Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report

2026-2027

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PART 1 - KEY INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Open Academy Norwich's SEND Information Report 2026–27. This report sets out how we support students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

At Open Academy, we are a school built on Christian foundations where every young person is valued, supported, and encouraged to thrive. Our vision is to *transform lives* by providing excellent education, opportunities, and care for all, rooted in our belief that every child is unique and has God-given potential.

We are committed to creating a nurturing and inclusive community where relationships come first, and where students are inspired to develop wisdom, knowledge, skills, and aspirations for the future. Through this, we aim to equip all our students to live life to the fullest, both now and beyond their time at the Academy.

WHY IS THIS REPORT SO LONG?!

By law (Children and Families Act 2014), all schools must publish a SEND Information Report on their website and update it at least once a year. The SEND Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (CoP) outline the details that must be included in this report. Because there is a lot of required information, the document is quite comprehensive.

We understand that the length of this report may feel overwhelming and therefore are happy to discuss any part of it to offer more clarity and support. If you would like to discuss any part of it, please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of staff. At Open Academy, we are committed to working in partnership with our whole school community. Throughout the year there will be opportunities to gather feedback from parents/carers, students and staff through questionnaires, but we also warmly welcome your thoughts at any time on how we can continue to improve the support we provide for children with SEND.

The people to contact are:

Mrs Halliday - SENDCo

Mr Bagshaw - Principal

Contact details:

Principal: Mr Bagshaw: Principal@open-academy.org.uk

SENDCo: Mrs Halliday: SEND@Open-academy.org.uk

SRB Lead: Miss Turner: SRB.Lead@Open-academy.org.uk

The above-named members of staff can also be contact via telephone – 01603 481640

In the opening section of this report, we will share some key information about the Academy and the support available within the local area. We will also include the essential details that must be part of every SEND Information Report.

In the second part of the report, we have included a series of questions and answers that families and community members felt would be helpful in making the often-complex world of SEND easier to understand

Please refer to the content's pages of this document on pages 2-3 to support you in navigating this document.

THE LOCAL OFFER

This report is part of the Norfolk **Local Offer** for learners with SEND. The **Local Offer** provides clear information about the services and support available for children and young people with SEND, as well as their parents and carers. It brings together details about education, health, and care provision in one accessible place. To access the Norfolk Local Offer, click on this link: Norfolk Local Offer

SO, WHAT IS SEN?

At different times in their school career, a child or young person may have a Special Educational Need. The Code of Practice defines SEND as:

"A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory academy age, or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream academies or mainstream post16 institutions."

If a learner is identified as having SEND, we will deliver provision that is "additional to or different from" the normal differentiated curriculum, and which is intended to overcome the barrier to their learning.

At Open Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every learner can engage fully with the curriculum and achieve their potential. We identify learners who may be at risk of falling behind and provide timely, targeted support to address their needs. While not all vulnerable learners have SEND, those with a learning difficulty requiring additional, personalised support are formally recognised as having SEND, ensuring they receive the interventions necessary to succeed.

Most children identified as having SEND can have their needs met through the additional support available within school, known as **SEN Support**. However, if a child requires more specialised or intensive support, the school and/or families can request an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment** from the Local Authority (LA). If the LA determines that a higher level of provision is necessary, the child may be issued an **EHC Plan (EHCP)**, which sets out their educational, health, and social care needs in a single coordinated document. In this report, we refer to this level of support as **EHCP**. Further information about EHCPs can be found here.

If you think your child may have a special educational need, please contact a member of the SEND team or Pastoral team for further guidance and support. Alternatively, please refer to Appendix 1, our Flow Chart for explaining the processes of SEND identification of needs.

WHAT IS A DISABILTIY?

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is:

"*A person has a disability for the purpose of this Act if (s)he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*"

Section 1(1) Disability Discrimination Act 1995

This definition of disability in the Equality Act includes children with long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND. Children and young people may therefore be covered by both SEN and disability legislation.

All staff at Open Academy work within the Equality Act 2010. This legislation places specific duties on academies / schools, settings and providers including the duty not to discriminate, harass or victimise a child or adult linked to a protected characteristic defined in the Equality Act, and to make "reasonable adjustments."

Individual medical needs are also identified, and a care plan is agreed with parents/carers, as required.

For more information about the Equality Act, protected characteristics or duties of public bodies, please see https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance.

For further information on how we ensure access to all, please see link to our DNEAT Accessibility and Plan Policy

WHAT IS SEND?

We use the term SEND to cover all students who may require extra help with their learning or have a disability. This includes any additional support needed to help them access the curriculum, participate fully in school life, and achieve their potential.

AREAS OF NEED

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of SEN. These are:

Communication and Interaction
This includes children who have difficulties with speech, language, or social communication. For example, a child may struggle to understand instructions, express themselves clearly, or interact appropriately with others. Conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are included in this category.

Cognition and Learning
This covers children who learn at a slower pace or have specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia. They may need extra support with reading, writing, or maths and benefit from targeted teaching strategies.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
Children with SEMH needs may experience anxiety, depression, attention difficulties, or behavioural challenges that affect their learning and relationships. They often need support to manage emotions, build resilience, and develop positive social skills.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs
This category includes children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, such as hearing or vision loss. These children may require adaptations to the classroom environment, specialist equipment, or support from other professionals to fully access learning.

