

SEND report and parent information

Retford Oaks Academy

September 2025

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1 Our Academy

Retford Oaks Academy is a fully inclusive mainstream academy which values all students equally, regardless of their physical or academic abilities. We offer a range of provisions to support all children ensuring their access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

2 Types of SEND

The Four Areas of Need

At Retford Oaks Academy we provide support for any young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in line with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice. This falls within the four primary areas of SEND: Cognition and Learning (C&L), Communication and Interaction (C&I), Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) along with Sensory and/or Physical (S&P) needs within the context of a mainstream environment. We make reasonable adjustments and best endeavours to support learners with SEND. SEND needs can overlap with students being classified as more than one area. Below are more detailed explanations into the four areas:

Cognition and Learning (C&L)

- Cognitive development, attainment/progress is at a lower level and below the majority of their peers
- Communication, participation and/or language difficulties
- Curriculum access/student participation, concentration and retention difficulties
- Social development difficulties, in making and maintaining friendships and relationships
- There may be some delay in fine and gross motor skills
- They may need support to develop independence in organisational skills and personal care needs

Communication and Interaction (C&I)

- Language and communication difficulties
- They may struggle with social interactions and read social cues
- Curriculum access/student participation difficulties, struggling to follow instructions and accepting adult direction
- Unusual response to sensory stimuli
- Uneven developmental profile

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

- Difficulty in understanding and participating in classroom activities, that can result in limited progress
- Disruption in emotional health and wellbeing, which impacts on learning
- Unpredictable responses to learning tasks resulting in being uncooperative and/or emotional withdrawal
- Difficulty making and maintaining friendships

- May become disruptive despite appropriate classroom strategies being put in place

Sensory and/or Physical (S&P)

- Where progress requires some additional support
- Has mobility needs or personal/intimate care support
- Has a health care plan
- Has difficulty forming and maintaining friendships
- Communication and language difficulties requiring specialist support

3 Our Approach

How do we identify children with Special Educational Needs?

The identification of SEND is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all students and is the responsibility of all staff. The assessment of special educational needs will actively involve the student, their parents/carers and their teachers. Data will be used to help us accurately assess and plan for the needs of all students with SEND. The data used is a combination of the students' academic progress, standardized assessments and diagnostic testing, these help to identify strengths and weaknesses of the individual.

The above information will form a starting point from which we can tailor interventions and build a bespoke package of support. For some students this may require us to seek advice from specialist professionals. As a school we follow the assess, plan, do, review cycle, with us looking at areas of difficulty, planning appropriate interventions, carrying these out and then reviewing their impact on learning. This cycle is carried out over two terms and if the student requires support that is "additional to and different from" the normal classroom provision, then they will be added to our SEND register.

Feedback on student progress is via termly reports, parents' evenings and SEND parent/carer days, where you can meet with our SENDCo half termly to raise concerns and look at the interventions that have been put in place. Parents can also track behaviour, homework and attendance via our online system.

4 Teaching and Learning

In line with the SEND Code of Practice guidance on 'reasonable adjustments,' a graduated approach is taken depending on the needs of the individual child/pupil. This begins with identification, assessment, adaptation, intervention and personalisation of the curriculum where necessary, with the goal of enabling every child/pupil to learn effectively. To support any special educational need in the classroom, there are a range of support strategies that are available at Retford Oaks Academy. All students have access to:

- Quality First Teaching
- Scaffolded lessons to support individual needs
- Dyslexia friendly classroom teaching

- ASD and ADHD adaptations
- Differentiated outcomes
- Simple communication adaptations
- Reasonable environment adaptations
- Progress tracking and monitoring
- Smaller groupings for the lower sets in core lessons
- Access to coloured overlays
- Access to our sensory room

Further support for some students at Retford Oaks may include:

- Access arrangements for tests/exams
- Literacy screening to look for areas of weakness
- Numeracy screening to look for areas of weakness
- Parental meetings to discuss concerns
- Subject specific, informal support

Targeted individual support may include all of the above strategies plus:

