

Saxon Hill Academy

Special Educational Needs & Disability Report

*The **Special Educational Needs & Disability Report** is a mandatory requirement for schools to publish their plans and provision to ensure that children and young people with disabilities can access a full and relevant education without being disadvantaged or discriminated against in any way.*

The Saxon Hill Academy SEND Report will draw upon and reference existing documents, policies and provision that describe how Saxon Hill Academy meets its obligations regarding legislation, and ensures that all children and young people, irrespective of their disability, have access to a full and dynamic relevant and meaningful education curriculum, care and health support.

Legislation and Compliance References

This report ensures compliance with the legislative requirements for SEN information reports, which are set out in [schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Regulations 2014](#) and [paragraphs 6.79-6.81 of the SEND Code of Practice](#)

Updated April 2025

Our School Context

Saxon Hill Academy is a special school in Lichfield, Staffordshire and is part of the Shaw Education Trust (a multi-academy trust).

Our designation (and subsequent specialism) is for children and young people aged 2-19 with physical disabilities, complex medical needs, and associated sensory and learning difficulties. Our learning environments have been developed to be appropriately resourced and fully accessible for these specialist areas of need.

Saxon Hill has a 14 bed, short-break residential service known as Sleepover Club, providing extended day and overnight short breaks for our children and families. OFSTED have rated this provision Outstanding (inspection July 2023).

In September 2024, we had 133 pupils on roll which is 3 places above planned places.

As our school is an all-age provision, we do not necessarily have a large cohort of pupils leaving each year. This means that for some years, we have much fewer spaces become available for new pupils to join us.

Our School Offer

Reference should be made to the document **“Saxon Hill Academy – Our Local Offer”** which is available on our school website and by request. This details our provision as a specialist school for children and young people with physical disabilities and complex needs. Further information is also available on our school website:

www.saxonhillacademy.org.uk

Who is our special educational needs and disability coordinator (SENDCo) and how can he/she be contacted?



Suzanne Walters - Deputy Headteacher & SENCo



Maggie Candlish – Headteacher

Contact information:

Telephone – Main reception: 01543 414892

Office email: office@saxon.set.org

Website: www.saxonhillacademy.org.uk

Local Offer Web: [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Local Offer | Staffordshire Connects](#) and search for Saxon Hill Academy.

Admissions to Saxon Hill

Children would usually meet criteria for being admitted to Saxon Hill Academy due to having a physical disability and associated medical needs, sensory impairments and learning needs. All our pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Due to the site being fully accessible and having on-site health care and access to special school nurses many of our pupils have severe physical and complex medical needs ensuring that their placement is an appropriate use of LA resources.

We do not control admissions to our school, all offers of places are made through the Local Authority by the SEND team. We are happy to provide information and offer visits to school but are unable to provide specific information about whether an individual would be able to attend our school. All children who are under assessment for an EHCP or who have an EHCP will have a SEND keyworker who can support this process and they would be responsible for requesting a placement.

For visits, please contact the school office on the contact details above.

How do we identify and assess pupils with SEND?

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than others of the same age
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

We admit some students on Assessment Placements in special circumstances (e.g. Early Years or pupils moving into the UK), but all other pupils on roll have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) stating their special needs and required provision.

Baseline Assessments: When pupils start Saxon Hill, all pupils are assessed by the school to ensure that any additional barriers to learning can be identified early. This includes a motivator assessment, equipment audit and a sensory assessment to screen for any unidentified sensory needs that could affect a pupil's access to learning. Once complete, a barriers to learning profile is created and shared with the pupil, family and class team and strategies are implemented.

Our Approaches to teaching pupils with SEND

As a specialist school for children with complex needs, we believe passionately in providing the very best opportunities for all our children, irrespective of the complexity of need. We aim to provide a safe and vibrant accessible learning environment that supports every child and young person to meet their individual potential. We have high aspirations for all our pupils.

We have a mixed intake of pupils; therefore, we do not always organise classes by year but by grouping pupils within a key stage together who have similar needs and require similar approaches to learning. Teaching and learning is highly personalised and teachers will use a wide range of strategies to enable pupils to access to the curriculum. The strategies we use are varied and reflect the specialism that our provision can offer.