More information about these areas can be found in the SEND CoP on pages 97-98.

SENDCo

Every school has a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo). This is a qualified teacher whose role is to make sure children with SEND get the support they need to succeed. The SENDCo is trained to lead on SEND and must complete a special qualification called the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within three years of starting the role.

The SENDCo oversees support for children who receive SEND Support and those with an EHCP, working closely with teachers, families, and other professionals to make sure the help provided really makes a difference. At Open Academy, all staff are involved in supporting children with SEND and work together with the SENDCo and SEND team to ensure every child is included and able to “achieve, belong and thrive” (New OFSTED framework 2025).

Our School SENDCo is Mrs Halliday.

Mrs Halliday has the following qualifications:

- BA Hons degree in Physical Education with QTS
- NPQSL
- DSL trained
- Currently working towards NPQ SENDCo Qualification
-

Mrs Halliday is dedicated to developing her expertise and regularly takes part in SENDCo CPD opportunities such as attending, the Zone Inclusion Partnership (ZIP) meetings, Team Around the School (TAS) meetings and participating in the Norfolk SENDCo Now Programme.

Our staff regularly participate in a range of professional training to support the progress and engagement of our SEND students. We have dedicated INSET training days to SEND, led by our SENDCo and Senior Leadership Team focused on the four broad areas of need with the aim of developing and sharing best practice, to support positive impact on student outcomes.

We also commission specialist expertise training in school where a need has been identified, for example, inviting county experts into the academy to train staff in supporting and adjusting for students to prevent learning being impacted. Below is a list of professionals who have provided expertise training to staff to prepare them for this academic year:

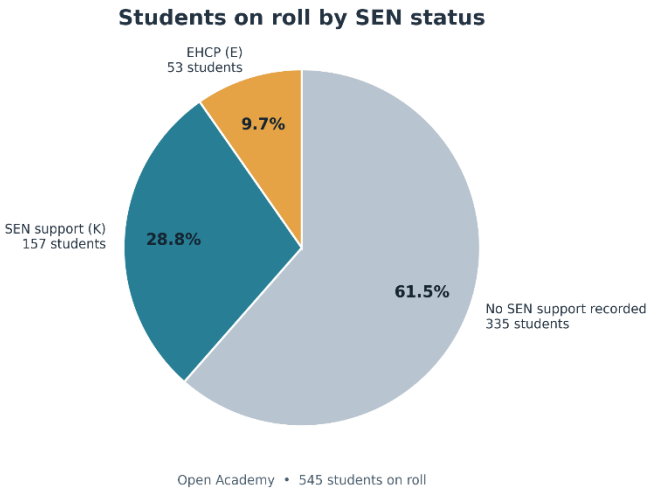
- All Staff received Trauma Informed Training from The Virtual Schools in September Inset 2026

OUR SEND PROFILE 2026-2027

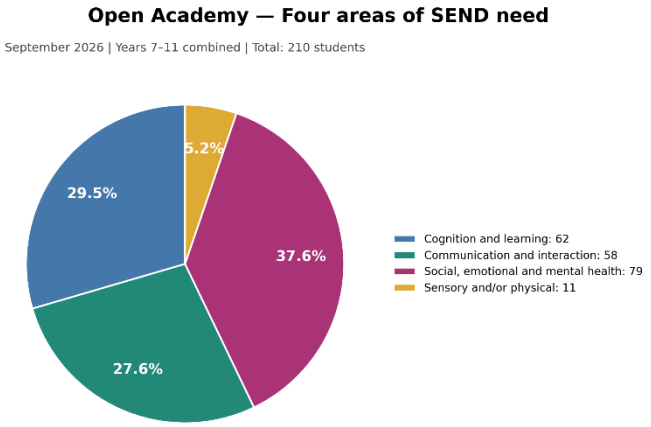
Our SEND profile for 2026/27 shows that we have 210 learners identified as having SEND, with 53 of these students having an Education- Health and Care Plan (EHCP). At Open Academy our SEND students are categorised into four broad areas of need:

Whole School SEND

- Identified SEN –210 Students
- Students with an EHCP – 53
- Students not on the SEN register (including monitoring students) - 335



This below data shows the proportion or percentage of students within each primary need, however, some of our SEND students also have further needs that are not represented in these figures but are supported as part of our provision.



SEND FUNDING

The Government outline information about funding as follows:

"*Mainstream maintained schools and academies (schools') are notified each year of a clearly identified but notional SEN budget, within their overall budget allocation. This SEN budget should be used towards the costs of fulfilling their duty to use their 'best endeavours' to secure that special educational provision for their pupils with SEN is made."*

"The notional SEN budget is not a budget that is separate from a school's overall budget. It is an identified amount within a maintained school's delegated budget share or an academy's general annual grant. It is intended as a guide for a school's spending decisions, and is neither a target nor a constraint on a school's duty to use its 'best endeavours' to secure special provision for its pupils with SEN."

Where individual pupils require additional support that costs more than £6,000, We apply and, in some cases, receive high needs top up funding.

You can find Open Academy's SEN Memorandum for 2025-2026 here:

https://csapps.norfolk.gov.uk/BudgetShare/default.aspx

Further information can be found here on how SEND funding works in secondary schools in Norfolk:

https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40745/SEN-funding-for-schools

Open Academy's Notional Budget is used in a variety of ways to support children with SEND.