- Individualized scaffolding that is “additional to and different from” the normal classroom provision
- Support from a teaching assistant, to look at adaptations in the classroom
- Regular planned meetings as part of the assess, plan, do, review cycle
- Extended interventions to support learners who are behind their peers of the same age
- Regular, sustained access to a range of booster groups
- Bespoke alternative provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Health e.g. the school counsellor, the Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Fresh Start reading interventions, for students whose reading age is significantly below their chronological age
- Literacy and numeracy interventions, using IDL to tailor learning to support areas of weakness
- Social stories groups, looking at different scenarios and how these could be dealt with
- Break and lunchtime clubs for students who struggle being in the general school population
- Targeted afterschool interventions for core subject areas
- Withdrawal from some classes to support extra interventions e.g. removal from Modern Foreign Languages to focus on English
- Mentoring from our teaching assistants and/or sixth form students
- Interventions for external agencies e.g. Notts Communication Team, the Visual Impairment Team
- Off-site educational provision
- Additional transition support in moving from primary to secondary
- Support from the Educational Psychology service

Pupil Passports

If a student is placed on to our SEND register, then these students require “additional to and different from” the normal classroom provision. For these students’ individual pupil passports are created. The passports are written from the child’s perspective, with them explaining strategies to

support them in lessons. These are stored on Provision Map, which allows all staff to access up to date information on how to adapt to a learner's needs.

5 Parent/Carer Reviews

Decisions are made collegiately in response to the individual needs. It is a responsive process to ever-changing needs and is structured with clearly defined outcomes. Tutors and subject teachers monitor success and achievement through pupil engagement and progress data. As part of the assess, plan, do, review cycle we work together to look at adaptations, see what is working and what is not. From this we offer additional support and guidance. Support can be increased or decreased depending on levels of success. This process is monitored by the Head of Year and the SENDCo.

The school holds parents' evenings, review meetings and student review days with parents to share information, discuss progress and develop the way forward for their child. Tutors, subject teachers and SENDCo are also available via phone calls and emails to share information or answer any queries. The school aims to work collaboratively with parents or carers with the student's best interests, being at the forefront of our priorities.

In addition to this, the SENDCo now offers half termly meetings that can be accessed by any parent or carer. Each half term there is a whole day, where appointments can be made to raise concerns about a student, to look at diagnosis, to monitor interventions and or review student's progress. This means that you can meet with the Student Support Team regularly and again work collaboratively, to make positive changes to individuals learning experiences.

6 Pupil Views

The students fill in a questionnaire annually, to express their views on all aspects of school life. Pupil Passports are also used to gain pupil views on how lessons can be adapted to support their individual needs. They have an opportunity to be involved in the SEND parent/carers days and can sit in on the meetings. They can air their opinions where appropriate and help reflect on the provision that is in place. Best efforts are made to solicit views in alternative ways for children who do not communicate easily through speech, such as Microsoft Forms surveys. The School Council meetings, also allow views to be expressed and where students can be involved in positive changes for the school.

7 Exam Access Arrangements

The JCQ represents the largest national awarding bodies in the UK offering GCSEs, A Levels and vocational qualifications. Applications for exam access arrangements must be agreed by JCQ and their regulations are updated annually. Access arrangements are for candidates based on:

- Evidence of need

- The student's normal way of working e.g. the arrangements that take place in all lessons already
- Access arrangements are for students with the required knowledge, understanding and skills, who are unable to demonstrate these in assessments, due to their SEND, disability or injury
- Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working
- Proposed arrangements should support a student in being able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding
- Arrangement should remove any substantial disadvantage but should not unfairly advantage a student

Applications

An application must be accompanied by the following teacher evidence:

- Documentation of evidence, showing the nature and extent of difficulty
- Evidence of the student's normal way of working, this can come from in class assessments/tests/trial exams across years 9, 10 and 11
- Involvement of teaching staff, who give feedback back on the regular working practice in the classroom

As a mainstream secondary school, we must follow the rules set out by JCQ. We are inspected annually to monitor what we have put in place to support our learners. If an establishment is found to be breaking the rules, this is classified as malpractice and can result in a setting not being able to offer examinations.

