HIGHDOWN SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM CENTRE

SEN Information Report – September 2026

Highdown is a fully inclusive mainstream Academy within Reading Bough Council (Brighter Futures for Children BFFC). At Highdown, all students are valued equally, regardless of where their abilities lie, with the Academy being committed to developing 'the best in everyone'. All students are entitled to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is adapted to meet individual needs. Within its aims, Highdown is committed to equal opportunities, with students being encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their academic or physical ability, through the provision of a balanced and challenging curriculum in both content and styles of learning.

Students of all ages and all abilities will:

- Be treated as individuals where their individual needs, interests and aptitudes are recognised.
- Be entitled to have an emerging or evident special educational need identified and assessed.
- Be provided with opportunities for continued growth and development so that they can increase their self-esteem and become confident.
- Receive a balanced curriculum in both content and style of delivery which allow them to make informed choices as they progress beyond the Academy.
- Be encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their abilities.
- Be encouraged to learn through a range of enjoyable and stimulating experiences in an atmosphere where students feel valued, encouraged and safe.
- Learn to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning and actions so that they will be equipped to deal with life after school.
- Be encouraged to see education as a life-long process to the benefit of all aspects of their life.

This SEND Information Report outlines information regarding the ways in which we provide support for all students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in order to realise their full potential, make outstanding academic and personal progress and grow to be equipped for their future lives. Provision may change and develop over time.

The information required to be included in this SEND Information Report is stated in The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 SCHEDULE 1: Information to be included in the SEN information report.

September 2026

Regulation	Question	School response
1. The kinds of Special Educational Needs for which provision is made at the school	*What kinds of SEND do students have in your school?*	Students are identified as having SEND when they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities of a kind generally provided for students of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Authority (SEND Regulations 2014). Students at Highdown have a range of difficulties including Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties and Sensory or Physical difficulties. Highdown has a specialist base for students with visual impairments.
2. Information, in relation to mainstream schools about the school's policies for the identification and assessment of students with special educational needs.	*How do you know if a student needs extra help?*	When your child first joins Highdown, we use information from a range of sources to help identify SEND and other needs. These include information from parents/carers; primary school teachers; end of key stage 2 levels; base line testing; CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test); literacy and numeracy tests; application form information; subject teachers; specialist colleagues and external agencies. Our class teachers, Mentors, Curriculum Leaders, and Heads of Achievement closely monitor the interactions, progress and attainment of all students, including those who have or may have SEND. The continuous monitoring of students during their time at Highdown will further identify students with a special educational need. This identification may come from mentors, subject teachers, support colleagues, Heads of Achievements, outside agencies, parents/carers or the students themselves. If your child needs to be assessed, we will use a range of assessments depending on the area of need. If it is thought a family needs support, we have good working relationships with outside agencies and a referral can be made to them. We follow a staged and graduated approach to identifying and assessing needs, using the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' model. The triggers for intervention could be from the teacher, support colleague or another member of staff, underpinned by evidence about a student who, despite receiving adapted learning opportunities, does not make expected progress. All students with SEND are on the SEND or Additional Needs registers which are accessible to all staff. The SEND register is regularly reviewed. Staff use this information to inform their lesson planning, teaching and student learning activities. Targeted interventions are planned and delivered where appropriate. This may include small group or individual work across a broad range of activities.

3a. How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils	*How will I know that my child is making progress? How do you evaluate provision?*	All students, including those with SEND, are assessed on a regular basis, in accordance with the Academy's Assessment Policy. Teachers formally assess and review progress and attainment 5 times a year which is communicated to parents/carers by a report that is sent home. Additionally, Learning Review Meetings are held once a year when there is an opportunity to discuss progress, attainment and next steps. All students with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) have an Annual Review. SEND students who are on the SEND register will have a review update after interventions. The school has a Quality Assurance process that assesses the effectiveness of Teaching and Learning for all students, including those with SEND and the outcomes of these evaluations are used to create and implement development plans for all aspects of school life. These are regularly reviewed through regular evaluation. Additionally, progress and attainment data for students is analysed for effectiveness and value for money.
3b. The school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs	*How do you check and review the progress of my child and how will I be involved?*	Following each assessment report Curriculum Leaders, Heads of Achievement and Inclusion staff will monitor and review your child's progress and pick up on any subjects where your child's progress is concerning. We will then put any necessary intervention in place. At the next reporting time we will check whether progress has been made. We report regularly to the governors who check and review the work of all departments, including Inclusion. Further information about assessment and reporting can be found here: https://www.highdown.reading.sch.uk/assessment-and-reporting We welcome the involvement of parents/carers and want to keep you up to date and involved with your child's progress. We do this through Learning Review Meetings; email; telephone calls; appointments made with individual teachers; Annual Reviews/review updates (for those on the SEND register). The school provides information for parents through the website; social media; newsletters; Open/Information days; and letters home.
3c. The school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs	*How do teachers help pupils with SEND?*	Our teachers have high expectations of all students, including those with SEND. All teachers will be informed of your child's individual needs and will adapt their lessons to meet these. Students with specific diagnoses with have a Student Passport for sharing of need and best practice with classroom teachers. Teachers have experience and/or are trained in doing this. This may involve using different strategies, more practical/adaptation of resources and activities. This means your child can access the lessons fully. Within school there are a variety of staff roles to help us fully support your child. Where it is felt it is the right thing to do a student may be offered additional help and support, in which case you would be

