

SEN Information Report

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

Trafford's local offer makes it easier for families to find out about the support that is available for children and young people with SEN (Special Educational Needs) or who are Disabled. All schools and academies in Trafford are expected to identify and support pupils with special educational needs to make the best possible progress. Schools are supported to be as inclusive as possible and wherever possible, the needs of pupils with a Special Educational Need are met in a mainstream setting, where families want this to happen. Trafford's Graduated Approach document provides guidance on what should usually be available within school's resources.

Schools have a duty to publish SEN Information on their website which is updated every year. The questions on this template were developed with parents. Some schools have chosen to complete this template to provide their SEN Information. To go straight to a particular question, use the links below:

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1. What kinds of special educational needs does the school provide for?

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls (AGGS) is a mainstream school which is committed to providing an outstanding education for its students. The following core values underpin school life:

- Unity
- Co-operation
- Empowerment
- Selflessness
- Perseverance
- Vision

At AGGS, every student is valued equally and encouraged to develop to their full potential. Consequently, where we are considered the right school for a young person with a special educational need or disability (SEND), particularly in terms of academic ability and attainment, we will use a range of strategies and ensure that the most appropriate support is in place to enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Teaching staff at AGGS have experience of providing for a range of special educational needs including:

- Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
- Autistic Spectrum Condition
- Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression
- Speech and language difficulties
- Sensory Impairment (visual or hearing impairment)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Physical disability

Parents/ carers are encouraged to contact the school to discuss individual student needs. Contact details are provided below.

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

At AGGS, we recognise the importance of early identification of needs, good Home-School communication and strong relationships between students and teachers. Parents/carers and students are encouraged to contact school or speak to a member of staff to discuss concerns as and when they arise.

In addition, there are effective systems and procedures in place to identify and support students who may have special educational needs:

- Some of our students may already have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan or have been identified as needing SEN Support by their previous educational setting, usually a primary school or another secondary school, in which case the information will be shared with us on transfer.
- The progress of all students is routinely monitored by teaching staff using a variety of data. If the progress of any student is causing significant concern, then the senior tutor will contact parents/carers to discuss next steps, which could include classroom interventions, pastoral support such as participation in the student mentoring programme or referral to the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator).
- On referral, the SENCo will make an initial assessment of the young person's difficulties, using information provided by teaching staff, classroom observations and standardised screening tools in the first instance. It may be that having collated the information, it is judged that the student should

continue to be supported through the pastoral system or alternatively, that further referral to an outside agency or specialist assessor is required, to diagnose the underlying cause. Teaching and learning strategies and additional interventions can then be put in place according to individual need and will be regularly reviewed.

- Students with SEND will be placed on the SEN register and supported by an Access to Learning Plan which summarises the needs of the young person and the strategies and interventions to be used by teaching staff to address any barriers to learning. This will be regularly reviewed with the student and with parents/carers. The student will be removed from the SEN register when/if they no longer need the additional support.
- At all stages, parents/carers and students will be kept informed of the outcome of any assessment or referral.

3. How will both you and I know how my child/young person is doing?

School communicates regularly with parents/carers about the progress of each student. This is done via termly school reports and parents' evening appointments arranged by year group as a matter of whole school policy. Interventions that parents/carers can help with at home can be discussed at parents' evening.

Parents/carers with a student on SEN support or with an EHC plan will also be invited by the SENCo to discuss progress towards desired outcomes and to assess the effectiveness of interventions at face-to-face review meetings and/or by telephone contact.

Parents/ carers are encouraged to share concerns that arise during the school year; a list of available contacts is provided below. Parents/ carers can expect a prompt response, in line with our communications policy.

4. How will the curriculum be matched to my child/young person's needs?

AGGS aims to provide an academic, broad, and balanced curriculum that enables all students to realise their potential. A variety of teaching and learning approaches are utilised and lessons are differentiated for a range of need, including special educational needs. In addition:

- School will provide specialist equipment such as coloured reading rulers, coloured exercise books, laptops, and iPads, reading pens and other aids where these are recommended by specialists working with students to ensure access to the curriculum.
- Resources will also be modified in accordance with advice regarding e.g., font size, layout, colour etc and the support and expertise of the sensory support service will be fully utilised to ensure equal access to the curriculum wherever possible.
- Other significant modifications to the curriculum will be considered on an individual basis as needs arise and in consultation with other agencies and health care practitioners.

