory or physical needs (e.g. visual or hearing impairments).

All our students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). SEND is at the centre of everything that we do, and the focus of all our activities.

We are a member of The Gallery Trust: a special multi-academy trust based in Oxfordshire. The Gallery Trust is dedicated to providing outstanding education and support for children and young people with SEND.

How we identify and support children with SEND

- Admissions to Northern House Academy are managed by the Local Authority and all children must have an EHCP in order to be offered a place with us. Please see our admissions policy for further information.
- Assessments for SEND are made as part of the EHCP process which happens prior to entry to Northern House Academy. As part of our admissions procedure we spend time gathering information from families and other professionals to gain an understanding of each child's needs and use this information to begin to plan our provision for them.
- Once at the academy, we take time to get to know each child as an individual and we adapt any initial plans if necessary.
- Each child will have a post admission meeting shortly after joining Northern House Academy. This gives staff and parents an early opportunity to discuss provision in place and make changes if necessary.
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- All our children have Termly Outcome Plans (TOPs) which outline their individual provision and which set achievable targets which are shared with parents. TOPs are reviewed and updated regularly.
- If we suspect that a child has an unidentified SEND in addition to their existing diagnoses, we will speak to their parents/carers before either completing inhouse assessments or arranging for other professionals' involvement.

Joining the school and moving on

- We welcome prospective parents and carers to speak to us prior to beginning the admissions process with the Local Authority so that we can talk about their child's SEND and how we may be able to support them. We also encourage parents to view our website and to arrange a visit to Northern House Academy if possible.
- Transition arrangements are made once the child has a confirmed place at the academy. We make individual arrangements with families to suit the needs of their child. For some children, this means a gradual move to the academy over a specified timeframe.
- In Year 5, the Annual Review meetings focus on transition to secondary school so that the academy and parents can work together to plan a smooth transition.

How we work with parents and carers

- At the beginning of each academic year we ask parents to let us know their preferred mode of contact (either by phone or email) plus how often and when they would like contact. We aim to speak to our families weekly so that strong connections and relationships are built between parents and staff. We also have Positive Communication Books which children take home.
- Throughout the academic year, we hold at least two parents' evenings where we share with parents their child's TOPs. These evenings are important in building trusting and respectful relationships between the academy and families.
- We also hold a formal Annual Review of each child's EHCP with parents and other professionals. This meeting is chaired by the Headteacher or a Deputy Head.
- We encourage families to speak to us about any concerns they may have with their child's provision and support at the academy at an early stage so that we can work together to put things right if necessary.

- We work with families to resolve any issues or concerns. If a family feels that a concern is not being resolved to their satisfaction, we encourage them to use our Complaints Policy which is available on the academy's website.

Adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of our students

- We believe that all our students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. We therefore strive to ensure that students are able to access all areas of learning at the academy.
- As a special school we recognise that our students will require a curriculum that meets their needs, as such the balance of our curriculum reflects the need for increased opportunities for communication and interaction, mathematics, English, PSHE and PE and sport.
- All students have an EHCP or TOPS linked to their learning in all core subjects. Please see the 'Curriculum' section of the website for more information about how we adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of our students.

How our students are helped to access activities beyond the classroom

- All children are supported in being able to access activities and trips beyond the school. We know that for some children being out of their usual routine or environment may be challenging, therefore we plan for this as best we can and involve children in the planning as far as possible.
- We produce detailed risk assessments for any activities that take place outside the usual timetable or if we take children off the school site. These risk assessments give us the opportunity to proactively plan for any likely hazards or concerns which could impact on the safe running of the trip or activity.
- One of our most useful life skills activities outside the classroom is swimming lessons. We offer swimming on a rota basis so that all children have the opportunity of participating. Our swimming lessons take place at the local sports centre which is within walking distance of Northern House Academy. Some children need detailed risk assessments to be able to participate in swimming lessons to ensure that they are able to safely take part, however we encourage all students to join in and learn to swim.
- Other activities that our students are supported with accessing include Forest School at Hill End Outdoor Education Centre, and planned visits in the local community for individuals or small groups. We also run trips and visits linked to topics and learning taking place within the school. These are embedded within our long term planning to ensure equitability and consistency of access for all students.

- We ensure any activity outside the academy has a high ratio of adults to students.

How we support the well-being of children at the academy

We support the well-being of children through our curriculum. For example, our Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) curriculum encourages students to learn about their own well-being and safety. Topics include online safety and healthy relationships as part of the Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural and Physical development of our students. During communication and interaction lessons students work on skills which enable them to communicate their needs, wants and dislikes.

The Gallery team and dedicated Gallery spaces support student wellbeing and provide therapeutic support for all students at Northern House Academy. The Gallery team is central to supporting the whole school community by contributing towards a safe learning environment, making provision for students who are out of class, responding to challenging behaviour and running interventions which promote mutual respect, protective behaviours and a wide range of other social skills.

To further support student well-being, all staff work within a Restorative and Values-Led Culture, with Restorative Practices being consistently demonstrated across the school. All staff are expected to positively promote the restorative approaches based on the five restorative principles listed below; these encourage an environment, which promotes mutual respect, the development of good relationships and the need to take responsibility for one's own behaviour. We do not believe in issuing set sanctions in response to incidents that arise in school but believe in working together in a restorative way to identify agreed outcomes.

The five key themes underpinning this work are:

- Everyone has a unique and individual perspective
 - Thoughts influence feelings and feelings influence our behaviour
 - Our behaviour can have a negative impact on others and cause harm; this harm needs to be repaired
 - In the event of harm everyone involved will have needs which must be met to move on
 - Those involved in conflict are the best placed to take responsibility and ownership for problem solving.
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- We work collaboratively with health, social care and other professionals when reviewing EHCPs so that any concerns with well-being and personal safety can be appropriately supported.

- All students are encouraged to attend their Annual Review meeting where they are given the chance to discuss what is working well for them, what areas they may be struggling with and how we can support them. We know that some students find it difficult to attend this meeting, and if this is the case we will endeavour to get their input prior to the meeting.

The expertise we offer at the Academy

- All staff receive induction training followed by ongoing professional development which focuses on SEND and the needs of our children. This is monitored through the annual staff appraisal process.
- We use Team Teach principles to support children in times of crisis. We have a Team Teach Tutor within our Gallery Team who supports consistent refinement and application of Team Teach principles across the school.
- Our Pastoral and Operations Lead (PaOL) and Therapeutic Support Worker (TSW) have a sophisticated understanding of supporting students with complex SEMH needs, which has been developed via the completion of a Foundation Degree in Therapeutic Care for Children and Young People. This degree is accredited by the University of West of England and delivered by The Mulberry Bush School.

How we know if SEND provision is effective

- We use parent and student voice to monitor the effectiveness of our provision. This can be via informal conversations, by our frequent parent questionnaires or by feedback at student council meetings.
- In-house assessment procedures and progress data are monitored and analysed by SLT and trustees on a frequent and timetabled basis.
- We use our Annual Review process including scrutiny of TOPs to review the effectiveness of our SEND provision.

Who to contact for further information?

If you require further general information about the academy and our provision for SEND, please first look at our website on www.northernhouseacademy.co.uk or contact us on office@northernhouseacademy.co.uk

For all other information about SEND please see Oxfordshire's Local Offer www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/special-educational-needs-and-disabilitylocal-offer