



TOWNSEND
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information
Report 2023-2024

Introduction

At Townsend, our vision 'Achievement For All, Respect For All' is underpinned by the concept of 'Love your neighbour' from the story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37. We value everyone, and show love and respect for ourselves and others, setting high standards and supporting each other so that we can all flourish. The concept of 'love your neighbour' is taught in three strands:

1. Love your neighbour – treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself.
2. Love yourself – self-care is important, look after yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually.
3. Love the journey – whether academic or personal, Townsend supports everyone's journeys to enable you to flourish individually and collectively.

Townsend Church of England School is an inclusive school, and the Learning Support Department works in collaboration with other departments in the school to ensure support is offered to all students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). All teachers are teachers of students with SEND and teaching SEND students is therefore a whole school responsibility, requiring a whole school response.

As a school we are committed to the belief that every child is an individual who brings something special to the school community. All students, regardless of ability, background or ethnicity, have the right to participate in and enjoy all aspects of school life, and have the opportunity to meet their full potential.

Townsend has an above average proportion of SEND students within the school community, of approximately 24% (national average 17.3%). Our main areas of need are Communication and Interaction (including ASD and Speech Language and Communication), Social Emotional and Mental Health, and Cognition and Learning.

If you require additional information, we encourage you to visit the school on our annual open evening or morning tours. Our SENDCo Anna Philpott can be contacted here: sen217@townsend.herts.sch.uk

The Information Report below sets out our usual approach for supporting students with SEND and how additional help is accessed. The report is produced in collaboration with staff, parents and students and is updated annually.

Key Questions:

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

The school uses a variety of methods to identify if students have special educational needs. We liaise closely with local primary schools when students are in Year 6 to plan their transition to secondary school, use baseline assessment tests and monitor student progress to identify those who are making slower progress than their peers. Students who come to us with SEN concerns at transition will be monitored for up to one term to establish whether additional interventions are required above quality first teaching. Any member of staff who has concerns about a pupil can refer them to the Learning Support Department.

Parents who have concerns about their child's progress can discuss this with their child's form tutor and/or relevant subject teacher, but if the difficulties persist parents can contact the SENDCo for advice. Students can also speak to any member of staff if they have concerns. However, the school recognises that some behavioural or learning issues can be caused by a

variety of circumstances and do not necessarily mean that a student has special educational needs. In these circumstances, our pastoral teams may be involved in supporting students, including Directors of Learning and our Wellbeing Lead.

Please see question 7 for the additional support that may be offered if needs are identified through our identification and monitoring processes.

2. How will Townsend School staff support my child?

Evidence suggests that the best support for all students, including those with special educational needs, is high quality classroom teaching. As a school, we place great emphasis on ensuring that the quality of teaching delivered meets the needs of all our students. We do, of course, recognise that some children need additional support. Our aim, as far as possible, is to support student learning in regular lessons and to enable access to a full and varied curriculum.

At Key Stage 3, all students are offered a wide-ranging curriculum. This is followed by a guided options process moving into Key Stage 4 which allows greater personalisation of the curriculum. In addition, we run a number of interventions which are accessed according to pupil needs. More details of these are given at the end of this Information Report.

3. How will I know how my child is doing?

We report to parents/carers on student progress three times per year using data collected from teachers. This will include a review of individual targets and strategies for some SEN students. Parents/carers are also invited to an annual parent/carer consultation meeting to discuss their child's progress with subject teachers. In addition to this, parents/carers of students with an Education, Health and Care plan have a further annual review meeting with the Learning Support Department. Looked after students have regular personal education plan meetings led by the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

Teachers award achievement points and may contact home to congratulate students for noteworthy contributions, and we have a number of celebratory occasions throughout the year, including Student of the Week, weekly Head's Commendations, attendance awards on a termly basis and our year end Celebration Assemblies to recognise individual success. In addition, parents/carers may be contacted when required by teachers or the Learning Support Department, to discuss specific issues or areas of concern. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school when they have a concern.

