

Merstone School

SEND INFORMATION REPORT

VISION STATEMENT:

"Working Together for the benefit of all"

Under section 65(3) (a) of the Children and Families Act 2014, a school must publish its report containing SEN Information and make it available on the school website. The report will be updated annually to reflect changes and plans within the school. This report describes the current provision at Merstone.

ETHOS and VALUES:

We aim to create a happy and secure learning environment where all pupils needs are met and success is recognised and praised

- The holistic needs of pupils will be paramount to the organisation of their education and care. Every effort is made to ensure that they benefit from a dynamic, innovative and safe environment that is responsive to their changing needs and to the advancements of knowledge and understanding within the education and care of pupils with special educational needs.
- Equality of opportunity is regarded as the cornerstone of the school's organisation regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability or social standing. The school community fosters an ethos in which honesty; sharing, caring and trust are central to the conduct of members of the community and actively encourage a sense of individual and collective responsibility towards that end. The contributions and qualities of pupils are recognised and celebrated. There is a staff code of conduct and 'Working together' document in place to support this.
- Differentiated teaching and learning is in place ensuring access to an inclusive and stimulating curriculum, appropriate to their level of understanding. Pupils are treated with dignity and respect and are involved in the implementation of their care and education as much as possible. They are encouraged to develop personal and social qualities to support them access the community and post school placements.
- The school promotes a pro-active relationship with families to encourage mutual respect and, in doing so; strive to establish a genuine collaborative relationship to the benefit of all concerned.

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Identifying the particular special educational needs of a child or young person:

The school is described as admitting pupils with severe and complex learning disabilities. Learning is influenced by Autism, Sensory Impairment, Physical Disability, Communication Difficulties and Challenging Behaviours.

The school offers full time education from Reception to Year 14 and 15 hours provision to pre-nursery and nursery aged pupils. Students in key stage 4 and 5 may participate in Work Related or Work Experience activities within school or in community settings such as the care homes, charity shops, local farms and local nurseries.

Consulting/working in partnership with parents of children with special educational needs and with young people with special educational needs:

Consultation with parents/carers is achieved through:

- An Annual Education, Health and Care Review held to which parents / carers and all agencies involved with the student are invited to attend. These reviews are person centred and include the views of the young person.
- Two further parents meetings during the school year
- Our Child & Family Support Worker regularly contacts parents and carers, organising coffee mornings, transition and SEN workshops, Citizen Advice Bureau clinics, Parents Evening “Market Place” of providers and services.
- Home visits by the EYFS team, coffee mornings, school visits etc as a precursor to pupils starting at Merstone.
- Home school diaries.
- Use of Class DoJo communication app
- Regular opportunities for meetings with the class staff at Annual Reviews, Parents Evening, and Transition Meetings to discuss student progress.
- Multi-agency meetings held on site.
- Stakeholder Questionnaires.
- Annual Reports to Parents.
- Appointments with medical professionals and therapists.

Services that are provided within the school include:

- ***By Health:***
- Nursing Team.
- Speech and Language Therapy / Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy.
- Clinics with Consultant Paediatricians.
- Feeding programmes for pupils.
- Community Learning Difficulties Team.
- Community Dental.

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- ***By Local Educational Authority:***

- Educational Psychologist.
- Specialist teachers for Vision and Hearing Impairment.
- Solihull Improvement Advisor.
- Home/School Transport.

- ***By Social Care:***

- Disability Social Work Team – childrens.
- All Age Disability Adult Social Care.

- ***Equipment:***

- Wheelchair Services.
- Occupational Health for accessibility equipment.
- Specialised equipment and hoists to support toileting needs of all pupils.
- Sensory Room.
- Hydrotherapy pool on site.
- Sensory Garden.
- IT suite.

- ***Out of school activities:***

- After School Clubs
- Breakfast club
- Residential Visits.
- Community visits.
- Creative Arts and Leisure activities.
- Summer School linked with SOLO – local charity.
- Drama performances such as Shakespeare at the MAC, Birmingham

If you have a query relating to these areas it is best to contact the professionals directly. This will ensure that your message/queries/concerns are dealt with in the most efficient way.