Use of the Notional SEN Budget

Below are some examples of how last academic year (2025-2026) Open Academy used our notional SEN budget to support students:

1. **Provided targeted support in the classroom** – This can include small group work, additional teaching assistant support, or specialist teaching strategies.
2. **Purchased resources and equipment** – Resources that help students access learning, such as sensory tools, assistive technology, or adapted materials.
3. **Delivered specialist interventions** – For example, literacy or numeracy programs, speech and language therapy activities, or social skills groups.
4. **Trained and developed staff** – Ensuring teachers and support staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of students with SEND effectively.
5. **Monitored and reviewed provision** – Regularly assessing whether interventions are effective and adjusting support as necessary to improve outcomes.

This academic year we aim to maintain the provision mentioned above with the key principle that the notional SEN budget should be **flexibly and strategically used to ensure that all students with SEND receive appropriate, high-quality support** that enables them to make progress alongside their peers.

PART 2 - Q & A

We often get asked lots of questions by parents/carers and students about what it looks like at Open Academy for students with SEND. We have therefore put together some responses to the FAQ to support. If you have additional questions that you think should be included in this report, please contact the SEND team. We would really appreciate your input.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A STUDENT AT OPEN ACADEMY?

At Open Academy, we are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment where every child can thrive. Our routines, expectations, and structures are designed to help all students feel valued, confident, and ready to succeed. Being a Faith School we value the opportunity that Collective Worship brings to all of our community.

Classes and Grouping

Students are taught in **mixed-ability classes** across most subjects. This ensures that everyone has the opportunity to learn alongside peers with different strengths, experiences, and perspectives, which helps build confidence, collaboration, and respect for others. In **Maths**, students are grouped by ability so they can be taught at the right pace and level of challenge, ensuring no one is held back and everyone has the chance to make progress.

Timetables

We use a **two-week timetable** to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Students receive a hard copy of their timetable, but we also support independence by giving them access through **Microsoft Teams**. Tutors check in with students every morning to make sure they feel clear and prepared for the day ahead. Staff are always available if students need extra help, ensuring no child feels lost or left behind.

Structure of the Day

The academy day follows a **fixed and predictable structure**, which helps students feel secure and reduces anxiety. Each year group knows exactly what to expect, with two minutes provided to move between lessons to ensure students can maximise their learning time in the classroom. At the start of each day, students line up calmly in their tutor groups. This sets a positive, orderly tone and allows tutors to carry out **uniform and equipment checks**—ensuring students are ready to learn and can take full advantage of every lesson.

Tutor Time

Tutor sessions follow a **purposeful structure**, with a strong focus on the academy's core values of respect, aspiration, and resilience. This is a time where tutors not only guide learning but also provide encouragement and personal support, so every student feels included and motivated to succeed. Tutor time builds a sense of community and belonging, helping students to feel that they are a valued part of the academy.

Support Around the Academy

Staff are **highly visible during lesson changeovers**, providing reassurance and guidance as students move around the building. This creates a safe, calm, and welcoming atmosphere where students feel supported. Our aim is to make sure every child is confident about where they need to go and how to behave, promoting independence while ensuring nobody feels uncertain or excluded.

HOW DO WE IDENTIFY CHILDREN WITH SEND?

Teachers, support staff, parents/carers and learners are often the first to identify learning difficulties. At Open Academy, assessment of needs involves all of these stakeholders, with strong emphasis on student voice—captured through discussions to ensure their experiences and preferences shape support and provision. The SENDCo also supports the identification of barriers to learning. In line with the SEND Code of Practice, parents and carers will be informed promptly if a special educational need is suspected and will be involved in discussions regarding assessment and next steps (see Appendix 1: SEND Identification Flow Chart).

Please see below links in relation to our policies for the identification and assessment of students with special educational needs:

- SEND Policy
- DNEAT Accessibility Policy
- DNEAT Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Culture Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- DNEAT Transfer to Secondary Policy

Once a child is identified as having SEND we follow the" Assess, Plan, Do and Review" model (see Graduated Approach section – page 15) and ensure that parents/carers and children are involved at each step. Before any additional provision is selected to help a child, the SENCo, subject teacher, pastoral team, parent/carer and learner, agree on what they expect to be different following this intervention. A baseline will also be recorded, which can be used to compare the impact of the provision. This is documented within a shared support plan for the learner.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT LEARNERS WITH DIFFERENT AREAS OF NEED AT OPEN ACADEMY?

Our staff follow the 'Open Way to Teaching and Learning' at the academy. Teachers plan lessons using an evidence-informed approach using the DFE guidance, the Ofsted framework and via the Education Endowment Foundation and Great Teaching Review, for example to ensure students with SEND can access and be challenged in their learning. At Open Academy, every teacher adapts their lessons to meet the wide range of abilities, interests, and understanding within the classroom – this is known as the differentiated curriculum. When a student is identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), we

provide support that goes beyond this, offering something ‘additional to or different from’ the usual classroom approach. The type of extra support or intervention will always depend on the individual student’s needs and is carefully planned to help reduce or remove barriers to learning. We work closely with students and their families to agree on the most appropriate provision, ensuring it makes a real difference to their progress and wellbeing.

