

Statement of Principles At Vale of York Academy

We welcome everybody into our community. We recognise that every child is unique and special and will need to be recognised and known as an individual. Currently we work with students with a wide range of additional needs including, Dyslexia, physical difficulties, speech language and communication difficulties, Autistic Spectrum conditions, more general learning difficulties, hearing and visual impairment and attention deficit disorders. We have a fully accessible building that is DDA compliant.

Our Academy ethos is based on our motto:

Semper ad optimum – be the best

Every student at Vale of York Academy has the opportunity to follow all National Curriculum subjects as well as following an appropriate Key Stage 4 curriculum pathway.

Our Hemisphere team provides specific interventions where appropriate. At Key Stage 4 students take a variety of appropriate qualifications including GCSE and Technical Awards.

We are committed to narrowing the attainment gap between SEND and non-SEND students. This may include short-term intervention learning or other learning interventions developed on an individual needs basis.

If your child has a disability and you would like to know more about what we offer at Vale of York Academy please contact us on: 01904 560000 or email s.barnes@voy.hslt.academy

Identifying Need

Students are “known” at Vale of York Academy and we are constantly monitoring the progress of known students.

Students with SEND are identified in a number of ways:

- Information comes from the Primary school
- Vale of York Academy teachers raise concerns
- Parents share information and concerns
- Students themselves
- External professionals may be involved and inform the school of their work with a student

Assessment of students' progress is done formally at set points in the year for all students. In addition the Hemisphere team undertakes robust and recognised testing as is appropriate to identify specific needs and develop intervention programmes on an individual basis.

- We use data to accurately track student progress.
- Your child will be set challenging targets.
- Our challenge is to support your child in attaining those targets.

We share examples of good practice during department meetings and Teaching and Learning training with all staff. Sharing information enables colleagues to work together to overcome learning barriers.

We celebrate learning achievement throughout the academic year.

How we support students through the curriculum

We support students either in the mainstream or within smaller group settings. Support is geared to individual need and the aim in both settings is to develop successful independent learners and happy students.

Students follow the full National Curriculum with appropriate support delivered primarily through Quality First Teaching.

In Key stage 4 students may take one less option subject to allow for Study Plus time which is used for consolidation of the core subjects. In addition students may follow a supported pathway of subjects which offer GCSE and BTEC options.

We look at individual need and, in consultation with parents and teachers, modify the curriculum accordingly where appropriate.

Examples of specific support:

- PE lessons are differentiated to include the individual physical needs of our students.
- On a daily basis students with additional physical needs access our lessons successfully. Our school has carpets that soften the acoustics for students with a hearing impairment.
- We have a Pastoral Team which includes external professionals who are trained to help students cope with a range of social and emotional difficulties including anxiety, self-esteem, and social issues.
- We develop learning programmes with advice from external professionals where appropriate to meet students' needs.
- Our Accessibility Plan is planned collaboratively with students and parents.
- Teaching Assistants deliver study skills interventions where appropriate to help our students develop independent study skills.
- Our hemisphere team runs a break and lunch club for identified students who need this support.
- We have a phonics intervention programme to help develop reading skills for students who need this support.

Consulting with Parents and Young People

All students at Vale of York Academy have formal consultation points during the year including parents evenings. Students with SEND have in addition reviews for their Educational and Health Care Plans or My Support Plans. Parents and students with these plans are fully involved at each point of the decision making process and it is our aim that by

Year 9 students are communicating the support they need and want and are actively involved in the design of their own support programmes.

Supporting Transition

Transition is a very anxious time for parents and students and it is vital to “get it right”.

Transition from primary school can involve the following:

- An initial visit to the primary school to ascertain specific need and requirements (some of this information may already be in school if the student has had a Year 5 EHCP review to which Vale of York Academy were invited).
- Follow up visits to the primary school by a member of the SEND team to develop a greater understanding of need and effective ways of working.
- Students have a planned programme of transition visits to Vale of York Academy as is appropriate to need. This is done in consultation with parents and the primary school.
- Transition day and week are supported by the TA team.

It is important that parents feel they have a good relationship with the SEND team prior to transfer and so we may meet, talk or email many times before your child transfers. We will have established how we will communicate in the early weeks of transition and will have had the opportunity to address any specific issues that may affect your child. By the time your child enters Vale of York Academy we should all know each other very well.

Transition to Post 16 can involve the following:

- Access to a specialist SEND careers advisor who will provide advice and guidance
Initial visits to the different providers
- Travel training through our own scheme supported by York Independent Living and Travelling Scheme.
- Supported transition visits to the chosen provider if appropriate.

Expertise of Staff

All staff receive regular training in SEND with specific training being given as is appropriate. (This may occur for example if a young person enters our school with a rare syndrome).

Our staff work every day with a wide variety of SEND pupils including those with: Autistic Spectrum Conditions, Physical Difficulties, Sensory impairments and learning challenges.

We have a team of Teaching Assistants who are highly trained professionals including classroom based ATAs and a HLTA.

Training for all staff is on-going through whole school staff training sessions, Teaching and Learning Groups and Department meetings.

Training is accessed from the Learning Support Hub and other providers such as Pathfinder Training Hun as well as staff participating and then disseminating training from external courses.

Evaluating our Effectiveness

We are constantly looking to improve the provision we make for our students and we do this in several ways:

- Parental feedback through face to face consultations/reviews and surveys
- Student voice
- Staff feedback
- Outside agency specialist and Local Authority advice and guidance

How young people with SEND engage in extra-curricular activities

All our students are encouraged to take part in the wider aspects of academy life. Students with SEND are encouraged to attend our residential trips both in this country and abroad. They do this with planned support as is appropriate to their needs.

We also run a before school club which supports SEND students in preparation for the day, and an afterschool homework club 3 evenings a week which provides small group support for homework completion.

Additional Pastoral Support

It is important to us that all our students are “known”. Each student belongs to a tutor group with a tutor who will get to know them. They also belong to a Year group with a Progress Leader.

In addition we have a strong pastoral team who are trained to support students through difficult or challenging times as they tackle the complexities of adolescence.

Accessing other support

- York SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service) provide impartial support, advice and information for parents and carers of children with special educational needs. The service is free and can be provided over the telephone, at home visits or through support at school meetings. Contact: Yorksendiass@york.gov.uk Tel: 01904 554312
- Information about the York local offer for SEND can be found on the York Local Offer website which can be found at: <https://www.yorksend.org/>
- Complaints procedure for Vale of York Academy can be accessed from the academy's own website which can be found at: <https://voy.hslt.academy/>