Solihull EHCP Team 0121 704 6690

Solihull SENDIASS 0121 733 7290

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Speech and Language Therapy 0121 722 8069

Occupational Therapy 0121 722 8017

Solihull Transport 0121 704 6610

Birmingham Transport 0121 303 4955

Birmingham SENAR 0121 303 1888

If there is a number you need which is not listed, please contact the school.

Transition between phases or provision in education is accomplished through:

- A comprehensive transition programme from other schools that includes school visits, home visits, coffee mornings and staff exchanges.
- Part time placements, if required, for pupils joining.
- Support from our Independent Careers Advisor.
- Transition meetings with Social Care, colleges and commissioned services.
- Person Centred Planning
- Professionals from post 19 colleges visit Key Stage 5 students to undertake assessments for placement.
- Adult Social Care allocates a named worker from Year 13 / 14 as appropriate.
- Our CFSW and Learning Mentor support parents in a wide variety of ways.
- Transition from school to colleges is supported by assessments in school / taster days at college / induction programme
- Attendance by post school placement representatives at EHC reviews for Year 14 students.

Learning Pathways at Merstone:

Themed and Core Curriculum:

- Pupils participate in a Themed Curriculum that addresses Foundation Subjects. Core subjects are taught discretely.
- Themed days including MFL themes
- Lesson planning addresses individual needs to ensure inclusion.
- Post 16 provision includes work experience, work related learning, community and life skills, and preparation for further education which supports students in achieving a variety of accreditations
- Enrichment activities includes theatre trips, science days, visiting poets, history days, music specialists, art workshops with visiting artists and cultural dance days.
- Staff plan learning opportunities based on individual student need.

Accredited Curriculum:

- Accreditation programme for all Key Stage 4 and 5 students. • Key Stage 3 students follow an accredited PSD programme
- Enterprise programme or work-related learning.
- Work Experience activities.

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Enrichment:

- Residential visits.
- Animal care.
- Swimming
- Local sports centre.
- Enterprise activities.
- Local community visits.
- Physical Education: A large number of sports / leisure activities are offered which engage and include students with a variety of special needs, such as:
 - Boccia
 - Swimming
 - Yoga
 - Cycling
 - Golf
 - Competitive sports with other special schools.

We use ICT Technology such as ipads, switch technology, touch screens and Eye Gaze with specialist programmes such as:

- Cause and effect programmes.
- Communication apps and switch technology for students with specific speech and language needs.
- Specialist designed programmes e.g. Communicate in Print that creates and adapts curriculum materials for students who need symbols.
- Laptops, interactive whiteboards and iPads for students' curriculum use.

Communication is supported by:

- A Makaton Regional Tutor.
- A communication learning support assistant
- Total Communication environment.
- Sign and Symbols timetables and lesson prompts.
- Music cues.
- Objects of Reference.

Sensory Impairment is supported by:

- Specialist teachers of the visual and hearing impaired.
- Technology and aids.
- An OT learning support assistant

Students demonstrating challenging behaviour are supported by:

- Praise and celebration
- Positive re-enforcement.
- Individual Behaviour Support programmes.
- Team Teach intervention – all staff trained.
- Team Teach 2 staff co-ordinators (4 in total on school site).
- Community Learning Disabilities Team.
- Educational Psychologists

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Additional personalised support:

- Individual timetables.
- 1:1 staffing resource where appropriate and the result of assessment.
- Cross phase learning.
- Music therapy
- Lego therapy
- Learning Mentor support
- Aromatherapy, rest and relax

The additional learning support available to children and young people with special educational needs are:

- The appropriate staffing to student ratios enables engagement and access for pupils to progress their learning. Other professionals also provide advice and guidance to support this personalised learning including:
- The specialist advisory teachers for Visual and Hearing Impaired.
- Music specialists.
- Creative Art specialists.
- Sports partnership specialist coaches.
- 1:1 intervention provision.
- School dog 'Benji' – registered as a Pets As Therapy dog.

Assessment at Merstone is relevant and rigorous. It includes:

- Assessment tool established across all subjects taking into account the new curriculum requirements and also the previous P levels – 'Development Walls'
- Daily assessment against curriculum and EHC targets
- Formative Assessment for Learning remains a high priority for all staff.
- Pupils included in self and peer assessment utilising an appropriate strategy.
- Termly Summative Assessment completed with the aid of SOLAR software.
- Pupils are assessed in subject areas using development walls. Attainment recorded on SOLAR. Reporting student progress against targets.
- The school commits to internal and external moderation programmes. And leads the regional moderation processes
- Key Stage 3,4 &5 students assessed against ASDAN /Ascentis criteria.
- Key Stage 5 modules moderated internally and externally.
- Ascentis qualifications controlled assessments
- Engagement model used to support assessment of pupil progress

How the effectiveness of special educational provision will be assessed and evaluated, including information about how children, their parents and young people will take part in any assessment and evaluation:

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- Parents and students are fully involved in the annual review of EHC Plan, recording and sharing their views within the meeting.
- All parents invited to participate in at least 3 formal conversations per year.
- Senior Leaders and Governors undertake termly review of School Improvement Plan progress.
- Self-Evaluation Form updated termly with governors.
- Solihull Improvement Partner visits to monitor improvement.
- All staff included in Performance Management to maintain focus on school vision.
- Active Student School Council.

How facilities that are available can be accessed by children and young people with special educational needs:

Merstone School pursues the principles of inclusion at all times by providing all pupils with an education that allows for them to achieve and make progress.

Teachers and Learning Support Assistants apply a very personalised approach to ensure inclusion and seek the input of specialist provision and advice to provide a holistic environment.

Staffing ratios enable access to a wide range of appropriate activities and facilities. Details of staffing are available on the school website.

Adapted minibus enables extensive use made of community settings to the benefit of all students.

What activities are available for children and young people with special educational needs in addition to the curriculum?

- Breakfast club.
- After school club
- Lunchtime Clubs.
- Holiday playschemes.
- Integrated after school clubs with Forest Oak School.

What support is available for children and young people with special educational needs?

- High classroom staffing ratio.
- Child & Family Support Worker.
- Wide range of Health, Social Care and Educational specialists.
- Staff have continuing professional development in areas of teaching students with special needs
- Specialised training in physical intervention, first aid, water therapy, physiotherapy etc.
- 1:1 staffing for Work Experience, intervention and community visits.

How expertise in supporting children and young people with special educational needs is secured for teaching staff and others working with those children and young people:

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- Annual CPD (Continuing Professional Development) programme.
- Teacher and LSA Performance management programme.
- 12 hours twilight training during academic year for all class-based staff.
- Weekly INSET programme of professional development for teachers.
- Specialised training for minibus driving, lifesaving, Team Teach intervention, Manual Handling, medical competencies, PECs training for all teachers, Physio training.
- Whole staff training is organised for training days to progress School Improvement priorities.
- Individual professional development priorities.
- Merstone is a strategic partner with North Solihull Schools to support training in the community

How the emotional and social development of children and young people with special educational needs will be supported and improved:

- Appropriate curriculum and provision underpins the social and emotional wellbeing of the students.
- Positive support plans are drawn up to support individual students.
- Specific focus for EHC plans.
- Social, Moral, Cultural, Spiritual activities are identified on Medium Term Planning for each subject.
- PHSE is a subject with a high profile throughout the whole school.
- Achievement and success is regularly celebrated.
- Access to Solar mental health professionals
- Weekly kindness awards for staff and pupils
- Interventions to support pupils – behaviour plans, Music therapy, aromatherapy.

Mental Health Support

Merstone has an ethos based approach to supporting pupils based on the NHS 5 areas for wellbeing. This is the SMILE approach.

- The five areas are Socialise, Move, Interest, Learn & Engage (SMILE)
- Staff teach mindfulness daily
- Pupils have an annual (more often when required) well-being audit which identifies pupils that may need additional intervention to support their well-being
- Links with local CAMHS (Solar) to support pupils requiring additional support
- Therapy support – music, lego, school dog
- 5 staff with Mental Health First Aid qualifications to support pupils

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Where is the information on the Solihull's local offer published?

Further details about Solihull's Local Offer can be found at:

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/children-and-family-support/localoffer>

October 2025

Next Review Date October 2026