



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report

This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees with reference to the academy's Equality Policy. The aims of the Equality Policy are to ensure that Plume Academy meets the needs of all, taking account of gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this academy we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

Author: Whole Academy Inclusion Lead	Ratified by Board of Trustees: 20 September 2023
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Plume Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report has been completed in line with the following areas of legislation and guidance:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015);
- Children and Families Act (2014);
- Equality Act (2010);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021).

It is a requirement of all schools and academies to publish key information about the special educational needs processes and their provision for SEND.

'Schools should ensure that the information is easily accessible by parents and is set in clear, straightforward language.' (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0 to 25 years (2015) Section 6:79)

If you require support to access this document, please contact the SEND team at Plume Academy. For contact details of members of the SEND Team, please refer to the Plume Academy website.

Key Contacts for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Plume Academy:

Mrs S Archer: 2/ic & Fambridge Road Campus Manager
(Year 9 – Year 13)

Mrs J Farmer: Mill Road Campus SEND Camps Manager
(Year 7 – Year 8)

Mrs. A. Stansfield: SEND Strategic Paperwork Manager
(Year 7 – Year 13)

Ms Hilary Hills: SENDCo
(Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator)

Mr. E. Harris: SEND Intervention Lead
(Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator)

Mr Clive Cambridge: Whole Academy Inclusion Lead (SLT)
(Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator)

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What is meant by Special Educational Needs?

From the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) pages 15-16:

'xiii. A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

xiv. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.*

xv. For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers...'

Are disabled children also SEN?

From the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) page 16:

'xviii. Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.’

Who can I call at Plume Academy to discuss my child’s difficulty with learning, special educational needs or disabilities?

At Plume Academy, the identification of SEN is embedded into the day-to-day practice of our academy. It is not an add-on or something different that only the SENCO does in isolation.

In the first instance, you should contact your child’s Learning Group Tutor to outline any concerns about your child’s progress or wellbeing that you may have.

Your child’s tutor will coordinate with the Head of Year and contact subject teachers and other staff to establish further details. As appropriate, they will liaise and seek advice from the SEND team to address your concerns. 6.19 The first response to such progress should be high

quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. Most gaps in progress can be addressed through high quality teaching and are not the result of special educational needs.

In most situations where a child or young person is not making progress this can be addressed by high quality teaching which targets areas of weakness.

Plume Academy operates a Three Tier referral system which is in line with the Assess Plan Do Review Cycle.

- Wave 1 – Universal: High Quality Pastoral Care and Teaching for all students.
- Wave 2 – Targeted: Investigation by HOY/Subject/Faculty Lead
- Wave 3 – Specialist: Referral to SEND

What types of SEND does Plume Academy provide for?

All staff at Plume Academy are committed to providing opportunities for learning which are closely matched to student's abilities and aspirations. Lessons are carefully adapted to provide support and challenge for all students, respecting their different starting points, so that all students can make good progress over time. Staff place great importance on the knowledge that students learn in different ways and adapt their lessons accordingly.

We provide high quality teaching for young people with special educational needs under the following broad areas:

Cognition and Learning, for example:

- Mild to moderate learning difficulties.
- Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) including persistent difficulties with the skills associated with literacy and / or numeracy.

Communication and Interaction, for example:

- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health, for example:

- Attachment disorder.
- Attention Deficit (and Hyperactivity) Disorder (AD[H]D).
- Prolonged anxiety.

Sensory and / or Physical difficulties, for example:

- Hearing impairment.
- Physical disabilities.
- Sensory processing difficulties.
- Visual impairment.

Plume Academy cooperates and collaborates with the Local Authority which offers advice to parents / carers and engages with other professional colleagues.

Further details can be found on the Local Offer website, using the following link: [Home - Essex Local Offer](#)

How do you know if a young person has additional needs?

At Plume Academy, we strive to identify young people with special educational needs as early as possible using a range of strategies, including the following:

- Close liaison with Primary School colleagues to exchange information at transition.
- Feedback from teachers and additional adults on student performance and engagement in class.
- Feedback from the pastoral teams around potential barriers to students learning and wellbeing that may require additional support.
- Feedback from parents / carers, raising concerns about their child's progress.
- Rigorous tracking of student progress through the Academy assessment cycle.
- Evidence based, standardised screening assessments to monitor phonological awareness, visual discrimination, auditory memory, etc.
- Observing students to identify attention and concentration, ability to process verbal and written instructions, gross and fine motor skills.
- Advice from external agencies, including medical and social care professionals.

How will you let me know if you have any concerns about my child's learning, special educational needs or disabilities and who will be involved?

If your child is assessed as having special educational needs or disabilities you will be thoroughly involved in the process and your child's progress will be monitored and shared with you regularly, in accordance with the Academy assessment schedule.