The curriculum choices and what students need to know are the starting point of the planning process, with a focus on the misconceptions that all students could make. Planning is adapted to address this, with tasks carefully ordered and explained to support all students in accessing the content of the lesson. Learning is checked using a variety of methods; retrieval practice strategies such as do now’s, structured questioning, the use of whiteboards for example, allowing in-the- moment learning to be checked and adjustments to be made. Timetabled homework, pre-planned and regular progress folder tasks and examination assessments provide regular feedback on the progress students are making and allow adaptations to provision and interventions to be identified and implemented. Teachers will correct misconceptions, to ensure progress can be made.

Below outlines some of the strategies used for each area of need:

Cognition and learning:

In the classroom, cognition and learning needs are supported through high-quality teaching strategies such as breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps, using visual aids and scaffolding, and providing clear instructions and modelling. Teachers adapt resources to suit different abilities, offer additional time for tasks, and use strategies such as overlearning and repetition to reinforce key knowledge. Teaching assistants may provide targeted support within lessons, while technology and adapted materials help students access the curriculum more independently. Regular feedback and encouragement are used to build confidence and promote progress.

Communication and interaction:

In the classroom, communication and interaction needs are supported by using clear, simple language, visual prompts, and structured routines. Teachers provide extra processing time, check understanding regularly, and encourage the use of supportive tools such as visual timetables, or communication cards (e.g. red/green card). Opportunities for structured group work help students practice social and communication skills in a safe environment, while staff model positive interaction and adapt questioning to match the student’s level of understanding. Where needed, teaching assistants give additional support to help students engage with peers, follow instructions, and express themselves confidently.

Social, emotional and mental health:

In the classroom, SEMH needs are supported by creating a calm, predictable environment with clear routines and expectations. Teachers use positive behaviour strategies, praise, and encouragement to build self-esteem and resilience. Support might include access to a quiet space for self-regulation, structured breaks, or personalised support plans. Staff model positive relationships and provide consistent boundaries, while teaching assistants can offer check-ins to help students manage emotions and remain engaged in learning. Open Academy also has an effective pastoral system where an emotionally available adult can be available for students to talk to, as part of our whole school Trauma Informed approach. Students with identified emotional needs can access targeted support, including referrals to the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and mentoring sessions with ELSA trained staff.

Physical and/or sensory:

In the classroom, sensory and physical needs are supported through adaptations to the environment and resources. This may include seating arrangements that reduce distractions, the use of sensory breaks, or specialist equipment such as writing aids, overlays, or assistive technology. Teachers adapt tasks to be accessible, use multisensory approaches to learning, and ensure instructions are clear and reinforced visually where needed. Staff remain alert to signs of discomfort or fatigue and work flexibly to ensure that all students can participate fully and safely in lessons.

HOW DO WE FIND OUT IF THIS SUPPORT WORKS?

At Open Academy, we regularly check for student progress to ensure every learner is supported in reaching their full potential. Teachers use a range of assessment methods, including classwork, homework, low stake quizzes, and formal assessments, to monitor understanding and identify areas for improvement. Progress is tracked through regular data reviews, where teachers, pastoral staff and SEN staff members work together to spot patterns and provide targeted support. Students receive feedback that helps them reflect on their learning and set clear goals, while parents and carers are kept informed through progress reports, parents' evenings and meetings where necessary This consistent approach ensures that progress is not only measured but also actively supported, helping students at Open Academy to grow in confidence and achievement.

At Open Academy, we know if support is working for SEN students by carefully monitoring both their academic progress and personal development. Teachers and support staff regularly review classroom work, assessment results, and engagement in lessons to check whether the strategies in place are helping students to make progress. We also listen to the students themselves, encouraging them to share how the support feels and whether it is making a difference to their learning and confidence. In addition, we work closely with parents and carers to gather their perspective on the impact of support. Regular reviews of each student's individual plan, alongside discussions with specialist staff, ensure that any adjustments needed are made quickly. This ongoing cycle of monitoring, feedback, and review helps us ensure that SEN support at Open Academy is effective and responsive to each student's needs.

The SENCo and Pastoral teams will regularly review the students' needs and decide if further interventions, external specialist support or a change in approach are needed. One vital way that we review the effectiveness of our SEN support is through the **'Graduated Approach'**. This approach is detailed further below.

HOW DOES OPEN ACADEMY EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVESNESS OF PROVISION AVAILABLE

GRADUATED APPROACH

We follow a four-part cycle known as **'The Graduated Approach'**. This process helps us make sure that the support we are giving is effective. It is important that children and their families are closely involved in reviewing this support throughout the process. The four parts of the graduated approach are: **Assess, Plan, Do** and **Review** and these are explained below:

- **Assess:** we assess using information from parents and other family members, children, school staff and sometimes other professionals. We use a variety of initial assessments which can help us to identify the child's needs so that the right SEND support is given.
  These assessments could focus on any of the four broad areas of need.
- **Plan**: Taking account of the views of children and their families and of the child's needs, we decide what SEND support will be put in place to achieve the desired outcomes. This could be in-class support, interventions or specialist support. It is this part where we set targets and agree what we expect to be different following the implementation of the extra support.
- **Do**: Working closely together, we do what we have planned.
- **Review**: We use assessments at each review point (termly) and compare the results to the initial assessments that we did at the start of the process. This allows us to review whether SEN support has had a positive impact and what needs to happen next. We share this information about progress with families and children at each review point. We do this through pupil progress review meetings and written feedback.

