

## Special Educational Needs Information Report 2020 – 2021

At Future Academies Watford, we believe in equal opportunities for all, and aim to ensure that our provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) offers appropriate support for those facing barriers to their learning. At the academy, we provide experienced support for all four broad areas of Special Educational Need: Learning and Cognition; Communication and Interaction; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Sensory and Physical Needs.

Our SENCo, Kerry Williams, is experienced in ensuring that suitable provision is offered to students who need additional support of some kind. She is supported by a team of knowledgeable and qualified professionals (including therapists and psychologists). Where possible, these are members of staff at our own school but, as and when required, also include professionals from the Local Authority, whom we consult and work with.

At Future Academies, Gary Aubin supervises SEND across our schools to ensure that it is of the highest standards and that children on the SEND register are being supported to achieve their full potential.

### SEND Information

#### 1. What kinds of Special Educational Needs are provided for at Future Academies Watford?

Within the SEND Code of Practice it is identified that there are four broad areas of need:

1. Communication and Interaction Needs
2. Cognition and Learning Needs
3. Social, Emotional, Mental health Needs
4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

These four broad areas are defined as:

1. **Communication and Interaction** – for students who have speech, language and communication needs, a specific language impairment or a range of communication difficulties. One such communication difficulty may include Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)
2. **Cognition and Learning** – for students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, or moderate learning difficulties that affect students in a range of cognitive areas
3. **Social, Emotional, Mental Health** – for students who struggle to engage in the social aspects of school, or who find it hard to cope with challenging emotions. This will range from students needing short-term assistance during a turbulent time in their life, to students with a recognised condition such as ADD or ADHD.
4. **Sensory and/or Physical needs** – for students who have a physical disability and may need support to access the school site, or students with a visual and/or hearing impairment who may need extra support to access the curriculum.

#### Students with medical needs

Future Academies Watford is committed to ensuring that students with medical conditions are properly supported in school so that they can:

- play a full and active role in school life;

- access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child, including school trips and physical education;
- remain healthy and safe;
- achieve their academic potential.

If a student has a medical need, they will have a Care Plan which is compiled in consultation with parents and carers under the guidance of the medical officer and/or Head of Year. The plan is discussed with all staff who are involved with the student. Staff receive regular medical training as required and are aware of where they can access further information as necessary. Where necessary, and in agreement with parents, medicines are administered in school, but only with signed parental consent and with medicines in the original packaging.

## **2. Who are the best people to talk to about my child's difficulty, Special Educational Needs, or disability?**

Talk to your child's form tutor about your concerns. If the concern is with a particular subject, you should speak to your child's subject teacher. It is likely that the class teacher will have discussed your concerns with Kerry Williams, the academy SENCo. You may wish to email, telephone or arrange a meeting with the SENCo.

If you continue to have concerns you can arrange to discuss these with Lucy Wheeler, Vice Principal – Safeguarding and Wellbeing, who leads on all inclusion, or Deborah Warwick, Principal, or with Gary Aubin, the Trust Head of SEND. The CEO, Paul Smith, can be contacted for any concerns that need to be expressed to the Governing Body.

## **3. How do we identify and assess students with SEN?**

The SEND Admissions process informs us of those with Educational Health Care Plans. For students with such an EHCP, and in the case that we agree we are able to meet a child's needs, we are able to plan for as seamless a transition as possible in meeting their needs in their new secondary provision.

We also gain information about students' SEN before they arrive, through:

- Parent-supplied information on school application forms and at entry interviews.
- Shared communication between primary schools and Future Academies Watford on the specific needs of individual students, in the summer term prior to the child starting.
- Close liaison with parents and primary SENCos before a student joins us in Year 7 to ensure continuity of care, especially where a diagnosis exist for a child or where an EHC Plan states certain types of provision.
- In-school testing of all Year 7 students prior to them starting at Future Academies Watford, including Reading and Spelling Tests, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires and Cognitive Ability Tests.

Once students have begun their time at Future Academies Watford, further identification and assessment can be done through:

- In-class observations of all classes for the first weeks of term for Year 7 classes.
- Teacher feedback and continual progress-monitoring to inform where a child may need extra support.
- Regular meetings between the pastoral teams and the SENCo.

- Further specific screening tests can be carried out according to need, to recognise students with traits of dyslexia or dyscalculia, as well as tests that look at handwriting speed, spelling accuracy and reading ability.
- In more complex cases, we feed into external services including speech and language therapy, the Educational Psychology Service, Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Visual/Hearing Impairment Services.

