

## SEND Local Offer and Information Report

Our local offer is produced so that parents, carers and external agencies working with children who have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) can find out more about what Chiltern Hills Academy (CHA) can provide for pupils. We are always reviewing our provision to meet need and welcome positive discussions regarding potential provision within our school so please do get in touch if you have any further questions.

Chiltern Hills Academy is an academy which means it receives its funding directly from the government, however, all schools in Buckinghamshire are supported by Buckinghamshire Council to be as inclusive as possible and the council support the school with the administration of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The school work closely with the Buckinghamshire Integrated SEND team and other teams within Children's Services to provide provision for children who attend our school who have additional needs.

Chiltern Hills Academy is a mainstream non-selective school with a catchment area which covers Chesham and the surrounding areas. It is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote the Christian values of honesty, respect, compassion, love, forgiveness, self-discipline and hope. Ofsted rated the school as 'good' in September 2022. We welcome all students to our school and believe that every student should be guided to achieve goals which are relevant and motivating to them so that they can become confident learners. Diversity is valued as a rich resource, which supports the learning of all. At CHA we recognise a child's right to a broad, balanced, relevant and challenging curriculum, which is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents and personal qualities.

We currently have approximately 956 students on roll in Years 7 – 11 with an additional 118 students attending our sixth form. There are 51 students with an Education, Health & Care Plan and another 136 students accessing SEN Support and a further 77 students are being monitored and have their needs through Quality First Teaching within the classroom.

Admissions to the school are through the local authority. All applications need to be made through them.

### **The Annual Special Educational Needs and Disability Report**

The main contacts in the school for parents wishing to discuss their child's Special Educational Needs are form tutors, Year Leaders and Assistant Year Leaders as well as Mrs Downing, the SENDCo, who holds the National Award for SEN Coordination and a Masters in Inclusive and Special Education. Mrs Downing joined the school in September 2024 after many years of experience working as a SENDCo, specialist autism teacher and SEND advisor for Buckinghamshire Council.

Mrs Downing is supported by Mrs Smith, the SEND Manager. As SEND manager, Mrs Smith has worked at the school for some time now and was previously in post as Lead LSA for Communication and Interaction. Mrs Smith has an advanced level of SEN knowledge, with a specialism in working with students with ASD.

Mrs Downing is assisted by Mrs Smith in meeting the following responsibilities:

- o Coordinating all the support for children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

- o Ensuring that parents are involved in supporting their child's learning and being kept informed about the support their child is getting in school.
- o Liaising with all professionals who may be coming into school to help support your child's learning e.g. Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy etc.
- o Updating the school's SEND register (a system for ensuring all the SEND needs of students in this school are known) and making sure that there are records of your child's progress and needs.
- o Providing specialist support and training for teachers and support staff in the school so they can help children with SEND in the school achieve the best progress possible.

We are committed to working with other schools in Chesham and the surrounding areas and to work with Buckinghamshire Council to improve the quality of provision for students with SEND. We meet regularly with SENDCos across Chesham to share good practice.

Further to the above, there are a number of questions relating to SEND which are answered below:

**How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?**

At Chiltern Hills Academy students are identified as needing additional support through a variety of ways. This process begins with transition meetings with all of our feeder schools. The Academic Year Leader for the year group and SENDCo gather information about incoming Year 7s and if necessary additional transition support is put into place and any areas of potential need are noted. Students may be added to the SEN register in line with guidance for SEN support from Buckinghamshire Local Authority and the SEN Code of Practice 2014. Assessments taken by student on entry will include:

- o Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)
- o Reading tests to gain an age equivalent
- o Baseline Assessments in all subjects
- o Further tests as required based on individual need

Ongoing identification is completed through regular assessments in subject areas. Teachers can also refer students to the Learning Support Team, using the online referral form, if they have any concerns. Following referral, further discussions will be undertaken regarding provision for your child and we will work with you to consider next steps. This may include seeking advice from external specialists, further assessments, classroom observations, support for teaching staff or signposting you to other services which may be beneficial for your child. Regular meetings are held between the SENDCo and Academic Year Leaders to identify students who may have additional needs. Early Intervention Meetings are held with a number of key staff in school to support the early identification of students that we have concerns about.