Children, parents/carers and their teaching and support staff will be directly involved in reviewing progress. This review can be built into the intervention itself, or it can be as a formal meeting, where we all discuss progress and next steps. If a learner has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the same review procedures take place, but the EHCP will also be formally reviewed annually and shared with Norfolk County Council.

Through the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle, we closely monitor progress and adjust support. Where ongoing needs are identified, this process can lead to a formal needs assessment.

The SENCo collates the impact data of interventions to ensure that we are only using interventions that work.

For some learners, we may need to seek advice from specialist teams. In our academy and cluster, we have access to various specialist services, but these may have to be commissioned from our academy budget.

Below is a list of Agencies that work with the academy:

- Access Through Technology
- Attendance officers
- Benjamin Foundation
- CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Educational Psychology Support Service (including clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and SEMH outreach workers – Through TAS
- Specialist teachers from EPSS, who are qualified access arrangement assessors
- Nelson's Journey
- Norfolk Early Help
- Point 1 counselling service
- Speech and Language Therapists
- The Dyslexia Outreach Team
- Virtual Academy for Sensory Support
- Just one Norfolk
- Virtual Schools
-

At Open Academy, we use a variety of methods to capture the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to support the best outcomes for students. This includes but is not limited to: SEN Support Plans including Pupil Passports. All sources of evidence capture the voice of the child, parents/carers and teachers. These strategies allow us to capture the child's strengths, interests, areas of difficulty and strategies to support them.

If a child has an EHCP, this is formally reviewed with families annually, in addition to the less formal termly meetings. These students will receive additional funding to support their needs. Further information about EHCPs can be found **here**.

Open Academy monitors the progress of **all** students formally twice a year to review their academic progress. As previously mentioned, we also use progress folder tasks and homework assignments as methods of calendared assessments throughout the year. Progress data is collated by the whole academy and monitored by teachers, senior leaders and governors. Our academy and cluster data are also monitored by the Local Authority and Ofsted.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if a SEN need has not been identified, further support is offered to students to bridge gaps in knowledge. This includes access to homework clubs and possibly other interventions arranged by the pastoral and SEND teams.

Annually we assess the Exam Access Arrangements for our key exam groups. The purpose of this more detailed approach is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to enable the student to achieve the best possible outcomes. At this point as a school we have identified that the student has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the student which is additional and different to what is normally available.

We make sure that all teachers and support staff working with a student know the support they need and the best teaching approaches to use. Using the Provision Mapper and data analysis, we monitor progress and share information with Heads of Faculty and Pastoral Teams. This helps us understand the challenges SEND students face in different subjects and respond in the classroom with effective, high-quality teaching.

We work closely with Norfolk County Council and schools in our local area to identify student needs, monitor progress, attendance, and inform targeted interventions that improve provision and support outcomes for our learners.

HOW DOES OPEN ACADEMY IMPROVE THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS?

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL DO TO SUPPORT GOOD MENTAL HEALTH?

The purpose of the academy is to provide an education which is transformative for every child, developing a sense of self-worth, belief and positivity, inspired by our Christian ethos.

Each SEND student is encouraged to engage in the Open Way. This links both the learning and behaviour of how we do things at Open. This is all underpinned by our core values, which include respect, teamwork, perseverance and courage. Our vision, inspired by Christian values, help to support SEND students and treat everyone as individuals.

We celebrate diversity and differences in our community and foster positive relationships through our positive behaviour policy, focusing on being ready, respectful and safe (The Open Way). SEN students are encouraged and rewarded when taking on student responsibilities such as sports leaders, prefects, library monitors and student council members. These students help shape our academy and support our continued commitment to improvement.

Our pastoral team works together to support the challenges SEN students may face as well as challenge them to become positive role models for the future. The Pastoral team understand the needs of their students as individuals; sign post them to support and liaise with families to provide the upmost care and strategies to help students. Regular contact with parents is also a valuable part of our pastoral care, as we believe promoting positive relationships with home gives student's reassurance that home and school can work together in the best interests of each individual.

We are a Trauma informed school, which alongside our behaviour policy will support students, who have either faced trauma or simply raise the awareness that not everyone enjoys a positive childhood.

As an academy we have access to a wide connection of external support for students. Including the Ormiston Families Mental Health Support Team (MHST), the Schools and Community Team (SCT), and Shaw trust. These services support students who require

further emotional support to help minimise barriers to learning. Assessments of students take place, and advice and support are catered for each individual based on their needs. We also have access to counsellors, Just One and liaise with students' social workers to offer the best support and guidance possible.

Through our PSHE curriculum we develop students' thinking around world issues, life choices and skills they may require for later life. This also covers mental health, healthy choices, and positive friendship and relationships.

HOW DO WE ADAPT THE CURRIICULUM AND LEARNING ENVIROMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND?

At Open Academy, we are committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where every student can succeed. Our structures, curriculum, and support systems are carefully designed to ensure that all learners—whatever their needs—can access the full curriculum and thrive during their time with us.