		informed. There are a range of interventions and additional subject support which are available and should your child need this, it would be discussed with you. When your child is approaching the start of Key Stage 4, if we think it is needed, we will assess and apply for exam Access Arrangements according to the Joint Council for Qualifications exam regulations.
3d. How the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs	*How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?* *How accessible is the school environment?*	Most of our students follow the intended curriculum, however a small number of learners have a more personalised curriculum to match their individual needs, interests and abilities. This may include option choices; alternative provision; additional literacy and numeracy; intervention groups and variation of the number of qualifications studied. Our school is a safe and accessible building, and we do our best to make it welcoming to the whole community. All safeguarding policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place, reviewed regularly, and adhered to by all staff. We have a range of different facilities to help SEND students throughout our school including disabled toilets, a therapy room, ramps, and equipment to help with reading and writing. An Accessibility Plan is in place and available from our school website.
3e. Additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs	*Is there additional support available to help pupils with SEND with their learning?* *How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?* *How is the decision made about how much/what support my child will receive?*	We have a wide range of staff to support pupils and support additional needs they may have, including pupils with SEND. This includes Specialist Teachers; Learning Support Assistants; Pastoral Support; SENCo; EAL Co-ordinator; Inclusion Team; School Nurse; Educational Psychologist and School Counsellor. Resources are allocated based on evidence of need and effectiveness. Students with an EHCP have resources allocated as outlined in their plan. Learning Support Assistants are allocated, where resources allow, to support students in lessons. Staff liaise closely with them to ensure maximum effectiveness. They have a huge range of skills to offer in supporting students directly and indirectly, assisting staff and helping parents/carers. Students with EHCPs will have targets and strategies set by the SENCo. Annual reviews involving the student, parents/carers, subject staff, and other professionals evaluate those targets and strategies. The decision is based on evidence of need and impact.

3f. How the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in the activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs	*What social, before and after school, and other activities are available for pupils with SEND?* *How can my child and I find out about these activities?* *How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?*	A range of academic and extra-curricular clubs are available at Highdown School. These are open to all students, including students with SEND. Additionally, we run a range of activities to support SEND students including Excellence Club, Lunch and Break Time Social Club etc. We also run coursework/revision sessions for older students as and when required. The Extra-Curricular timetable is available on the school's website and students are updated on this through mentor time and assemblies. All children in the school are encouraged to take part in extra activities at break time, lunchtime and after school. Day and residential trips are open to all children and your child's specific needs can be discussed if they wish to join such a trip.
3g. Support that is available for improving the emotional, mental and social development of pupils with special educational needs	*What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?*	At Highdown School we take our pastoral responsibilities seriously. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of student support and guidance. One way we support our students is by assigning them to a Mentor who will (in most cases) remain with them as they progress through the school. This provides continuity and builds a strong relationship between mentor and students. There are additional members of staff who can provide pastoral support, these include: Inclusion Team; School Counsellor; Learning Support Assistants; Heads of Achievement; Safeguarding Officer(s). We also have excellent relationships with several external agencies for example CAMHS and No5 Counselling. We have also recently begun offering Canine Assisted Learning in school and work with a large network of Alternative Provision providers.
4. In relation to mainstream schools, the name and contact details of the SEN co-ordinator	*Who should I contact if I want to find out more about how Highdown School supports pupils with SEND?* *What should I do if I think my child may have a special educational need or disability?*	The SENCo is Mrs J Arnold Contact details: hjf@highdown.reading.sch.uk or telephone 0118 901 5800. Speak to your child's mentor, Head of Achievement or subjects teachers in the first instance.

5. Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and about how specialist expertise will be secured	*What training have the staff supporting children and young people with SEND had or are having?*	We have a Curriculum Enhancement area which is made up of the SENCo, Assistant SENCo and Learning Support Assistants. Within this team we have staff who have a range of experience and training covering various SEN needs including the National SENCo Qualification; CCET (Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing); TEFL; Supporting students with ASD; Supporting students with ADHD; Attachment Issues and CAF training, QTVI and HI. Training is provided to all staff, including teachers and LSAs, as the need arises and there is ongoing training for all staff as well as opportunities to further develop skills. Staff who are new to the school follow an induction programme which includes training and information on SEN. As a school we can call on support from specialist organisations from within the Local Authority as well as Health and Social Care Services
6. Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured	*What happens if my child needs specialist equipment or other facilities?*	As a school we can access a range of services including from the Visual and Hearing-Impaired Team and Disability Team. We are the VI base for Reading, so we have vast knowledge in this area. These services are contacted when necessary and appropriate, according to your child's needs. If you believe your child needs specialist equipment or other facilities, please contact the SENCo or discuss the issue at the next review/parents evening.

7. The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving such parents in, the education of their child.	*How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?* *How will you help me to support my child's learning?*	We need you to support us and your child by encouraging them to fully engage with their learning and any interventions offered by: □ Helping them to be organised for their day (including bringing the right equipment, books and specialist equipment including their laptop, as required) □ Full attendance and good punctuality □ Completion of homework by referring to Class Charts □ Attending Learning Review Evenings □ Attending any meetings specifically arranged for your child. We will support you by having regular communication, through the HOAs, Mentors and SENCo when needed.
8. The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education	*How will my child be involved in his/her own learning and decisions made about his/her education?*	Students are encouraged to take part in Pupil Voice activities; regularly evaluate their work in lessons; attend review meetings; contribute to target setting and review and reflect on their learning and achievements. Student Voice opportunities are regular and ensure that all students are represented in their feedback to school leaders. We encourage students to consider taking on leadership roles in school and are determined to ensure the Student Leadership Team reflects our diverse community.

9. Any arrangements made by the trustee body or the proprietor relating to the from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school	*Who can I contact for further information?* *Who can I contact if I have a complaint?*	Please contact the SENCo for further information. Contact details: hjf@highdown.reading.sch.uk or telephone 0118 901 5800. In the first instance contact the subject teacher or your child's mentor who may refer your concerns to a more senior member of staff if needed. In the event of serious concerns, please contact our Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, Mr D Clawson, via the school office. The school's complaints procedure is available on the school's website and the SEN Governor is named at the bottom of this document.

10. How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils	*What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?*	As a school we can access a range of services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS); Social Care; School Nurse Service; Educational Psychology Service; Connexions; Speech and Language Service; and Occupational Therapy Service. These services are contacted when necessary and appropriate, according to your child's needs. The school works closely with Reading Bough Council and use the Early Help process when appropriate to do so. If you believe your child needs support from a specialist, please contact the SENCo or discuss at the next review/parents evening.

11. The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those for arrangements made in accordance with section 32.	*Who should I contact to find out about support for parents and families of children with SEND?*	Reading Information, Advice & Support Service for SEND http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=VqahHpIA19A Reading Bough Council Special Educational Needs: http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/service.page?id=djWCTbPQ3EE Reading Service Guide http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/home.page Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS): http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/ServiceCatInfo.asp?id=46

12. The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in a transfer between phases of education or in preparation for adulthood and independent living	*How will the school prepare and support my child when joining your school or transferring to a new school or post-16 provision?*	We liaise closely with primary schools and provide additional transition support both before your child starts and afterwards if it is needed. All children receive advice on careers and are encouraged to visit colleges to explore post-16 courses. If additional support is needed this will be put in place. We work closely with our careers team to ensure relevant paperwork is completed for students with EHCPs.
13. Information on where the local authority's local offer is published	*Where can I find out about other services that might be available for our family and my child?*	Reading Service Guide http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/home.page

Key Staff

SENCDo: Mrs J Arnold
Assistant SENDCo: Mrs S Trussler
QTVI (VI Base): Mrs J Arnold plus visiting QTVI
Access Arrangements Assessor: Mrs J Arnold
Inclusion Team: Mrs R Boys (Inclusion Manager), Ms J Holder (Inclusion Advocate & Young Carers Champion)
School Counsellor: Changeable (No5 used as a preference)
School Governor with responsibility for SEND: Professor E McCrum

You can contact any member of staff by telephoning the main switchboard on 0118 9015 800

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