Should you believe that your child has special educational needs in the first instance you should contact your child's form tutor to discuss next steps. Assistant year leaders and year leaders can also be contacted to discuss provision for your child.

Information can then be collated from other teachers before a referral is made to the SENDCo.

The assessment of students may also involve other specialists and professionals that we work with closely and can include; Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Specialist Teachers, School Nurses, CAMHs practitioners and other medical personnel.

The SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that all teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils, including those who have additional needs. The Code of Practice makes it clear that the most effective provision in supporting students with additional needs is High Quality Teaching

and therefore this must be the first and most important stage of provision for all our students. We provide teachers with training and information on a range of SEND needs throughout the year and support them through learning walks and student focused meetings where necessary.

All students with an identified need should be receiving High Quality Teaching that is adaptive, and which allows them to make progress towards their own goals in their classes.

A small percentage of our students may require further support based on their specific profile of needs. This may involve sessions to support them with their learning, social skills, language development and supporting them with their well-being.

Children without an EHC Plan but with additional needs may receive some additional support which is funded by a combination of funding including the notional SEND budget up to a maximum value of £6000 per pupil (these students will be supported at SEND Support). Pupils with an EHC Plan will receive some top up funding from the council to support the school with providing enhanced provision which costs above £6000. EHCP children have an annual meeting to discuss their progress and how best to use their funding to help them to reach their goals.

Please be aware that the stages of SEND support indicate the provision needed to support your child and are not static. Whilst a child's diagnosis or SEND will likely not change during their time at CHA, the provision they require to make progress and access learning will be fluid and therefore they may move between being on the SEND register and not being on it. EHCPs are only attainable by application to the council where the child lives; they can be applied for by parents/carers, medical professionals or the school (with parental consent).

All students with an EHCP have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) written by the SENDCo which is shared with all education staff via the school management system, Bromcom. We are working towards creating ILPs for all pupils on the SEND register alongside ensuring that all staff are aware of how to embed ordinarily available provision (OAP) into their teaching sequences. In some cases a support plan may be written jointly with the child, parents and the SENDCo. These include specific time bound targets working towards achieving a specific outcome for the child. These are reviewed accordingly by teachers, Academic Year Leaders, SENDCo and Learning Support Assistants.

### **How will I know how my child is doing?**

There are a number of ways in which you can find out how your child is doing. These include:

- o Parent/Carer Evenings – one or two per year, depending on year group
- o Progress Checks – three per year
- o Annual Review Meeting - If your child has an EHC plan you will also have an Annual Review, sometimes called a person-centred review
- o Key worker - member of the LSA team who will meet regularly with your child (usually this is only provided for children with an EHCP as their additional funding allows us to provide this although at times we may provide this level of support for children being supported at SEND Support)

### **How will the school staff support my child?**

There are a number of ways in which your child is supported. These can include:

- o High Quality First Teaching – A high standard of teaching in the classroom with adaptations made to enable all children to make progress
- o Academic Form Tutor – One teacher who your child will see daily at registrations
- o Year Leader – A teacher responsible for the well-being, pastoral and academic progress of the year group that your child is in.

- o Key worker - member of the LSA team who will see your child regularly if they have an EHCP
- o SENDCo – Putting additional support and/or interventions in place should your child require it. This can include one to one or small group activities focused on improving reading, comprehension, spelling, maths, motor skills, communication skills, emotional regulation or well-being more generally. However, for our Key Stage 4 students we also support exam preparation, exams access and controlled assessment.

### **What is the school’s approach for teaching students with SEND?**

All students identified with SEND are treated as individuals with a range of strengths and areas to develop. The key focus for the team at CHA is to form a positive relationship with your child and work alongside you to consider what provision will best meet their individual needs. All teachers are teachers of students with SEND and are responsible for the progress they make. Within lessons, it is the teacher’s responsibility to plan and adapt learning to make it accessible to all pupils. Strategies to support students identified with SEND are included on the student’s ILP or EHCP. Should a student be identified after entry as requiring additional support they will be assessed and their data will be analysed. If it is then felt necessary, they will be added to the SEND register. Following this, a SEND ILP is drawn up and information is communicated to relevant parties. We offer a variety of pathways at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. Students are identified and a discussion is held with parents to ensure the appropriate pathway for the child.