### **Admissions arrangements**

For full information on our admissions arrangements see our Admissions page.

## **4. How will students be supported to be part of the school setting?**

All areas of the building are fully accessible for people with disabilities or limited mobility. We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, in the way we provide education for our students and in the way we provide access for students to facilities and services.

The Future Academies Watford policy on behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment that champions respect for all.

Full information can be found in our Disability and Accessibility policy.

## **5. How does Future Academies Watford address bullying?**

Our Anti-Bullying Policy makes it clear that all our students have the right to feel safe from bullying. We have a robust and consistent approach to bullying, which makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Students with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment, and so particular care is taken to ensure that they feel supported and that any incidents are dealt with promptly.

Full information about how we deal with bullying can be found in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **6. Is my child included in all the same activities as his/her peers at school?**

Future Academies Watford is an inclusive school, committed to providing equal opportunities for all children.

School clubs, educational visits and residential trips are available to all children. When necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with SEN and/or disabilities are included in all activities.

You should also feel free to contact your child's tutor if you have any concerns.

## **7. What support will there be for my child's happiness and wellbeing at Future Academies Watford?**

At Future Academies Watford, we believe that the happiness and well-being of all our students is paramount. All members of staff take this aspect of school life very seriously.

You can be confident that your child's class teacher, Head of Year, the Learning Support Assistants, Tutors and SENCo are available to provide support to match your child's needs. The Year team are also responsible for taking actions to ensure your child's wellbeing in school.

You should also feel free to contact your child's tutor if you have any concerns.

## **8. How will Future Academies Watford support my child in transition stages?**

We liaise closely with local primary schools to ensure we know as much as possible about the support needs of our new students. We are able to discuss with the relevant teachers any individual needs, and meet all new parents, carers and students in the summer term before students begin Year 7. All Year 6 students visit Future Academies Watford three times – for baseline testing, for a Taster Day and for an interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. There are extra visits offered for those students with already identified special educational needs who may need more transition support.

At Future Academies Watford, we have attached a full time member of the Learning Support to a role dedicated to Year 7 only. This helps to provide staff with detailed strategies on learning plans as she meets with each student in the first few weeks during their individual SEN consultation. This role is instrumental in supporting the Year 7 students to settle quickly in their new learning environment.

When Year 7 students start in September, their first day is without the wider school population. This helps to ease anxiety about being in a school that will be significantly bigger than their primary school.

At Future Academies Watford, we take care to ensure that during transition points (between classes, each year and at the end of Key Stages) all staff are aware of individual students' needs, learning progress and the best strategies to support their learning. This happens through effective use of data, an Inclusion Department that communicates well with all teaching staff, and strong systems for reporting progress.

If your child has an EHC Plan, we will participate in and/or facilitate his/her annual review in sufficient time prior to him/her moving between key phases of education. You will be kept informed of these arrangements and be asked to attend the reviews.

From Year 9, all EHC Plan reviews will have a focus on preparing for adulthood, including employment, independent living and participation in society. We support students in their applications to further and higher education or training upon leaving Future Academies Watford. If a student leaves Future Academies Watford to join another school, we will ensure all relevant information is shared, in agreement with parents.

During Year 11, the Learning Support Department staff will support some students with SEND with applications for school, college, apprenticeships or employment opportunities.

## **9. How will the curriculum and the school environment be matched to my child's needs?**

At Future Academies Watford, we believe that your child's learning needs will first be met through the high-quality teaching delivered by her/his class teacher.

We carefully plan our knowledge-rich curriculum to match the age, ability and needs of all children. Differentiation is built into all teachers' lesson planning and delivery. The class teacher will adapt lesson planning and teaching to match your child's special educational needs and/or disability. Some of your child's lessons will be taught with other students who have a similar ability in that subject. Teachers are therefore able to pitch the lesson at a level that supports but also challenges your child in their learning.

Additional specialist advice is sought when appropriate and, when necessary, accessibility aids and technology may be used to support your child's learning.

Future Academies Watford regularly reviews its Accessibility Plan to ensure that all children have the fullest access to the curriculum and the academy site as possible.

Assessment points spread throughout the year help teachers to fully understand your child's progress, and to adjust their planning, teaching and feedback accordingly. We know the needs of our students very well, and use data in order to inform our planning and to identify targets to achieve improvements. We take action to close any gaps; for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills, we will take positive and proportionate action, such as targeted support or intervention.

If appropriate, specialist resources may be given to the student e.g. writing slopes, coloured overlays, large print materials or notebooks.

## 10. How will you support my child to reach his/her learning outcomes?

Every Department in the academy has responsibility for ensuring that your child is able to achieve in their subject. Their progress will be closely tracked, and fed back to parents and carers throughout the year. Many students will also have support from Teaching Assistants in class.

External agencies and specialists may also review your child's progress and adapt their planning accordingly.

### **Our approach to teaching students with Special Educational Needs:**

We run a range of interventions to support students, as well as offering a range of training to support classroom teachers. The intervention provided takes a three-tiered approach to supporting learning:

**Universal** – this is the teaching your child receives from their class teacher. It is the most fundamental way in which your child's needs will be met in school. Inclusive teaching means that, in the vast majority of cases, small adaptations made by the teacher will ensure access for all, without the need for your child to be taught a separate curriculum or taught outside the mainstream classroom. The work of the SENCo and other colleagues makes this a reality.

**Targeted** – it may be appropriate to consider making additional short-term special educational provision to remove or reduce any obstacles to your child's learning. This takes the form of a graduated four-part approach:

- assessing your child's needs.
- planning the most effective and appropriate intervention.

- providing this intervention.
- reviewing the impact on your child's progress towards individual learning outcomes.

Sometimes this intervention may take place outside the classroom, as a 1-to-1 or with a small group of students. These will be limited to a number of weeks to minimise disruption to the regular curriculum. You will be kept informed of your child's progress towards learning outcomes.

**Specialist** – it may be necessary to seek specialist advice and regular long-term support from a specialist professional within the school. Such specialists may include Speech Therapists or Educational Psychologists. Sometimes the school will enlist the services of external professionals, such as occupational therapists, sensory advisory teachers or services provided by the Local Authority. The school may need to prioritise referrals to these services. However, for a very small number of students, access to these specialists may be through an EHC Plan.

## **11. How will the school know that the support has made a difference to my child's learning, and how can my child and I be included in the review process?**

Your child's progress will be assessed both in terms of his/her regular learning within the class and with regard to specific intervention programmes.

Every method of supporting a child in Future Academies Watford has clearly identified measures of success. This will include feedback from the child and parents/carers, as well as the use of data to assess impact, and feedback from teachers where appropriate. You and your child will be kept informed, and encouraged to be actively involved at all stages of this support.

All students and their parents/carers are invited to meet teaching staff and Learning Support staff at parents' evenings to discuss progress and any concerns. All students with EHC Plans will have annual reviews to monitor progress against objectives and plan future objectives, in partnership with parents.

## **12. How does Future Academies Watford ensure staff are appropriately trained to support my child's special educational needs or disability?**

At Future Academies Watford we believe that your child's learning needs will first be met through the high quality teaching delivered by his/her class teacher. Regular professional development ensures that staff at Future Academies Watford are fully aware of how to cater for a range of Special Educational Needs. The Learning Support Department are in regular communication with teaching staff to make sure that everyone is aware of what Special Educational Needs there are within the school, and how to help support those needs in the classroom. The academy is able to access training programmes from different organisations including the Hertfordshire's Integrated Services for Learning. Individual training can also be arranged when necessary.

## **13. How will the school consider my views and those of my child with regards to his or her learning, special educational needs, or disability?**

We encourage parental involvement in any support we provide. We believe that it is essential for us to understand your view, as well as the views of your child, in any difficulties they may experience with their learning.

You will be able to share your views over email, by phoning the Learning Support Department, or by arranging a meeting with the SENCo. We will always endeavour to respond to your views, and where possible to act upon them.

If your child has an identified Special Educational Need, you will be invited to attend the school to discuss current progress, support strategies being used and expected outcomes. This may be with a member of the Learning Support Department or a key member of school staff. If your child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, you and your child will be able to share your views at the Annual Review.

All parents are also encouraged to have discussions with class teachers, to attend parents' evenings, and to ensure that their child completes home learning to a high standard.

We will carry out Student Voice activities throughout the year to better understand the views of students with SEND. An example of this would be the students' voice in the reviews of their own support plans which takes place three times a year. This informs us clearly of what is going well for them and where we can explore to make changes to best meet their needs. We believe the students' voice and their direct input into their SEND plans is integral to their inclusion being meaningful and successful.

#### **14. How will you help me to support my child's learning?**

- The academy provides parents and carers with advice on how to support your child's homework. Parents and carers are always welcome to contact their child's Form Tutor for more specific advice at any time.
- Parents will be invited to attend other specific events during the year e.g. Options Evening which give further support to parents and students.
- Your child's recent Student Profile will include a section on support strategies, many of which apply to home as well as school life. If you are not sure how you can apply them, contact the key worker of the report for further information.

#### **15. What support can students receive while taking tests and exams?**

We follow the guidelines outlined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). A student may be eligible for access arrangements (such as extra time, supervised rest breaks or use of a reader) if he/she meets certain pre-defined criteria. For full information on access arrangements, click on the JCQ website:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration>

Students who are on the SEND register are automatically tested to ascertain whether they meet the criteria. Other students are nominated by parents or teachers. Only small numbers of students are granted permission to have special consideration for examinations. In this case, parents and students are informed well in advance of the examination.

#### **16. What specialist services and expertise are available at, or accessed by, the school?**

<b>Educational Psychologist</b>	The academy has access to an Educational Psychologist. This enables us to access a range of consultation services, assessment and intervention support as well as training. Our Educational Psychologist consults with parents and staff to explore issues that may interfere with a student’s learning. Strategies discussed and actions taken should promote progress and inclusion using knowledge, experience and relevant research.
<b>CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)</b>	Where necessary, we are able to refer students to CAMHS directly. Parents can also refer to CAMHS via their GP. CAMHS provide outpatient assessment and treatment for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Team members are likely to include child and adolescent psychiatrists, social workers, clinical psychologists, community psychiatric nurses, child psychotherapists, occupational therapists, as well as art, music and drama therapists.
<b>Social Services</b>	If the school has a concern about a child or young person who may be suffering harm we immediately contact the Hertfordshire Referral and Assessment Team for advice and support. We also liaise closely when one of our students is Looked After by the Local Authority, is subject to a Child Protection Plan or is considered a Child in Need.
<b>Speech and Language Therapy</b>	The School has access to Speech and Language Therapy Service. This service can provide specialist advice, assessment and intervention for children and young people who have difficulties with any aspect of their communication. They can provide reports for schools to action their recommendations in how identified S&L needs can be met. These reports are reviewed after a period of time between 6 – 12 weeks to measure impact.
<b>School nurse</b>	The school nurse offers a wide ranging service which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health screening.</li> <li>• Creating care plans for students with additional health needs (for example diabetes, asthma, epilepsy).</li> <li>• Ad hoc health assessments relating to concerns around child protection and child in need reviews.</li> <li>• Health promotion - providing advice on a range of topics, including: sexual health, smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, and drugs and alcohol.</li> <li>• Supporting the SENCo with referrals for any ESMA provision should the school seek educational support for a student who may need education provision off site (at home).</li> </ul>
<b>Herts: Integrated Services for Learning (ISL)</b>	Integrated Services for Learning is a multi-professional service working in four integrated area teams across the county helping schools, settings and families to improve outcomes for children and young people with additional and special educational needs. Services include: Communication and Autism Team, Physical and Sensory Impairment, SEN Team.



<p><b>Alternative Provisions</b></p>	<p>Where a student's behaviour presents a barrier to learning that can't immediately be met by Future Academies Watford, your child may be referred to an Alternative Provision. This may include a short-term provision/outreach such as the Educational Support Centre (ESC), or a longer-term option that becomes your child's educational provider. All such providers will be equipped to provide your child with an education, as well as to address the behaviours or issues that meant they needed to be referred to alternative provision.</p>
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## 17. What is an EHC Plan, and who can request one for my child?

The purpose of an EHC Plan is to make special educational 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, prepare for adulthood.

An EHC Plan will:

- detail the views and aspirations of you and your child;
- give a full description of his/her Special Educational Needs and any health and social care needs;
- establish outcomes 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 agreed outcomes.

You, your child (where appropriate and aged 16 and over and/or the school can request that the Local Authority conducts an assessment of your child's needs). If the school is making a referral, this will be done by the SENCo. This may lead to an EHC Plan.

For full information on the EHC process, please read Chapter 9 of the SEND Code of Practice 0-25. For those students with the highest level of need, it may be appropriate for the SENCo, parents or the young person themselves (if over 16) to request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment.

Students and their parents are strongly encouraged and supported to be active participants in this process. We have an expectation that parents and the young person are fully included in the EHC assessment process from the start, are fully aware of their opportunities to offer views and information, and are consulted about the content of the plan.

## 18. How will the school fund SEND support?

There are three-different elements of funding for schools that are relevant for students with SEND:

1. **Student-led funding:** This is the basic per student funding that schools receive for every child whether or not they have SEN.
2. **Notional SEN funding:** This is an identified figure within the student-led funding that each school receives annually. This element of funding is used to fund the special educational provision for children with school-based SEN and a proportion (£6,000) of funding for children with EHC Plans.
3. **Funding for individual students:** This funding comes from the Local Authority, as and when required, and on the basis of the child's assessed needs. The expectation is that a mainstream school must provide an additional £6,000 of support for each individual child with SEND

before they can access any additional funding. For students in receipt of an EHC plan, Future Academies Watford has the same funding system as every school within the Herts LA boundary whereby each plan has an allocated budget which is individual to the provision as outline in the plan. This budget is reviewed annually.

## **19. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to the student's special educational needs?**

The notional SEN funding is allocated each financial year. This funding is used for a wide range of purposes that support students with SEND, such as:

- Enhancing high quality teaching: Our whole school priority is to continually improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students, including those with SEND.
- Employing specialist staff to support students with SEND, such as learning Support Assistants and other staff.
- Purchasing appropriate resources such as differentiated materials for less able students or literacy materials.
- Purchasing services such as Educational Psychology or Speech Therapists.
- Paying for training for staff to ensure they are aware of the latest research and developments on a wide range of SEND.
- Providing additional support and/or resources dependent on an individual's or cohort's needs.
- Contributing the first £6,000 towards funding for students with an EHC Plan.

## **20. How will the school let me know if they have any concerns about my child's learning, Special Educational Needs, or disability?**

Your child's class teacher or tutor may initially speak to you over the phone about your child's learning. The subject teacher may also talk to you about any issues at a parent's evening.

The SENCo may contact you and arrange a meeting to discuss your child's difficulties with learning, and any possible support strategies the school might be considering.

If your child is taking part in an intervention to support their learning, you will be informed about what this intervention is, and what the learning outcomes for it are.

## **21. How is the support allocated to children, and how do they move between different levels in school?**

Future Academies Watford receives funding that includes funds to support the learning of children with SEN and/or disabilities.

The Principal, in consultation with the school Governors, decides the budget for SEN provision on the basis of the needs of the children in school.

The Principal and the SENCo discuss the effectiveness of the school's current interventions and provisions and prioritise an action plan, which may include additional or alternative interventions, staff training and equipment needs. This process is reviewed regularly to ensure the best possible intervention is provided to those children who require additional support to learn.

Our internal 'cause for concern' system means that any member of staff can bring a student to the attention of the Learning Support Department, who can then assess the level of support needed.

## 22. Who can I contact if I have a complaint about the SEN provision made for my child?

Initially, speak with your child's teacher, Head of Year and/or the SENCo, Kerry Williams. Hopefully they will be able to address your concerns.

There is a senior member of staff who leads SEN at the academy. The Vice Principal, Safeguarding and Welfare, is Lucy Wheeler. Concerns may be escalated to this senior team member.

If you continue to feel your concerns are unsolved you can then contact the Principal, Deborah Warwick, who may direct you to the academy's Complaints Policy and procedure.

## 23. Roles and responsibilities at Future Academies Watford

**Class Teacher** – the person responsible for teaching your child a particular subject.

**Tutor** – a member of staff who sees your child for 30 minutes each day, supporting their learning through PSHE and academic support, as well as being the first person for your child to go to if they have an issue in school they want help with.

**Teaching Assistant** – a member of staff who supports the teacher to get the best learning outcomes for students in class. LSAs may also give focused, 1-to-1, small group interventions and support to individual students to support them in their school life.

**Head of Year** – within each Year group, the Head of Year is responsible for monitoring attendance, punctuality and behaviour. They will help students to find the right support if they are struggling in school.

**SENCo** – Special Educational Needs Coordinator (Kerry Williams) responsible for the overall provision of support for students with SEN.

## 24. How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?

Hertfordshire's Local Offer is available on the Herts Website:

<http://directory.hertsdirect.org/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/localoffer.page>

The Hertfordshire Local Offer can be accessed through Hertfordshire Directory at the following address:

<http://directory.hertsdirect.org/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/localoffer.page>

If parents/carers would like to use the Local Offer, but they cannot access the internet, they can contact their local library or Children's Centre.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>