Examples are as follows:

- Quality-first teaching with appropriate, targeted differentiation in place according to pupil need.
- Symbol based communication programmes such as PODD, TOBI symbols, PECS and other AAC devices
- Visual timetables
- Objects of reference / auditory cues
- Use of specialist approaches as required for sensory impairments for example, BSL signing, tactile cues, on body signing etc
- iPads, laptops or other alternative technological devices
- Emotion Coaching and positive support for all pupils to support their behaviour and emotional wellbeing
- Makaton and on body signing (TASSELS)
- Hydrotherapy / Rebound therapy
- Sensory integration / sensory diets
- Intensive Interaction
- Soundbath / Story Massage

Our Curriculum

All students follow our 'Leaders' curriculum and at all ages there is an emphasis on enabling pupils to be as independent as possible. For more details on our curriculum, the different approaches we use when teaching, the adaptations and additional support we offer, please read the curriculum overview on our website.

Saxon Hill Academy has 4 age-phase departments:

- Explorers Department (from pre-school to Year 1)
- Investigators Department (from Year 2 to Year 6)
- Adventurers Department (from Year 7 to Year 9)
- Towards Independence Department (from Year 10 to Year 14)

We have four learning pathways throughout the 4 departments that are designed to meet the wide-ranging needs of our children: **Pre-formal – Informal – Semi-formal - Formal**

Pre-formal Pathway – This curriculum has been specifically designed to reflect pupil's sensory interaction needs and to develop their pre-learning skills and responses. We focus on the development of pupil's engagement in their learning and will use individual motivators to support progression. Sensory classrooms are adapted to deliver appropriate learning experiences and provide physical care for our most complex children and young people. Lesson planning will include opportunities for sensory exploration, immersive music sessions, sound bath and story massage.

Informal Pathway - The informal curriculum has been developed to support our pupils who require highly individualised programmes of learning that are delivered alongside intense programmes of sensory integration to promote engagement in learning. Pupils also require direct teaching of orientation and mobility, support with managing transitions and often require specialist support for vision and hearing impairments.

Semi-formal Pathway –The curriculum is based on developing key learning concepts through the delivery of topic Anchors. Learning challenges are developed to reflect different aspects of the statutory curriculum in a stimulating and challenging programme based around a common theme for the term. Each child’s progress is tracked against wider holistic skills development (social, communication, and physical) as well as against personal progress in key subject strands, including Literacy and Maths.

Developing Pathway –This curriculum is more typical of a well differentiated mainstream school offer. It is also differentiated to support and challenge our more able learners. At Key Stages 4 and 5, students access formal accreditation such as Entry Level and Level 1 and 2 Diploma qualifications

How do we enable pupils with SEND to engage in activities with other pupils who do not have SEND and their wider community?

Saxon Hill Academy has a strong belief that education in the community and environment forms an essential aspect of learning, and of being able to use and apply their formal learning in real contexts. We actively encourage our staff teams to take class groups off-site – into towns and their local community – to engage and communicate with people in shops, services and businesses. Some of our older students regularly attend residential trips to places such as the Lea Green outdoor adventure centre in Matlock.

We have an established Forest School which has an indoor classroom and has outdoor classroom areas, including a fire-pit, and a Yurt with a wood-burning stove. These facilities are enjoyed by students of all ages throughout the year and ensure that our children have many experiences outside the classroom. We have two adapted school minibuses that are used regularly to access our local community. Relevant staff are trained on the safe loading and securing of wheelchairs, and risk assessments are carried out for all trips to ensure that children are kept as safe as possible.

Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)

Our specialist Leaders Curriculum is structured around the key PfA outcomes to ensure that pupils leave Saxon Hill prepared for life after school. This means that throughout school, pupils are working on individualised outcomes that will support them to achieve their potential and be as independent as they can.

All pupils from Year 9 can take part in work-based learning through our out-site educational provisions such as Dobbies Garden Centre, Lichfield Craft Barn, which is based at Chasewater Park, Lichfield Foodbank warehouse and Saxon Hill Academy Café. These have been set up to enable our students to develop skills in manufacturing, business and enterprise, retail, and hospitality and catering. This enables our students to work and live alongside people of all ages within the local community.

Our links with others

The success of our pupils relies on strong links between all our stakeholders in school (children, school staff, parents/carers, governors and other professionals. Parents/carers can consult on their child's education:

- Daily via home school diaries and through conversations with staff
- Through our EFL portal that allows parents and carers regular access to evidence of progress in school.
- At any time by making an appointment with the relevant member of staff
- At parent/teacher meetings which happen three times per year (in which children are also invited to attend).
- Annually at the EHCP review (in which children are also invited to attend).
- We hold regular parental workshops, which allow informal conversations to take place as well as giving parents/carers the opportunity to meet with other local providers/ services to support their children, this forms part of the Staffordshire Local Offer.

How do we consult pupils with SEN and involve them in their education?

Pupils can be involved in their education through:

- Individual feedback during their lessons
- Pupil views documents completed at least every academic year which informs individualised planning
- Sharing their views for EHCP Annual reviews and where appropriate attending
- During Personal, Social and Health Education lessons
- Through the School Council

How do we assess and review pupils' progress towards their outcomes?

We continually monitor pupil progress in several ways; daily feedback (verbally and through marking) lets our pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do next to make more progress. We scrutinise the work of pupils through the year to ensure that pupils' learning is challenging, relevant and accessible. We ensure our standards of judgement by moderating work in school, with other local special schools and with our local Shaw Education Trust schools. Progress is also collated through Evidence for Learning (EfL) which is a web-based programme that captures learning and allows this to be shared with families.

Longer term outcomes are set and agreed in the annual review of an EHCP which then informs short term targets to be assessed in the classroom. For more details on how we measure success please see the curriculum overview on our website. We conduct a termly assessment of the progress made, and attainment achieved by our children and young people. This information is collated and analysed to inform pupils, parents, teachers, school leaders, governors and school improvement stakeholders of the successes and areas for development about pupil progress. The data analysis has due regard for disability, age, gender, ethnicity, and any other factor that may categorise a child as having additional disadvantage or needs. This includes having due regard for national requirements such as Pupil Premium, Sports Premium, Student Bursary scheme, Free School Meals and any other entitlements designed to reduce disadvantage.

How do we support pupils moving between different phases of education?

Starting a new school at any age or moving on to another setting can be a very worrying time for parents and children. This process of transition is very important to us at Saxon Hill, as we work hard with parents to make this as worry-free as possible. We encourage all new children and parents to visit us, where we give a tour of our facilities and give an opportunity for parents to meet the other children and staff around the school. The needs of any new child are discussed in detail, and detailed care-plans are completed alongside the health agencies to ensure that children start with all facilities in place to meet the complex needs of any child appropriately from the first day. We offer a friendly and flexible approach to induction which can include phased or part-time induction where appropriate.

Children are assessed during their first half term, where any adjustments to provision may be discussed and agreed with parents. Saxon Hill works cohesively across all age phases and students have many opportunities to meet and work with a variety of staff, this means that when a student moves classes, departments/age phases it is a seamless transition. Some students require some transition sessions prior to moving, these are set up with class teachers and enable all students to feel confident and secure before making a full transition.

How do we support pupils preparing for adulthood?

Transition from Saxon Hill Academy and onwards to the next provision can be equally worrying, and again, we have developed a comprehensive transition plan for students moving on to new schools, colleges or other health or social care services. We work closely with other agencies and providers, and parents and students, to ensure that families are properly informed and supported through this process. Pupils on entry to Saxon Hill will engage in an annually updated, North Star activity, designed to identify individual aspirations early on. Transition planning for life beyond Saxon Hill gears up at Year 8 (age 13) with visitors and talks from outside education, health and care organisations and providers, an annual Transition Fayre and visits to local and regional post-19 providers. This way students and parents can develop aspirations that are appropriate to the student's desires, skills and abilities.

We have a comprehensive Preparing for Adulthood programme for students that runs throughout school. In the Towards Independence department there are additional opportunities such as visiting speakers in assemblies, work-based learning programmes at our wide range of vocational venues and individual bespoke programmes based on individual aspirations. Our aim is to equip our students with the confidence and skills to become advocates of their own futures and valued members of our society.