5. How will school staff support my child/young person?

To ensure their academic progress, all students will, primarily, be supported by high quality teaching. There are systems in place to ensure an outstanding quality of education is provided across the curriculum, which includes Learning Walks with a SEND focus.

As well as using their own subject knowledge and expertise, teachers are supported by the SENCo and outside specialist support services to find suitable strategies for students with SEND. Needs and additional interventions are communicated to staff by means of Access to Learning Plans, shared resources, and individual case conferences.

Teaching staff will ensure that approved access arrangements and reasonable adjustments including the availability of extra time or use of a laptop will be made available to students consistently to support their normal way of working.

The Pastoral Assistants at main school and sixth form will provide daily emotional wellbeing and first aid support and assist students with the storing and dispensing of medication. See school website for further information.

Form tutors will support students in dealing with everyday challenges that can affect wellbeing and academic progress.

6. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

To best support students with SEND, there is an ongoing cycle of assess, plan, do, review, a graduated approach as set out in the SEN Code of Practice (2014). Information from students, parents/carers, classroom teachers, senior tutors and specialist services will be called upon as required to input into any decisions regarding the adaptations, interventions or reasonable adjustments required to reduce barriers to learning and ensure all students can realise their full potential.

The SEN register comprises of two categories. The highest category of need is those students who have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan. These students require additional resources, for which extra funding may be available. Decisions about the support required by the individual student will be taken at Annual Review meetings to which the SENCO, parents/carers, student, outside agencies and other named individuals will be invited.

The second category are those students with SEND who require extra support but at a level below that of an EHC plan. These students will be identified as receiving SEN Support. An Access to Learning Plan will be provided which summarises their needs to teachers as well as identifying strategies that can usefully be adopted in the classroom. These are used by all teaching staff to help inform their planning.

In addition to the two categories above that appear on the SEN register, we also have students who may require monitoring and/or referral for further assessment before it is decided whether they will require SEN support. Parents/carers will always be informed of the outcome of the monitoring and/or assessment. Reports produced will be used to guide decisions made about the type of support that is put into place.

7. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including physical activities and school trips?

AGGS aims to educate the whole child and considers education outside of the classroom to have a vital role in students' personal development and overall wellbeing. It aims to be as inclusive as possible.

- All off-site activities are risk assessed to protect the health and safety of participants.
- There are times when an additional risk assessment may be required for an individual student with SEND, to allow them to participate in physical activities or a school day trip/residential visit. In such circumstances the school SENCO, parent/carer and the student would be involved at the planning stage and school would liaise with the appropriate specialist support services.
- On occasion, it may be necessary for a specialist support assistant to accompany the student on a trip or to support their participation in physical activities.

- In the unlikely event that it is considered unsafe for an individual to take part in an activity, alternative provision will be made.

8. What support will there be for my child/young person's overall wellbeing?

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls considers student wellbeing to be of the utmost importance and prides itself on the quality of the pastoral care it provides to support and guide students throughout the school.

- Every student in Years 7-11 has a form tutor, an assistant senior tutor, and a senior tutor; in the sixth form, each student has a form tutor, a senior tutor, and the head of sixth form. In addition, the pastoral team is supported by the lead senior tutor, the SENCO, the pastoral assistant, and the sixth form administrative team. The school also employs a Relate Counsellor and a 42nd Street Counsellor.
- Termly monitoring with form tutors provides an opportunity for all students to raise any issues they wish to discuss. A mentoring programme is available for some students who may benefit from additional help with organisation and study skills.
- In recent years, Mindfulness has been introduced into the school curriculum and is delivered by trained staff. There is also a team of trained anti-bullying peer group ambassadors who run a lunchtime drop-in TV lounge and a team of student wellbeing ambassadors, coordinated by the lead senior tutor.
- Access to a sensory room and/or wellbeing room is available to those who require it. Students are provided with time-out cards to use these facilities under the guidance of senior tutors.

Further details can be found on the school website.

9. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

Both the SENCO and the Pastoral Team, work with a range of agencies and will involve the appropriate services as and when required, to ensure that the needs of all students, including those with SEND, are met. This will always be in consultation with parents/carers where the young person is under 16 years of age.