### **What is the additional support for learning that is available for students with SEND?**

#### **In-class support**

Students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) are supported in accordance with the requirements of this document, this may be within class or outside of the classroom environment as needed. If a student does not have an EHCP, in-class support is not routinely offered. However, this can be considered in some cases if deemed necessary. On some occasions the class teacher may ask the learning support assistant to support a small group of students for the duration of the lesson in the Learning Hub, for example, where students need additional help with coursework or a particular aspect of the course.

#### **Specific Interventions (this list is not exhaustive, and we often have bespoke interventions depending on the student need):**

- o Reading and spelling programmes
- o Numeracy support programmes
- o Mentoring sessions
- o Social Skills groups
- o Language development groups
- o Support to develop writing or typing skills
- o Fine and gross motor skills development

### **What is the provision available for improving the emotional and social arrangements of students with SEND?**

CHA is committed to supporting all aspects of a child’s well-being and offers a variety of interventions to assist with this:

- o Transition group – a small group to support Year 7 students when they arrive at CHA
- o Social skills groups
- o Adult led mentoring
- o Individual behaviour plans for students requiring them
- o Young Carers’ support

Some students may require some targeted support to help them develop positive behaviours for learning and may have a support plan which indicates strategies for supporting them in lessons. Additional provision can include specialist behaviour programmes to model positive behaviours delivered through our Hub. Academic Tutor groups also offer a network of support to help with pastoral issues.

We also work with a number of external agencies to support young people's emotional needs (this list is not exhaustive):

- Aspire alternative provision
- Young Carers
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- MIND mentoring
- Bucks school nursing team
- Independent Careers Advice
- Educational Psychology (EP)
- The Autism Teaching Company
- Buckinghamshire Youth Justice & Support Team (YJST)

### **Access Arrangements for Examinations**

What are access arrangements?

- Access arrangements allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.

How will the process start?

- Parents and carers should let the SENCo know as soon as possible if their child has additional needs. Good and open communication is important.
- Students in Further Education should record their additional needs on the college's enrolment form.
- The SENCo will work with teachers and the student to identify possible arrangements.
- Various access arrangements are available. For example, support for students who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working and concentration.
- Not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements. It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams. Additional needs alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements.

Who will make the assessment?

- If a student has learning difficulties, the school or college's appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time.
- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements if the assessor has liaised with the school or college in advance and received the necessary access arrangements paperwork.
- Specialists (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements.
- The school or college must decide which access arrangements a student has for their exams.
- Teachers must give evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed. The school or college will record how effective the arrangement is in the classroom, in internal tests or in mock exams.

What else needs to be done?

- The school or college will have to apply for some arrangements.

- If a student has complex needs, a school or college can discuss their needs with the exam board.

Finally Schools and colleges must follow the rules. They are inspected and if they are found to be breaking the rules, this will be malpractice.

At CHA access arrangements for GCSE exams are tested for starting in the Summer Term of Year 10 and Autumn Term of Year 11 by a qualified assessor. Students are identified for these assessments via a staff referral and consideration of their normal way of working as evidenced in an ILP. It is rare for students to be awarded exam access arrangements in Year 11 if they have not been on the SEND register in Key Stage 3. Access arrangements remain valid for two years so we would typically need to reconsider access arrangements for students in Year 13.

Further guidance regarding exam access arrangements can be found on the website of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) - <https://www.jcq.org.uk/>

### **What facilities do you offer in your school building to include students with SEND?**

The buildings enable us to be DDA compliant. This ensures access for all students to all areas of the Academy. Accessible facilities include:

- o Accessible toilets across the Academy
- o Disabled Access shower
- o Lift in the main atrium, F block and E block
- o Disabled parking bays in car parks
- o Evac chairs with Evac chair trained staff
- o Adjustable workstations in Food Technology and science to enable students with wheelchairs to take part in practical lessons
- o Adjustable tables in all classrooms
- o Wide corridors which allow free movement around the building.
- o We provide quieter areas for students to eat their lunch and socialise with support.
- o We can provide time out cards to allow pupils to take regulation breaks if required.
- o We can provide early leaving passes to allow students to leave lessons earlier to move to their next lesson when corridors are quieter.
- o We can provide toilet passes (with a letter from a medical professional) to allow students to access the toilet for medical reasons.