You and your child will meet with a member of the SEND team to jointly create a 'pupil passport' outlining:

- Strengths
- Difficulties/challenges
- Targets (student identified)
- Helpful classroom strategies (student identified)
- SEND provision.
- Thoughts/feelings about: school, things that are important to them and people that appreciate them.

Long term (usually in line with Key Stages) outcomes and corresponding SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) targets to achieve these outcomes, will be agreed with you and appropriate provision put into place, which may include intervention programmes.

We measure the impact and effectiveness of intervention programmes through the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle every 6 – 12 weeks to ensure individual learning targets are monitored and revised if / or as necessary. Students may or may not continue to require intervention,

depending on the progress achieved. Where students have completed intervention programmes which have been established to have been effective, but adequate progress has not been made, the SEND team may request more specialist support and advice.

You and your child will be kept informed and encouraged to take an active role in all stages of this support. We welcome and value your engagement and feedback. You can, at any time, arrange an appointment to speak with the SENDCo regarding your child's progress and provision.

How are young people with SEND supported to access and engage in a broad curriculum alongside others who do not have SEND at Plume Academy?

Every student is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and all students are encouraged, valued, respected and accepted. At Plume Academy all students are inspired and nurtured to achieve their full potential. Students are supported to enable them to access, enjoy and be successful in all activities offered through the Academy curriculum and enrichment.

The Academy works closely with students, families, staff and other professionals to identify specific barriers to learning. Our first response is 'high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness' (Code of Practice, 2015, page 95, Section 6.19) using adaptive teaching methods, resources, and equipment. Adaptive teaching promotes high achievement for all.

Plume Academy teachers "adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils" (Teachers' Standards DfE 2911).

We also offer:

- A range of assistive technology and sensory tools.
- Fully equipped accessible toilets.
- Several intervention classrooms where students are able to follow intervention programmes and / or modified curriculum topics related to a clear set of expected outcomes with relevant academic and developmental targets.
- Supervised social activity rooms to enable students to enjoy unstructured social times with confidence.
- Access to shared classroom support, when necessary.
- A range of communication aids, for example, visual timetables.
- Access to a member of the SEND team to support students throughout the day to resolve issues efficiently and effectively.

We ensure that teachers and additional staff are aware of students' individual needs. We share strategy sheets and co-produced 'pupil passports' and agreed targets to enable teachers to plan appropriate learning activities for students to make progress.

The SEND team also host regular 'drop in' sessions to discuss the needs of learners to support additional adaptive teaching strategies or personalisation. We provide regular professional development or training for staff on issues relating to special educational needs and disabilities, plus we share tips, prompts and reminders addressing current SEND related issues through frequent communication with staff.

How will you know that the additional support my child has received has made a difference to my child's learning and how can my child be included in the review process?

You are the person who knows your child the best and we welcome working in partnership with you. We strongly believe that a collaborative approach with parents / carers is the best way to support a student's learning and needs, hence our assessment schedule includes Parent Consultation Evenings during the academic year when we routinely share and discuss your child's achievements.

“Every teacher is a teacher of SEND” “The focus is on **early intervention and effective teaching**”. Subject teachers make regular assessments of students learning and will identify if a student is making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances in their taught subject. A teacher's first response to address slower progress than expected will be to review and adjust the high-quality teaching strategies in place. They may also contact you to discuss your child's progress and agree additional approaches with you. Continuing slow progress in a subject area will trigger the beginning of the application of the “Assess Plan Do Review” cycle - A conversation between the teacher and subject leader to enact short-term ‘early action’ support to specifically focus on your child's area(s) for development.

If any concerns are raised surrounding your child's social or emotional wellbeing, or it is necessary to discuss progress across a number of subjects, your child's Learning Group Tutor or a member of the Year team will contact you. If progress across subjects continues to be less than expected a referral to the SEND Team will be made by the Year team which will trigger a review of the difficulties experienced by your child and the support in place. This is in line with the ‘Assess’ part of the graduated approach outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015). If necessary, appropriate additional provision to support improved progress and outcomes for your child will be introduced. Such provision may include intervention programmes for which the agreed, individual learning outcomes are established. Intervention programmes are assessed for impact and effectiveness every 6 – 12 weeks through the ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ cycle.

What are examination access arrangements and how can these be agreed for students?

‘Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval... Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment.’ (www.jcq.org.uk)

Each year, JCQ produce a document setting out the range of adjustments which can be requested or ‘centre-delegated’ to ensure that students with needs are not disadvantaged by the assessment methods. These adjustments can include, but are not restricted to:

- Computer reader/reader or use of an examination reading pen.
- Extra time.
- Practical assistant.
- Prompter.

- Scribe/speech recognition technology.
- Supervised rest breaks.
- Word processor.