- Services we work with include health and social care, Local Authority Support Services such as Trafford SEN Advisory Service (SENAS) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), voluntary organisations and charities such as 42nd Street.
- Referrals can be made by the school SENCO to the Trafford Autism and Social Communication Pathway and Trafford Combined ADHD Service.
- Counselling is provided by 42nd Street and other trained counsellors.
- Bright Futures Educational Trust employs its own team of qualified educational psychologists (EPs), providing for timely and evidence-based interventions such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. They have recently initiated new screening protocols for the identification and support of students with autism spectrum condition and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- The EPs or other specialists may be invited to observe, meet, and assess students so that appropriate personalised strategies and interventions may be put in place to support them and their families. These will be shared with teaching staff at case conferences and via the Access to Learning Plans.

- Representatives from specialist support services such as Trafford Sensory Impairment Support Service (TSISS) are invited to attend review meetings for pupils/students with SEND and to deliver training sessions to teaching staff.
- Other services and expertise available include the Education Welfare Service, Trafford Emotional Resilience Network (TERN), the school examinations officer and pastoral mentors. In addition, as a school, we work closely with our Bright Futures Educational Trust (BFET) partners and have access to the SEN expertise of Melland High School.

10. What training have the staff supporting children/young people with SEND had?

Mrs A Hughes, the school SENCO, has gained the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (2016). She has attended workshops and courses on a variety of related fields, including dyslexia and a multi-sensory intervention programme, mental health first aid, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autistic spectrum condition. She is a qualified access arrangements assessor (PAPAA, 2020). She regularly attends the local secondary SENCO forum for the latest updates on national and local SEND policy and procedure. Mrs Hughes has previous experience of working with students with a broad range of abilities and a range of special educational needs in several mainstream schools and as a home tutor for the Complementary Education Service in Sefton. In addition, she has experience of delivering support for KS3 literacy and teaching English to EAL learners. Other training:

- All staff attend the annual SEND update in September; all newly appointed staff attend an induction programme which includes sessions on inclusion and SEN, delivered by the SENCo.
- All staff attended disability awareness training (July 2021). Time for SEND related staff development is planned as part of the School Development Plan 2023-24 and our commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- The EPs deliver regular training to the pastoral team and/or to all staff on a range of topics including autism spectrum condition, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, emotional boundaries, sleep hygiene and anxiety. Other training may be delivered by specialists as and when the need arises.
- The Trafford Sensory Impairment Support Service provide training and ongoing support and advice for teachers of students with a visual or hearing impairment.

The designated safeguarding lead is Ms R Bond, Vice Principal.

The lead senior tutor, Mr J Flanagan; head of sixth form, Mrs K Galvin; and head of RS, Mr S Davenport, also have safeguarding and pupil wellbeing responsibilities.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

Where AGGS is considered the most appropriate school for a student with SEND, we will strive towards their full access to the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities. This includes consideration of the whole school environment.

- This is a split site school and movement between sites necessitates the crossing of roads.
- The main school, Breeze Hill and Fairlie have been adapted for access by wheelchair users. Lifts are provided to ensure upper floor classrooms can be accessed by all students, including those who are disabled or have limited mobility. Plans are afoot to repair a disabled stair left in West Wing. There are disabled toilet facilities. EVAC Chairs are provided for emergency situations where students need to get downstairs without use of their wheelchair/crutches.

- Action is in place to ensure that the needs of prospective sixth form students with limited mobility or who use a wheelchair are considered when assigning classes to rooms and ensuring fair access to sixth form facilities.
- Other reasonable adjustments such as the provision of specialist equipment to aid access to lesson resources are organised on an individual basis according to need. For example, a student with a vision impairment may be given an iPad so they can access digital copies of textbooks and take advantage of its magnification facility for viewing PowerPoint presentations.
- We work with specialist agencies and other experts such as the Trafford orientation and mobility officer to consider what further adaptations may be required to ensure equality of access. An environmental audit was last conducted in 2017 and its recommendations implemented to ensure the site was safe for a visually impaired pupil.

The school accessibility plan is available on the school website. See Equality and Accessibility Plan:

<https://aggs.bright-futures.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Equality-and-Accessibility-Plan-2020-2023.pdf>

12. How are parents and young people themselves involved in the school?

Parents/carers and students have numerous opportunities for involvement in day-to-day school life at AGGS.