8 Inclusion Outside of Lessons

Retford Oaks Academy is a fully inclusive school and makes every effort to ensure all children have access to extra-curricular activities within the boundaries of health and safety and in line with schools duty to make reasonable adjustments.

At Retford Oaks Academy we encourage engagement with any extra-curricular activities. We aim to remove any barrier that would limit students from being able to attend and participate in events. We support by creating adjustments and providing extra provision for students to participate in events, with further risk assessments, extra staff and flexibility.

Student Support is open to students from 8.15am every weekday, where students can come to have their breakfast and socialise with their peers in a quieter more nurturing environment. We are also open everyday day until 4pm, where students can complete homework, have extra support with their learning and have additional tutoring on core subjects.

9 Staff Training and Development

Relevant staff have regular training relating to specific individual needs. Staff training is reviewed on a regular basis and updated as necessary by in-house or external

providers/practitioners. A number of staff have accessed Paediatric First Aid, Managing Anxiety, Supporting Children with Autism and Precision Training delivered by external agencies. Key information and developments are shared during staff meetings. The Academy staff also have access to online training modules in a wide range of subjects. The SENDCo attends all relevant, up to date training on a regular basis and then filters this down to staff where appropriate. Staff have individual CPD focused on key areas of SEND as and when required.

10 Support Services

School works in tandem with outside agencies. These include:

- Communication and Interaction Team
- Cognition and Learning Team
- Medical professionals
- Educational Psychologists (EPs)
- Speech Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech and Language Team
- Hearing Impairment Services
- Visual Impairment Services
- Physical Disability Services
- Sensory Audit Team
- Social Services
- Healthy Families Team
- Mental Health Team
- Health Related Education Team (HRET)
- Bassetlaw Behaviour Partnership (BPBP)
- Family Service
- Early Help Unit
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS)
- Police, Youth Offending and Prevent Teams

These agencies work to support the students, as well as staff, in providing strategies to support education, as well as well-being. Where necessary, the Virtual School supports us to deliver appropriate care to Looked After Children. SEND leaders also meet regularly across the Family of Schools and Diverse Academies. The school talks to parents about local organisations and services that may be of relevance or interest.

11 Accessibility

The site building regulations comply with all relevant accessibility requirements. The building provides wheelchair access in all areas and accessible toilets. Student Support is made up of a variety of rooms to cater for pupils with SEND, allowing them to access interventions as well as additional support as and when needed.

12 Transition of Phases Within Education

Depending on the needs of the child, at Retford Oaks Academy we can provide additional support in transitioning from primary to secondary school. Opportunities for meetings for parents and primaries with our SENDCo, to share SEND needs and to address any concerns. This allows appropriate adaptations to be put in place for starting at our academy. Additional visits are available, allowing students to look around the school and to learn the layout of the building.

All students in year 6, who will be starting in the September of that year will have transition week with us. Students will get to know the school, as well as us getting to know them. They will take part in all of the lessons available at Retford Oaks. From this students gets a real sense of our school and what we have to offer. In addition to the transition week, we also have SEND transition mornings. If parents or primaries have raised concerns then these students can be invited to one of these mornings. Students will be welcomed into Student Support and be introduced to our amazing team, as well as taking part in fun activities.

In year admissions consultations will be made through the office team. If a student has additional needs then the SENDCo will be made aware and can offer further support in transitioning to our secondary setting.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance is also promoted on future career pathways. Progression routes are tracked throughout changes in Key Stage, to ensure appropriate options are taken, for transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and again from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5. Information is also delivered to vulnerable pupils via bespoke programs e.g. appropriate advice is given in a sensitive and responsive manner where necessary.