4. How will the teaching and learning provision at Townsend be matched to my child's needs?

The school will use teacher assessment as well as the results of any specific screening or baseline testing to match provision to needs. Students undertake CAT tests in Year 7, or where there has been an in-year admission where no prior data is available. Primary school or previous school information is also utilised to build a holistic profile of a student. Where appropriate, advice from external professionals will be sought and used to implement specific strategies or to access particular resources or equipment.

Information about student needs is shared with teachers via a student profile, which helps teachers to plan for each student's learning needs. The student's voice is also captured within a pupil profile to ensure that all students are involved and able to give their views. In Maths and English there is some setting by ability and those students who are working significantly below the level expected for their age may be taught in smaller classes in some subjects to enable

them to make progress. Any additional provisions put in place for a student will be reviewed at suitable intervals to assess impact.

5. What support is available at Townsend to support my child's overall Wellbeing?

Students receive support from their Form Tutor and their Directors of Learning for their year group. All students have a Form Tutor who is the first point of contact for parents and who oversees the Wellbeing of students in their form. If additional support is needed this may be provided by Directors of Learning and the Student and Family Wellbeing Lead, who can also signpost young people and their families to information and external support services. Where further help is needed, referrals can be made to external professionals. Mrs Barron leads on student mental health and Wellbeing and can be contacted on Well-Being@townsend.herts.sch.uk.

We take bullying seriously and each form at Townsend has an Anti-Bullying Ambassador who leads on anti-bullying activities throughout the year. Our Respect for All policy is underpinned by our bible-based vision 'Love Your Neighbour' (Luke 10:25-37). For further details, please see our Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Wellbeing Policy.

For students with medical conditions, parents/carers can complete a medication administration form for students who need to take medication while at school; First Aid staff can store and administer the medication in the medical room next to the main reception. We do not have staff trained in the provision of intimate/personal care.

Where support is needed to improve school attendance, our School Attendance Officer works in conjunction with the Director of Learning to provide advice and support to families. This may include making referrals to Hertfordshire's Educational Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) service for young people who are temporarily unable to attend school due to medical reasons.

The Attendance Policy and Behaviour Policy demonstrate Townsend's commitment to support and make reasonable adjustments for students with SEND to increase attendance and avoid potential exclusions.

6. What training do the staff, who are supporting children and young people with SEND have?

All staff have access to annual in-service training programmes and professional development opportunities to enhance their professional skills. Training opportunities take place throughout the academic year. All teachers have basic training in SEND and are able to differentiate and scaffold learning materials accordingly. Our Inclusion team, made up of Learning Support Assistants (LSA's), an Inclusion Manager and a SENDCo who undertake regular training in conjunction with external professionals to fit the profile of the students that we support, and to fulfil the legal obligations of the SEND Code of Practice. This includes the SENDCo who is in the process of completing the National Award for SEN Coordination. The SENDCo will also deliver and / or organise training in conjunction with external professionals to inform staff about the specific needs of individual pupils.

7. What specialist services and expertise are available at, or can be accessed by Townsend?

A range of services are available to students through a referral process which may require parental/carer consent. There may be waiting lists for some services. Referrals are generally

completed by Directors of Learning but may also be completed by the Wellbeing Lead or the Learning Support department.

Services we currently access are:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational Psychology
- Communication and Autism Team
- LINKS Academy Outreach Team
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Team
- Services for Young People
- Herts SEND Team Beds/Luton SEND Team
- Visual, Hearing and Physical and Neurological Teams
- Families First Assessment
- Mentoring / counselling service
- Virtual Schools
- NHS Health Teams
- Social Care Where (Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire)
- DSPL 7 support
- St Albans School Plus Partnership
- VISTA

8. How will Townsend help me to support my child's learning?

All parents/carers are encouraged to support their child's learning. We use Edulink and encourage parents/carers to familiarise themselves with the platform and see what homework their children have been set. Parents/carers can support by providing an appropriate place to complete home learning effectively and encourage their child to attend homework club if required. Homework club runs every Tuesday and Thursday after school and provides a supportive environment for your child to complete their homework with learning support assistants.

Feedback to parents/carers on student progress is provided regularly through progress reports and the annual parent/carer consultation meeting. We also offer additional information evenings for parents/carers of students at key points, to ensure that you have the best information to help with important decisions such as GCSE and A Level option selection and to prepare your child for both secondary, post-16 and post-18 transition. Other information and advice evenings and events are also held throughout the year e.g. for trips, or to share advice such as keeping young people safe online. There is information on the [school website](#) about matters such as home learning, and the weekly school newsletter contains information about important upcoming events and activities.

9. How does Townsend enable constructive partnership working with families?

By attending the programme of meetings outlined in questions 3 and 8, you will be involved in discussing and planning your child's education. If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan, your comments will be requested in advance of the annual review meeting, and then the views of all parties, including your child's, will be discussed at the meeting. For Looked after Children, Personal Education Plan meetings (with the student, the carers and the school) are held to plan targets and support.

Parents/carers are involved in many aspects of school life, from election as Parent Governors and involvement in Friends of Townsend (PTA) and are consulted via surveys as part of our annual programme of reviews. Parents/carers are invited to school performances throughout the year and are encouraged to support Townsend at sporting events.

10. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?

Townsend is committed to including students with SEND in activities outside of the classroom, including school trips, and will make reasonable adjustments to do so. Additional risk assessments may be carried out and we will work with parents/carers and students to find solutions to any barriers to participation, aiming to ensure that students are comfortable and happy accessing activities and trips, unless doing so would endanger either themselves or others.

11. How accessible is the Townsend School environment?

Townsend aims to make the school site as accessible as possible; a wheelchair user is able to enter the principal building unaided. We have implemented a programme of improvements such as disabled toilets, handrails, and adaptations for students with visual impairments, such as posters on door viewing panes and yellow edging for steps around the site. However, our school has a number of sets of stairs and some departments can only be accessed by stairs including Languages and Humanities. The majority of the site is accessible via ramps. Townsend does not have any lifts. We recommend that parents visit our site to make their own assessment of suitability and contact us to discuss any specific requirements.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

In the first instance we would ask you to contact Miss Anna Philpott (SENDCo) or Mrs Tracy Sibley (Inclusion Manager) and the Director of Learning for your child's year group using the email addresses below:

sen217@townsend.herts.sch.uk
year7@townsend.herts.sch.uk
year8@townsend.herts.sch.uk
year9@townsend.herts.sch.uk
year10@townsend.herts.sch.uk
year11@townsend.herts.sch.uk
6thform@townsend.herts.sch.uk

Members of staff may also be contacted via the school switchboard on 01727 853047.

If you have any complaints about the SEN provision for your child, please refer to the complaints procedures in the Complaints Policy Summary on the website <https://townsend.herts.sch.uk/policies-statutory-information/>

13. How will Townsend prepare and support my child to join the school, or transfer to a new school or the next stage of my education and life?

Strategies to support transition include:

- induction visit for all new Year 7 students (summer term of Year 6)
- optional additional summer induction programme in the August prior to September start

- year 6 Parents' Information Evenings (summer term of Year 6)
- additional familiarisation visit for students with SEND (summer term of Year 6)
- where possible, attendance at Year 6 EHCP annual reviews by the SENDCo and attendance at review meetings for Looked after Children by the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children
- year 7 induction, first week of the new academic year
- enhanced support for Year 7 students for the first two weeks of the autumn term (learning support assistants and sixth form students)
- for selected students, student profiles are used to inform subject teachers of pupil needs
- for in year admissions, a matched 'buddy' to facilitate transition
- planning for Adulthood meetings for EHCP students with an independent advisor at the transition to Key Stage 4 and again at Key Stage 5
- for students leaving Townsend to join another educational establishment, we ensure that records are transferred quickly and securely for a smooth transition
- where possible and appropriate, a member of the Inclusion team will accompany students to visit their new school/college.

14. How are Townsend's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

For the vast majority of children in Hertfordshire mainstream schools, including those with SEND, funding is allocated to the school to meet their needs through the school budget. The school receives a nominal budget allocation for SEND and may also receive some high needs funding, which is spent on support according to student need, taking account of any provision requirements outlined in Education, Health & Care plans. We prioritise support for students who have Education, Health & Care plans in core subjects or in lessons where there may be a health and safety risk.

In addition to employing Learning Support Assistants, we use our resources in a range of ways, for example to provide smaller class teaching for students working significantly below age-related expectations in English and Maths. Hertfordshire's funding system will be allocated funding for students who have Education, Health & Care Plans according to the banding system set out by the local authority. We have no capacity to change this, and it does not take into account the amount of hours of learning support a child has.

15. How are decisions made about the range of support my child will receive?

This is dependent on provision outlined in Education, Health & Care plans or Personal Education Plans for Looked after Children as well as prior attainment and rates of progress. Decisions are made in collaboration with parents but will also be dependent on resources available. In-class Learning Support Assistant support is prioritised for students with Education, Health & Care plans in core subjects and where there may be health & safety issues.

Where can I find out about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with SEND.

Please see Hertfordshire's website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>

Please contact the SEND team to support you further or alternatively, parents are able to seek independent advice through the SEND Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)

- Hertfordshire - <https://www.hertssendiass.org.uk/home.aspx>

- Central Bedfordshire - <https://cbsendiass.org/>
- Luton - <https://sendiasluton.co.uk/>

The following range of provision and support may be offered after consideration of an individual student's SEND needs, taking account of prior attainment data, the views of external professionals, their teachers, their parents, and the student themselves.

- social skills programmes/support including strategies to enhance self-esteem and mentoring
- provision of an Inclusion area for break and lunch times
- laptop computers / Chromebooks
- specialist equipment can be accessed via the external Hearing and Visual Impairment teams dependent on individual needs assessment
- touch typing tuition via a computer-based program
- homework Club run on Tuesday and Thursday after school
- all students are supported by the pastoral team, including their Form Tutor, Director of Learning and Wellbeing Lead
- support from a Sixth Form or Year 11 Mentor is provided for selected Year 7 students via peer mentoring
- an LSA may be provided to students with Education, Health & Care plans for core lessons
- academic mentoring support is put in place in Year 11 for targeted students
- strategies to support/develop literacy and numeracy including reading
- opportunities for weaker readers to read to an adult for Year 7 students
- a paired reading programme is organised for some students with a Sixth Form partner
- small English groups in each year group for selected students
- small Maths groups in each year group for selected students
- individual support from the SENDCo, Intervention Teacher or Learning Support Assistants during form times
- computer-based numeracy programmes such as Maths Watch
- behaviour management support
- support from the pastoral teams including Form Tutors and Directors of Learning
- in-class support and mentoring from Learning Support Assistants
- where there have been concerns, an individualised support plan (Safety and Support Plan) may be needed, drawn up by the Director of Learning or Designated Safeguarding Lead, and involving parents and the student
- a Time Out Card organised for a few students where appropriate and if necessary a calm / safe space
- referral to the Links ESC Outreach Rapid Response Service
- referral to one of Hertfordshire's Educational Support Centres for advice or placement, for students at serious risk of permanent exclusion
- year 9 options, enabling more personalised choices of potential GCSE and enrichment subjects
- year 10 & 11 options, built around core subjects but offering choices of up to 4 GCSEs examination support
- students whose special educational needs have a significant impact on their ability to perform in exams may qualify for exam access arrangements Testing is carried out in Year 10 and the autumn term of Year 12 to determine the eligibility for arrangements, based on the most up-to-date criteria issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications

- opportunities for practising exam access arrangements are given in internal and mock exams where possible, prioritising end of year 10 and year 11 mock exams.

For students with medical needs there is the following available:

- individual protocols for children with significant medical needs and allergies
- access to and support from the NHS School Nursing Service
- referral to Hertfordshire's Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) service for students who are absent on medical grounds for a prolonged period.