Through a thorough process of identification of special educational needs, we can establish support mechanisms enabling students to demonstrate their learning and progress throughout the curriculum.

At the end of KS3, an additional inventory is taken of the progress and attainment data held for each student. At this time, the SENDCo and qualified external professionals complete a series of detailed standardised assessments for identified students and agree an application for access arrangements if necessary. In addition, adjustments or improvements may be made to the existing support strategies in place for individual students.

How do you support young people with medical conditions at Plume Academy?

Students with medical conditions are fully supported to ensure they have full access to education and enjoy the same opportunities as any other child.

Where children have additional physical or medical needs, our First Aid team, SEND team, Year teams and attendance teams work collaboratively with parents / carers and healthcare professionals. We will create an Individual Medical Care Plan to ensure that your child's needs are known to staff, and they are met.

What is an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), who can request one for my child and how are they monitored and maintained?

The purpose of an Education and Health Care Plan is to make special education provision to meet the special educational needs of a child or young person, to secure improved outcomes for him / her across education, health and social care and, as he / she gets older, preparing for adulthood.' (SEND Code of Practice, 0-25 years, Section 9.20)

You, your child (where appropriate and aged 16 or over) and/or the academy, usually through the SENDCo, can request the Local Authority to conduct an assessment of your child's needs. This *may* lead to an EHCP.

It will take no more than 20 weeks from the request for an EHC needs assessment to issuing the final EHC plan, if granted. An EHCP can provide a framework for support from birth to age 25 years.

An EHCP is created using a person-centred approach fully involving you and your child, and will contain:

- The views and aspirations of you and your child.
- A full description of their special educational needs and include any health and social care needs.
- A description of your child's personal and learning strengths.
- Establish outcomes and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainment, Relevant and Time-bound) targets for your child's progress.

- Specify the provision required and how education, health and social care will work together to meet your child's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes.

An annual review provides you and your child the opportunity to reflect on progress towards the specified outcomes with Plume Academy staff and, when appropriate, other professionals. Outcomes, targets, and provision are reviewed and adjusted as necessary to reflect and meet your child's changing needs.

Students with an EHC plan are overseen and supported by the SEND Team. They have regular contact with your child, monitoring progress, absence, and conduct; they liaise with your child's tutor and subject teachers, and they also coordinate and attend meetings with you and other professionals.

What support is available for my child's happiness and wellbeing?

At Plume Academy we support student wellbeing through:

- Daily Learning Group time, which covers topical issues and current events, plus also reinforces learning themes through relevant activities, quizzes, and challenges.
- Tutors and Pastoral Leaders offer support daily.
- The Academy employs a dedicated Mental Health Champion.
- Some students, depending on their individual learning needs may be involved in a bespoke emotional literacy programme.
- Students can attend a range of supervised structured, enrichment activities during lunchtime or after school, including games and social activities, homework club and subject specific clubs.
- Students can attend breakfast hub.
- Students can utilise a dedicated 'quiet/calm room' to support emotional regulation.
- Some students, depending on their individual learning needs, may be invited to attend sensory or preparation sessions to ensure a positive start to the Academy Day.

We also encourage our young people to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and opinions by:

- Talking to trusting adults.
- Participating in student voice opportunities and completing student voice surveys,
- Being involved in one-planning meetings and in the creation and / or review of their 'pupil passport' and EHCP as appropriate.

What arrangements do you make for supporting young people in joining the Academy, moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood?

We are committed to ensuring that your child settles quickly and feels happy and safe at the academy. We encourage and promote:

- Positive transition planning with primary schools, with dedicated SEND transition days organised by the SEND Team and a whole Academy transition day involving all year groups, organised by the Pastoral teams.
- Admission meetings for in-year transfers,
- Impartial Careers Advice and Guidance.

We pride ourselves in setting high expectations and aspirations for our young people and preparing them effectively for adulthood through a broad and balanced, comprehensive curriculum. Plus:

- Plume Academy Open Evenings for Year 6 and Plume College (Post 16) students and parents / carers,
- Option guidance evening for Year 8 and Year 9 students and parents / carers,
- Supported visits to alternative College Open Days.

For students with an EHCP, in-depth conversations as part of the annual review process, most importantly at key transition points, Year 8, Year 9, Year 11, Year 12, and Year 13. Plus, additional support from Year 9 from the Local Authority Preparation for Adulthood Coordinator.

How does Plume Academy ensure that teaching and support staff are appropriately trained to support my child's special educational needs and / or disability?

All staff at Plume Academy receive regular professional development throughout the year to develop expertise within the Academy. The whole staff training schedule prepared by the joint Heads of Academy responds to any changing needs at the academy and is planned with reference to evidence of teaching and learning collected through the academy self-evaluation and a rigorous quality improvement programme.

The SEND intervention team promote literacy skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and in the application of number skills and mathematical concepts to everyday situations, plus in the development of emotional literacy skills, supporting social development, self-esteem, and self-management. The delivery of SEND interventions is quality assured by the lead SENDCo and the Whole Academy Inclusion Lead.

How do you involve outside agencies such as Health and Social Care or other Local Authority Support Services and voluntary sector organisations in meeting young people's SEN and supporting their families?

Plume Academy staff regularly call upon the services of a wide range of agencies whose staff work collaboratively to support children and their families.

The services provided by the Local Authority include:

- Children's Social Care,
- Educational Psychology Support,
- Essex Youth Service,

- Inclusion Partnership,
- Parent Partnership Service,
- Physical and Sensory Support Service – HI, PNI and VI teams,
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Independent Advice and Support Service (SEND-IASS),
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Operations Team (SEND-Ops).

Those provided through the Health Trust include:

- Essex Welfare and Mental Health Service,
- Community Paediatrician Service,
- Occupational Therapy Team,
- Physiotherapy,
- School Nursing Team,
- Speech and Language Service.

What are the arrangements for handling complaints from parents and young people with SEND about the provision made at the academy?

Plume Academy strive to ensure that we work in collaboration with our young people and you, their parent/carer. The insight and views of you and your child are an integral part of our ability to establish appropriate provision and support mechanisms.

Plume Academy recognises that at times things can and do go wrong. We also believe that it is in all stakeholders' best interest to resolve concerns and complaints at the earliest possible stage, as such, we ask that you arrange an informal discussion or meeting to discuss your concerns with the Assistant Vice Principal for Inclusion and SENDCo at which time we would endeavour to resolve your concerns. This is stage 1 of our Complaints Procedure.

If your complaint cannot be resolved at this stage, please refer to our Complaints Procedure for subsequent actions.

What is the Local Offer and where can I find it?

The Local Offer is the Local Authority's offer for parents and young people.

It includes provision both in and out of the academy and details services and support provided by private and voluntary sectors, as well as the Local Authority and the National Health Service.

Essex Local Offer provides children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families information about the education, health, and social care support services available in the local area.

Essex Local Offer can:

- make it easier to find the support which is nearest and most suitable for young people and families,
- help young people and families to be less dependent on other people or word of mouth,

- help young people and families to ask the right questions.

Essex County Council worked with young people, parents/carers, and practitioners to use their combined skills and creativity to shape the Essex Local Offer. Views were gathered through participation, feedback and involvement at family groups, classes, and conferences. Participants in the coproduction include:

- Chelmsford College,
- Contact Essex,
- Essex Family Forum,
- Harlow College,
- Special Needs and Parents,
- The Multi-Schools Council,
- Young Essex Assembly.

Please use this link to access the Essex Local Offer: [Home - Essex Local Offer](#)

What other useful information and support is available for families of students with special educational needs?

APEX

Thriftwoodschool.com

Autism Anglia

Autism Anglia provides a range of services to enable people with autism to live as independently as possible and experience choice and inclusion in society.

www.autism-anglia.org.uk

Autism Education Trust

The Autism Education Trust is dedicated to coordinating, supporting and promoting effective education practice for all children and young people on the autism spectrum.

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk

Changing Faces

Changing Faces supports and represents people who have conditions or injuries which affect their appearance.

www.changingfaces.org.uk

Contact a Family

Contact a Family exists to support the families of disabled children whatever their condition or disability.

www.cafamily.org.uk

0808 8083555 (free helpline)

Dyslexia Action

Their aim is to remove the barriers facing those with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties by providing help and support.

chelmsford@dyslexiaaction.org.uk

www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

01245 2596560

Essex Parent Partnership Service

Offer information and support over the telephone or in person

parentpartnership@essex.gov.uk

www.essex.gov.uk/parentpartnership

01245 436 036

Families in Focus

An independent, parent-led charity providing a range of support to families of children with disabilities and special needs across Essex.

www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

01245 353575

ICAN

ICAN is the children's communication charity. It is expert in helping children develop the speech, language and communication skills they need to thrive in a 21st century world.

www.ican.org.uk

Kids Inspire

Building relationships through therapy, opportunity, love and care. Kids Inspire helps young people in Essex to feel that they are valued members of society.

www.kidsinspire.org.uk

01245 348707

National Autistic Society

For impartial, confidential advice and support on autism for anyone affected by, or researching autism.

www.autism.org.uk

0808 8004104

Special Kids in the UK

A charity for families who have a child of any age with special needs.

www.specialkidsintheuk.org

Talk about Autism

A safe and friendly online community where you can share experiences, obtain support and discuss autism.

www.talkaboutautism.org.uk