Class Sizes and Curriculum Access

Students are generally placed in classes of no more than 30, supported by our Published Admission Number (PAN) of 110 per year group.

At Key Stage 3, all information required for learning is shared with students every half term through **Knowledge Organisers**, available on the school website. This enables students to revisit learning at their own pace and helps minimise any gaps in knowledge.

At Key Stage 4, class sizes vary depending on subject choices. Where subjects are particularly popular, where possible additional classes are created to keep numbers lower, especially when large numbers of students with special educational needs (SEN) opt for that subject. Where possible, **additional maths and English classes** are also provided to reduce group sizes and support learners effectively.

Support for Learning

At Key Stage 3, students may be withdrawn from certain lessons to take part in targeted interventions that strengthen their learning across the curriculum. SEN students are carefully distributed across classes to ensure balanced groupings. All classes are mixed ability, and wherever appropriate, students from our Specialist Resource Base (SRB) are included in mainstream curriculum classes. All students are given **full access to the national curriculum**, with adaptations made where required to meet individual needs.

Technology and Accessibility

As Open Academy we embrace technology to make learning more inclusive and accessible:

All students have access to **Office 365**, enabling them to use powerful tools that support learning anywhere, anytime. **Immersive Reader technology** is available to support reading, helping students access texts in ways that suit their learning style. All homework is published on **Microsoft Teams**, making it available in any font, font size, and at any time. Each subject provides **class notes and learning journeys** alongside Knowledge Organisers, ensuring students always have access to clear, student-friendly resources. For students unable to attend due to medical issues, these technologies provide full access to learning and allow communication with teachers via Teams.

Adaptations and Specialist Support

Students with physical or sensory impairments are provided with appropriate equipment, and staff are trained to support their needs effectively. Practical rooms, such as science laboratories, are fitted with **adjustable-height tables** to improve access. The academy's **oncall system** supports students who may need time to re-regulate so that they can return to learning successfully. Students who require lift access can be issued with a **lift pass** following a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). Staircases have been adapted to make them safer and more accessible for visually impaired students.

Our Commitment

Open Academy responds to the needs of every student in our care wherever possible. Through small class sizes, inclusive teaching, adapted curriculum pathways, and the creative use of technology, we work hard to remove barriers to learning so that all students can be successful.

For further details, please see our DNEAT **Accessibility Policy and Plan**.

HOW WILL MY CHILD BE INCLUDED IN ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM INCLUSING TRIPS AND CLUBS?

At Open Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all students, including those with SEND, can participate fully in both learning and wider school life alongside their peers. We actively remove barriers to participation and provide the right support, equipment, and environment to enable equal access to every aspect of school. All SEN students can access all the academy's activities, and we seek specialist advice and guidance when planning trips to ensure they are accessible to all. We seek parental input into trips and visits for students with additional needs. Open Academy is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure participation for all. Please contact our SENDCO for additional information.

Support

Students with SEND benefit from a wide range of support systems. This includes peer support to promote inclusion and collaboration, tailored teaching strategies, and the development of independence skills. Teaching Assistants (TAs) provide targeted in-class support, while pastoral staff and the Mental Health Support Team ensure students' wellbeing

is prioritised. Individual support plans help staff to adapt teaching approaches so that students can engage meaningfully in all subjects and activities.

Therapies
Where appropriate, we work closely with external professionals to deliver therapeutic support. This may include physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy, which are integrated into the school day to ensure students' specific needs are met without limiting their participation in lessons or extracurricular opportunities.

Specialist Equipment
Students with physical, sensory, or communication needs have access to specialist equipment to support their engagement. This includes adapted toilets for physical access, sensory aids such as headphones, and communication aids including radio aids. Assistive technology, such as laptops or tablets, is provided where needed to ensure students can access learning. All sports equipment is adapted or SEN-friendly so that students can take part in physical activities safely and confidently.

Physical Environment
We have adapted our physical environment to be inclusive and accessible to all. Features include quiet areas, breakout rooms, and low-stimulation spaces to support students who need them. The school building is designed with accessibility in mind, with lifts to all floors, wide doorways, clear corridors, non-slip flooring, handrails, and accessible toilets and changing facilities. Classrooms and communal areas are well lit, with tactile and clear signage, highlighted edges on steps, and the use of contrasting colours to aid navigation (e.g. red zones for English). These adaptations ensure students with a wide range of needs can move around the school safely and independently.

Through this combination of support, therapies, specialist equipment, and an inclusive environment, Open Academy ensures that students with SEND can engage in all areas of school life, academic, social, and physical together with their peers

HOW DOES OPEN ACADEMY SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH BOTH SEN AND EAL?

In the classroom, students with SEN who also have English as an additional language are supported through strategies that develop both language and learning. Teachers use clear, accessible language, visual supports, and modelling to aid understanding, alongside scaffolding techniques such as sentence starters, word banks, and key vocabulary lists. Instructions are broken down and reinforced with gestures, visuals, or translation tools where appropriate. Opportunities for collaborative learning and peer support are encouraged, helping students practise language in meaningful contexts. Staff are mindful of cultural differences and adapt teaching so that language barriers do not prevent full access to the curriculum or progress in learning.