How do we support pupils with SEN to improve their emotional and social development?

At Saxon Hill, we place great emphasis on the care and well-being of our children. It is important to us that children feel safe, and that their personal care and emotional well-being take priority. We work closely with our team of qualified nurses, physiotherapists and other agencies to ensure that their wider physical, medical and emotional needs are properly supported.

We take particular care to nurture the trust and relationships between staff and children, so that they feel able to freely express their concerns and worries. This enables our staff to respond quickly to their needs, and to deal quickly with any issues that may develop.

We have a zero tolerance of bullying and are proud of the ethos that encourages cooperation and mutual care and support between children. We work closely with parents and children where behaviour may require support and adopt models that promote positive behaviours, and where appropriate support families with 24 hour “wrap-around” behaviour plans. We work closely with other agencies and professionals where appropriate, such as Education Psychology and Learning Disability Teams.

Pupils have opportunities to ‘have their say’ during the school council sessions, Sleepover pupil voice sessions, in the Mental Health Audit and during tutor group times. We have a Mental Health lead (Suzanne Walters is our Senior Mental Health Lead) and several of our staff are trained in Counselling. We are an Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed school, and all staff are trained in this approach to support pupil health and well-being. We use Emotion Coaching approaches to support our pupils to learn about their emotions and how they can develop their own independent regulation strategies which are life-long skills.

What expertise and training do our staff have to support pupils with SEN?

Saxon Hill Academy has an extensive staff training offer, this is a combination of mandatory training such as annual Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education, FGM, Prevent, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Moving and Handling, SCIPr-UK for positive behaviour support. In addition, some staff receive First Aid, Reach and Rescue, Rebound Therapy, Medicine Management and Administration training. Our clinical staff are trained in specific enteral feeding and diabetes management and have signed off competencies in order to complete these procedures safely. Staff are consulted about what extra training they require, and we endeavour to meet those specific needs. Many of our middle leadership and senior leadership team have completed National Professional Qualifications and our SENCo is a Qualified Teacher of Multisensory Impairment as well as holding the national SENCO qualification. Staff also receive practical professional development through learning walks and observations, this ensures they are being challenged and support to deliver quality first teaching.

All school teams work closely with each other to ensure our children and young people are support in the best way possible.

School teams:

- Senior Leaders – qualified teachers with several years SEND experience • Business Team Manager – School Business Manager qualifications
- Qualified and unqualified teachers with several years' experience
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants (Grade 7)
- Teaching Assistants (Grade 3 and 5)
- Ancillary Assistants (Grade 2)
- Personal Care Workers (Grade 2) Residential Support Workers (Grade 6)
- Family Support Worker – Social Work qualification
- Continuing Care teams (external provider – Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust)
- Occupational Therapist (external provider – Children's Choice Therapy Service)
- Physiotherapist (external provider – Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust)
- Speech and Language Therapist (external provider – Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust)
- Multi-Sensory Impairment, Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment Teachers (external provider – Staffordshire County Council)

How will we secure specialist expertise?

Saxon Hill Academy is a specialist school for children with physical disabilities and complex medical needs. We work closely with a variety of internal and external agencies to ensure each student receives the specialist expertise they require. This ensures that each child can access a relevant and challenging education curriculum while making sure that their wider health and care needs are also being met.

How do we involve other organisations in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and supporting their families?

We work closely with a variety of agencies and pride ourselves in our multi-agency work. We seek advice and support for a range of educational and medical needs and adapt our offer for each individual student to ensure they all receive appropriate support. We have regular meetings with parents/carers and agencies to review the support needed and make referrals if the support isn't already in place.

How will we secure equipment and facilities to support pupils with SEN?

Any specialist equipment required in school for a child will be assessed and agreed with other professional agencies and parents as necessary, and purchased by the school where the equipment is generic, or purchased by the Health Authority where the equipment is prescribed and unique to the child. Equipment can include specialist seating, access to standing, walking, and lying, or specialist workstations or desks. Individual assessments of need are made so that wherever specialist and personalised resources are required (that are reasonable and practicable) then these are provided. Some children qualify for additional funding through government Pupil Premium schemes or Student Bursary. These funds are allocated appropriately to ensure all vulnerable groups identified across our school population have their needs appropriately met. See school website for most recent details of Pupil Premium spending.