### **What arrangements are in place to consult with parents/carers of young people with SEND about the education of their child?**

All parents are regularly consulted through questionnaires about the education of their child. Parent forums are held six times per year led by The Principal. The school holds regular parents/carers evenings for all year groups and additional transition evenings for all key years undergoing transition.

Parents of students with SEND are consulted in annual reviews/person centred reviews and additional reviews. The SENDCo will also attend all parent/carer evenings so that parents can discuss provision for their child. Appointments can also be made with the SENDCo or the SEN Manager.

### **What is the Academy's Accessibility Policy?**

The school is accessible to all students and provision is reviewed in line with needs of the existing and new students. We have experience of working with students with physical disabilities, visual impairments and hearing loss. Please see our website for the Disabled Access policy.

### **How do the Governing body involve other agencies, including health and social services, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, to meet the needs of students with SEND and their families?**

Within CHA we have a range of qualified staff to support students. This includes Learning Support Assistants, teachers, a school attendance officer, year leaders, assistant year leaders and HUB staff. We also work alongside a wide range of external agencies to ensure students are fully supported. These are listed above. If you feel that your child should be referred to one of these agencies, please contact either your child's Year Leader, the SENDCo or Student Services and they will advise you accordingly.

### **What are the arrangements for students with SEND transferring between other education providers or preparing for adulthood and independent living?**

We have close links with our main feeder schools in Chesham and the surrounding areas and there are a number of activities throughout the year for Years 5 and 6 children to visit CHA. For Year 6 students who have an EHC plan coming to us for Year 7, the SENDCo will attend their person-centred review at their primary school in year 6. Students who are considered vulnerable at transition will be invited to spend an additional day at the academy prior to the normal transfer day. CHA also run an in-house transition camp

at the start of the summer holiday each year which allows all pupils to experience life at CHA before joining us in September.

All pupils and schools are visited before the Buckinghamshire transfer day by the Academic Year Leader and the SENDCo. Teachers of the upcoming Year 6 cohort are liaised with closely to ensure provision continues for pupils.

For transfer to KS4, students have a programme of activities regarding GCSE options through PSHE which includes visits from our independent careers advisor and an options evening; where necessary one to one conversations with parents are arranged. Students who have an EHC plan will have further discussions about option choices in their person centred review/annual review. From Year 9 onwards all students with an EHC plan will have support from an independent careers adviser.

Throughout their time at Chiltern Hills, students are part of a careers programme which is designed to inspire them and raise aspirations with visits to Universities, Skills Shows and colleges. In Year 10 and 11, students are offered a one to one session with our independent careers advisor. In Key Stage 5, students are guided through the different options for post 18 which includes university, apprenticeships and work. This is undertaken with the support of Bucks New University and the independent careers advisory service.

**What arrangements are there for training staff in relation to children and young people with SEND and how do you obtain specialist expertise?**

Teaching staff at CHA are highly trained having regular professional development in learning and teaching and training in areas of SEN by outside agencies. The SENDCo is a qualified teacher and holds the National Special Educational Needs Award as well as a masters degree in special and inclusive education . Pupils are supported by a team of Learning Support Assistants who have a range of expertise in working with children with SEN. At the start of each year all teaching and support staff are introduced to the SEN needs of Year 7 students via transition profiles. At this time individual needs are identified and plans are put in place for a successful transition and support for progress. A register is held on the Bromcom database of all students with SEN; this is accessible to all staff so they can understand and plan provision for pupils.

The Hub Manager is trained in a number of areas to deliver various programmes to students to support emotional and social well-being and restorative justice. This includes nurture, attachment and adoption.

Training on SEND is provided by the SENDCo for the Learning Support team every Friday morning between 9am and 10am and whole school training is provided on a rolling basis throughout the year. Other training continues on a needs led basis for all staff throughout the academic year depending on pupil need or identified areas for development in our whole school development plan. External professionals and trainers also offer training throughout the year for our teams; this may involve accessing webinars and we subscribe to the National College training offer for all staff.