WHAT DO I DO IF I WANT TO TALK TO SOMEONE AT SCHOOL?

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Parents and carers can contact the SENDCo via email (SEND@open-academy.org.uk) or call reception to arrange a telephone call or appointment to meet.
Parents are invited to participate in support plan review meetings to inform plan writing and further developments to support the child in reaching their best outcomes. There are also parents' evenings, SEND meetings, questionnaires, EHCP review meetings, Open evenings and meetings with professionals involved with the student for example, Educational Psychologist reviews, that we welcome parents to attend. Open Academy issues a weekly parents' newsletter to share whole-school and year-group news. The SEN department will regularly update parents/carers through the weekly newsletter of any opportunities to participate outside of school in any SEN specific clubs and activities run by outside agencies.

Open Academy has an inclusive culture, and we aim to be responsive to the diversity of students' backgrounds, interests, experience, knowledge and skills.
SEND students have opportunities to share their views via questionnaires across the curriculum, through their tutor programme and student council. Students with SEN are also a big part of the academy's quality assurance processes including gaining student voice. We use this method to help improve the provision for students. Students with SEND are also invited to give their views and be involved in making decisions about their support before and during EHCP and support plan review meetings. We also use Pupil Passports at Open Academy, which give students a voice in shaping how they are supported in their learning. Open Academy is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure participation for all students.

TRANSITION

HOW WILL THE SCHOOL HELP MY CHILD GET READY FOR THEIR NEXT STEPS?

At Open Academy, we understand that transition is an important part of every learner's journey. This might mean moving into a new class, starting with a new teacher, moving to another education setting or training provider, or stepping into employment. We are committed to working closely with children, families, and other providers to make each transition as smooth and positive as possible. For learners with SEND, planning for transition begins early. For example, discussions around moving to secondary school for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) begin in Year 5 to allow plenty of time for preparation. Our SEND team also works closely with primary schools, visiting pupils and meeting SENCos to gather key information. Families receive information and resources such as booklets, videos, and invitations to transition events to help their child feel prepared and supported.

As part of the move from primary to secondary school, Year 6 pupils are invited to attend transition days at Open Academy. These transition days give children the chance to explore the academy, meet their new teachers and classmates, and take part in activities that help them feel more confident about the changes ahead. For students with SEND, we also offer smaller group visits and opportunities for families to come in, so that each child feels supported and reassured. Our aim is to make the transition into Year 7 a positive experience where every child feels welcomed and ready to begin their new journey.

We also ensure that staff at the academy are fully informed about new learners. Important information is shared with teachers before the new school year starts, and training is provided to ensure the right support is in place from day one. Throughout a student's time at Open Academy, further transitions are supported, whether that is moving between key stages, selecting options, or preparing for life beyond school. Additional guidance is provided for SEN students through targeted support from TAs, specialist staff, careers leads, and teachers. When moving into Sixth Form, college, or university, we continue to share essential information with the next stage providers to make sure each student's needs are met. Alongside this, our PSHE and Sixth Form programmes help all learners develop the skills they need for their next steps. Parents are also invited to key events, such as our Year 6 transition evening and 'Meet the Tutor' evening, so that any questions or concerns can be discussed together.

HOW DOES THE GOVERNING BODY INVOLVE OTHER BODIES, LIKE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES, LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT SERVICE AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS?

As outlined in the DNEAT Scheme of Delegation, governors appoint a Link Governor for SEND monitoring, ensure that statutory information regarding SEND (including the annual SEND Information Report) is published on the academy website, and receive regular reports from senior leaders on how the vision for the curriculum enables SEND learners to flourish.

USEFUL LINKS

There is information available about services used, including when and how they might be involved:

Education services: Virtual School SEND, Virtual School Sensory Support, Virtual School Looked After Children, Educational Psychology Specialist Support, Inclusion Team, Dyslexia Outreach Service, Specialist Resource Base outreach services, Thrive. Online safety – Securus, EHCP Team

Health services: Just One Norfolk, Just One Number, Speech and Language Therapy Service, Occupational Therapy, mental health services, Norfolk and Suffolk Children and Young People's Mental Health Service, MAP, Mental Health Team, Point 1.

Social care services: Short Breaks, Early Help, Young Carer, Housing, CADS.

Third sector services e.g. Benjamin Foundation, Youth Services, Ormiston Families, Nelsons Journey, Young Minds, Kooth.

Other useful links can be found below:

https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs

https://www.norfolksendiass.org.uk/

Norfolk SENDIASS is a statutory service providing free and impartial information, advice and support about special educational needs & disabilities (SEND) for children, young people, parents and carers.

HOW AND WHO DO I TALK TO IF MY CHILD ISN'T GETTING THE SUPPORT THEY NEED OR IF I HAVE OTHER CONCERNS?

HAVE YOUR SAY AND HOW TO CONTACT US

Open Academy invites everyone to contribute to shaping and enhancing the support we provide for our learners, with the goal of ensuring success for all. We welcome your comments, feedback, or suggestions regarding any aspect of our SEN provision. Please feel free to get in touch with any of the following:

Principal: Mr Bagshaw: Principal@open-academy.org.uk

SENDCo: Mrs Halliday: SEND@open-academy.org.uk

All students have a pastoral team, who can support with initial concerns.

All these members of staff can be contacted via the school office on 01603 481640

COMPLAINTS

We understand that concerns may arise, and we are here to support parents and carers through the academy's complaints process. Our policy outlines each stage clearly, and staff are available to guide you in making a complaint and ensure your views are listened to and addressed fairly.

The DNEAT Complaints Procedure Policy can be accessed here

Further support available to families who wish to make a formal complaint can be found here: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/education-and-learning/support-for-learning/special-educational-needs-sen-support/reaching-agreement-sen-support

Appendix 1

Open Academy – SEN Identification Flowchart Process

Initial Concern Raised
(Teacher, Parent, Student, or Staff identifies concern)

- Parents will be contacted by form tutor/subject teacher/Year team if there are any concerns to student progress or if there is a concern there may be potential barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity.
- These concerns may have become clear through internal evidence gathering: classwork, teacher observations, assessment results from EA's and in class assessments.

If a concern is directly made by a parent/carer or student, these concerns will be followed up with the relevant subject teacher/s to gather evidence. It may be necessary for a meeting between the subject teacher and parents/carers/students to take place to discuss further. If the concern is over multiple subjects the Year team will be able to hold a meeting with parents/carers and students to discuss the matter/concern further.

Quality First Teaching (QFT) Adjustments

- Adaptive classroom strategies implemented following our Open Way to Teaching and Learning.
- Review to take place after approximately 6–8 weeks with impact evidence collected

Review of Progress

- Teacher/Year Team review progress
- If improvement – continue monitoring
- If limited progress – Teacher/Year team will refer to SENCO for further involvement

SENCO Involvement

- SENCO reviews any evidence – Screeners will then be used to get a better understanding of teachers' opinions to any barriers to learning the student may be facing.
- Parental and student consultation – opportunity for feedback
- Student possibly added to SEN monitoring list. If further evidence is gathered that indicates a special educational need then a student may be added to the SEN Register, under one of the four categories of need.

Targeted SEN Support (Assess–Plan–Do–Review- The Graduated Approach)

- Support Plan or Pupil Passport created by Year Team with student and parent/carer input
- Interventions arranged where relevant (literacy, numeracy, social skills, etc.) to support student progress
- Reviewed termly by named member of staff on support plan (usually AHOY)

External Agency Involvement

- SENCO refers to student concerns to Team Around Us (TAS) to see whether external agencies are available for further support (e.g. Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, SALT, Behaviour Support, etc.)

- Advice used to refine provision and support for the student to ensure best outcomes

Request for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)

• If limited progress despite sustained support, the SENCO, with parental consent, requests EHCNA from Local Authority
• Evidence submitted – this Needs Assessment may be refused by the Local Authority.

EHCP Issued or Refused

• If issued – EHCP plan implemented, with the provision that the school are able to implement annual review
• If refused – continue at SEN Support with adjusted strategies – Support plan to continue to be reviewed termly.

Ongoing Monitoring

• SENCO + Teachers review termly progress
• Adjust support as needed – updating support plans where appropriate
• Remove from SEN register when needs are met

Appendix 2

Specialist Resource Base (SRB)

As part of Norfolk County Council's Local Offer for
Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Open Academy is delighted to host a Specialist Resource Base for autistic students. SRB students are integrated into the main school wherever possible and access all the school's facilities.

About us

The SRB is a tutor group within Open Academy for up to 10 Key Stage 3 and 4 students. SRB students have a primary identification of autism or a related condition affecting communication, socialisation and flexibility of thinking. Most students who attend the SRB have an Education and Health and Care Plan (EHCP) but this is not essential.
The SRB is located within the main Academy building, at the heart of the school. There are two classrooms, a sensory room and a lavatory reserved for the use of SRB students.
In the classrooms there are individual workspaces for independent learning, break-out areas for group teaching and social spaces.

Staff

The SRB consists of two Lead Teachers who are supported by two HLTA's and one teaching assistant.

Additional staff may be employed to support individual students where a specific need is identified. Staff in the SRB are trained and experienced in working with autistic children and young people.

Teaching and Learning for SRB students

SRB staff provide a bespoke package of support for each student to enable them to attend up to 100% of the mainstream curriculum. They work closely with mainstream colleagues to ensure that SRB students are fully integrated and included in mainstream classes and activities such as trips. Individual Education Plans (IEPs), based on students' EHCP targets, are negotiated and agreed with all students and their parents. Meetings to discuss and review these targets are usually held termly.

Break and Lunchtimes

SRB students may choose to spend break and lunch times either in the SRB or with their mainstream peers. Following discussion and agreement by the SRB team, students may invite friends from mainstream to join them.

Personal, Social and Emotional Wellbeing

SRB staff work closely with students to help them learn to identify and regulate their feelings and emotions, manage their sensory needs and improve their ability to solve problems.
Mainstream PSHE lessons are supplemented by autism-specific coverage of subjects such as puberty and travel skills.
SRB staff work closely with external professionals such as educational psychologists, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists.

Home School Links

Contact between home and school is a vital part of the support for SRB students. Each student has a named, key staff member who can be contacted by phone or email.

In addition to the Annual Review of each student's EHCP and mainstream Parent Teacher meetings, termly meetings are held to discuss student's IEPs. Where parents are unable to get into the school, meetings can be held virtually or by phone.