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our SEN provision?

Saxon Hill Academy governors work very closely with the Senior Leadership team and Middle Leadership team to ensure they understand the effectiveness of Saxon Hill's specialist provision, and work through committees to ensure that the strategic objectives and school aims are achieved. A full self-analysis of our strengths and areas for development are detailed in our School Evaluation Form (SEF).

Reference should also be made to the school's Ofsted reports which offer an independent appraisal of the school and its effectiveness as measured against national standards.

Saxon Hill Academy Ofsted report: please see school website

Residential Ofsted report: please see school website

How do we handle complaints from parents of children with SEN about provision made at the school?

The Headteacher and wider Senior Leadership Team have an "open door" policy to children and parents, and value the relationships we build with families. Our Compliments and Complaints policy also details how we address issues immediately and feedback to parents when they have specific concerns. Class teachers are usually the first point of contact if a minor issue arises as they are best placed in school to know the child well. Some concerns may be referred to our Family Support Worker or on to any one of the Senior Leadership Team. Complaints about the Headteacher would need to be made to the Chair of Governors or Shaw Education Trust.

What support services are available to parents?

Staffordshire Local Authority:

Telephone: 0300 111 8007

Website: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/schoolsandcolleges/admissions/admissions.aspx> Post: School

Admissions and Transport Service

Tipping Street

Stafford

ST16 2DH

Who can young people and parents contact if they have concerns?

For parents of children already attending school, then the day-to-day point of contact is with their Class Teacher, or if a residential matter, then with the allocated Sleepover Club Keyworker.

Senior leaders and the Headteacher are also easily contactable to discuss aspects of provision. We welcome any discussion that ensures your confidence that your child's needs are being fully met. We are always happy to receive compliments to share with others, but also have a robust complaints procedure and policy should you have any concerns you wish to raise with us. We treat such matters very seriously to ensure our service to you and your child meets the highest of standards.

If you have a concern and your child attends the school, please contact a member of the Senior Leadership via the school reception.

Staffordshire SEND Family Partnership (SENDIASS)

Staffordshire's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service and provide free, impartial, confidential advice and support around Education, Health and Social Care. They support Parents and Carers of Children and Young People with SEND (0-25) and also Children and Young People with SEND.

<https://www.staffs-iass.org/home.aspx>

Friends of Saxon Hill Academy

We have an active Parent Teacher Association, Friends of Saxon Hill Academy which is run for and by parents. We encourage parents to meet and actively support each other with advice, experience and resources. As stated earlier, we have an "open-door" policy and welcome parents to meet and discuss their child's needs with staff or the leadership team members.

We have an active volunteer service that enables members of the community, including parents to support students or engage in projects around school.

Governors or Academy Councillors

Our school academy council of trustees has a committed representation of Parent Governors, playing a vital role in ensuring Saxon Hill Academy's strategic role is focused on the needs of children with complex needs and their families. If you would like to help- or have a special area of expertise that you would like to offer us, we would be glad to hear from you.

Department for Education

The Department for Education is the government site for education. The site also provides parents with the facility to search schools in England and view school performance, characteristics and spend per pupil data. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Independent Schools Council

The Independent Schools Council exists to promote choice, diversity and excellence in education, the development of talent at all levels of ability and the widening of opportunity for children from all backgrounds to achieve their potential.

<https://www.isc.co.uk/>

Ofsted

Ofsted is the inspectorate for children and learners in England. It is their job to contribute to the provision of better education and care through effective inspection and regulation. This link takes you to the area of the Ofsted website where you can search for copies of school inspection reports.

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Where can the LA's local offer be found? How have we contributed to it?

All settings must co-operate with the Local Authority in the development and review of the Local Offer as set out in Chapter 4 of the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and the associated Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (Part 4).

Schools have additional duties under the Regulations to provide more detailed information in their SEN Policy, SEN Information Report and how the school meets the duties of the Equality Act 2010.

Staffordshire Local Authority's local offer can be found here:

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/home.page>