- This includes dance and drama productions, school choir(s), orchestra; student leadership roles such as charity and school council representatives, school prefects and wellbeing ambassadors; and a wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities.
- There is an active Parent Teacher Association which organises various fund-raising events including school fairs, raffles, and cultural events.
- Parents/ carers are encouraged to attend a variety of induction and information evenings at various stages in their child's education such as at the start of Year 7, in Year 9 in preparation for making GCSE option choices and in Year 11/13 as students make decisions regarding post-16 and post-18 education.
- In addition, parents/carers of students with SEND are invited to arrange face-to-face meetings, or telephone appointments, as needs arise, as well as maintaining regular communication with the SENCo and/or senior tutor via email and with the other teaching members of staff via the normal school reporting arrangements.
- For students with an EHC plan, parents and the young person will be invited to participate in the Annual Review by submitting a report and attending a meeting, organised in accordance with statutory timescales. They will be encouraged to keep in regular contact with the SENCo and to attend other meetings as needs arise throughout the year.

13. Who can I contact for further information?

The first point of contact for any queries regarding a student at the school would be the senior tutor/assistant senior tutor who can be contacted either by telephone 0161 912 5912 or email: admin@aggs.bright-futures.co.uk

If you wish to speak to the SENCO, Mrs A Hughes, you can contact her on the school telephone number 0161 912 5912 or email: admin@aggs.bright-futures.co.uk

For any queries about admission to the school please contact the Admissions Secretary, Mrs A Sullivan by email: admissions@aggs.bright-futures.co.uk or by telephone 0161 912 5912.

Other specialist services such as Trafford Sensory Impairment Support Service may be contacted. The details of these services can be found on the Trafford Directory (see below).

14. How will the school prepare and support my child/young person to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

Year 7 Admissions

AGGS has effective procedures in place to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary school:

- An annual open evening for prospective pupils in Year 5 and their parents/carers, during which initial contact can be made with the SENCo.
- An induction day during the summer term when Year 6 joiners are welcomed into school to spend a day with their form group and form tutor to participate in taster lessons and friendship/ team-building activities.
- Staff visits to feeder primary schools in the summer term prior to enrolment, to meet the Year 6 joiners and their teachers.
- A singles afternoon for those pupils who are the only new intake to join us from any one primary school setting, to engage in a range of fun activities and make new friends.
- An induction evening in the first half term of Year 7 to enable all parents/carers to meet teaching staff, including form tutors.
- In addition, private tours of the school can be arranged for any student with SEND, and their parent/carer or primary TA, to ease transition and to address specific concerns regarding access or mobility.
- Parents/carers of prospective Year 7 students with SEND will always be contacted by the SENCo or Senior Tutor for Year 7 prior to arrival to discuss needs and support. Where possible, the SENCo will attend Year 6 Annual Reviews for those pupils with an EHC plan.

Other Admissions

For students who join a school year group other than Year 7, including new arrivals in Year 12, the SENCo will liaise with their previous educational establishment to ensure that any relevant documentation pertaining to special educational needs, is forwarded and that the student's needs can continue to be supported in the new setting. A pre-visit will be arranged in the Summer Term prior to admission to the sixth form, for any student with SEND who wishes to participate.

Careers Guidance

Beyond initial entry in Year 7, all students are supported to make the right choices regarding the next phase of their education by form tutors, senior tutors, the Post 18 Options/ higher education co-ordinator as well as the Connexions (Career) service. Our Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance Coordinator (CEIAG) works closely with the Connexions Service and students can arrange to see Ms A Parkins, our Careers Adviser, during the school day. From Year 9 onwards, she will provide impartial guidance to ensure students make informed and appropriate decisions about subject choices and post 16/post 18 options. She will also attend annual review meetings at the request of students with an EHC plan and/or their parents. Preparing for Adulthood aspirations and outcomes will be discussed in detail at key transition points.

For further information about Careers Education, please see our website.

On departure from AGGS, all relevant documentation will be passed on to the new provider, including details about any provision for SEND.

15. What other support is available?

Trafford SEND Local Offer

Every local authority is required to identify all the services and organisations which are available in the local area to support children, young people and families who have special educational needs or who are disabled.

Find out more about the local offer of support which is available for disabled children and young people and those who have SEN on the Trafford Service Directory www.trafford.gov.uk/localoffer

or by contacting the Family Information Service:

Telephone: 0161 912 1053 Monday to Friday, 8.30am until 5pm

Email: fis@trafford.gov.uk

Twitter: @traffordfis

Facebook: www.facebook.com/traffordfis

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A Hughes