13 Emotional and Social Development

The school promotes a culture that encourages positive interaction between staff and pupils. Staff listen to children and take their concerns seriously. Staff are available to listen and talk to children as necessary or when requested. We currently offer services that provide counselling for targeted pupils. The pastoral team holds regular meetings where individual students and pastoral issues are discussed, appropriate strategies implemented and outcomes are assessed regularly. All staff are trained in and are sensitive to changes in children's behaviour and emotional state within the classroom and consult the mental health and/or safeguarding leads when required.

14 Looked After Children (LAC)

All LAC students are offered 1:1 sessions for Maths & English with a tutor (NQ). As they progress through school the focus of these sessions will shift depending on need. Other LAC students have targeted interventions such as mentoring or counselling if they are struggling to regulate in school. 4 of our current LAC students are on bespoke timetables due to SEMH reasons, these vary from 1:1 tutoring in the home, hybrid packages and reduced timetables. If a request comes in for SEND assessments eg dyslexia these are carried out in the same way they would be for other students.

15 Bullying

Bullying is repeated, intended behaviour that hurts someone either physically or emotionally. Bullying can often be aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Bullying can take many forms and can include:

- Physical assault
- Teasing
- Making threats
- Name calling
- Cyberbullying – bullying via mobile phone or online, for example through email, social media and instant messenger

At Retford Oaks Academy we use the phrase S.T.O.P, which stands for Several Times on Purpose. This is publicised around school with posters, discuss in form time and a comments box in student reception, where students can explain incidents of bullying that they have either experienced themselves or that they have seen around the school.

Students are expected to have a positive attitude, maintaining high expectations for themselves and to contribute to creating a positive climate for learning. The rights and responsibilities of students are set out and should be adhered to alongside the academy rules. Reminders of the academy rules and expected standards of behaviour are displayed across the academy and regularly communicated through a range of methods.

We use dedicated systems to track and monitor student behaviour, ensuring parents and carers stay informed and updated about their child's progress and conduct. We will take responsible measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff and this includes protection from bullying. Our ethos is one of inclusion and equality, where bullying of any kind is regarded as a serious breach of our behaviour policy and will not be tolerated.

16 Complaints

Any concerns or complaints should first be aired with the Head of Year. Concerns will be passed on to the SENDCo or Principal if appropriate. Any formal complaint should follow the Academy policy, which requires a written submission to the Principal and Chair of Governors.

17 Evaluation of SEND Provision

Student success at Retford Oaks Academy is measured using a range of key performances, which are frequently reviewed and acted upon. Together with academic progress and positive contributions/experiences of students within the school, we aim to ensure that students are included and happy with their school experience. We aim to reduce any gaps between students with SEND and those who do not, this includes reviewing academic progress, attendance, behavioural data and attendance to extra-curricular opportunities. Through the student voice and parental contributions, we identify the student experience and review the provision employed to support the student. We work hard to challenge our students, fostering ambition and high expectations of themselves and their future.

18 Further Information

For further information on our Local Offer you can visit the [Nottshelpyourself | Retford Oaks Academy](#).

The SEND faculty is made up of a team of staff including an Assistant Principal, SENDCo, Assistant SENDCo and a team of highly qualified teaching assistants, who are all assigned to a specific year group. Below are the details for our team:

- Assistant Principal, line manager for Safeguarding and SEND – Mr Richard Stewardson
- SENDCo – Mrs Claire Gould – NASENDCo qualified
- Assistant SENDCo – Mrs Karina Austerberry
- Teach Assistant – Mrs Lynn Morris (Year 11)
- Teach Assistant – Mrs Emma Gibson (Year 11)
- Teach Assistant – Ms Shell Lacey (Year 10 and Post16)
- Teach Assistant – Mrs Mandy Hopkinson (Year 9)
- Teach Assistant – Mrs Nikki Parnell (Year 8)
- Teach Assistant – Ms Tracey Wright (Year 7)
- Teach Assistant and SEND Transition Lead – Mrs Sally Hird (Year 7)
- Teach Assistant for the Hub – Miss Sarah Hopkinson

All Student Support staff can be contacted by phone on 01777861618 or email on roa-senco@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk.