SEND information report

Horizons Academy

September 2026

We empower | We respect | We care

Part of Diverse Academies

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This SEND information report outlines information regarding ways in which we provide support for all our learners for them to learn and grow intellectually, emotionally and socially in a nurturing environment. We fully comply with: SEND Code of Practice January (2015), Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014).

1. Our vision

The Diverse Academy Trust emphasises a child centered approach, nothing about us, without us' which supports the resilience and well-being of our learners. We value both children and parental engagement, thereby sustaining a welcoming, effective and inclusive culture in our academy.

At Horizons Academy, we are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and ambitious learning environment where every young person is valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential.

As a specialist SEMH and ASC academy, we recognise that many of our pupils have experienced significant barriers to learning. Through strong relationships, high-quality teaching, therapeutic approaches and personalised support, we help pupils develop resilience, emotional regulation, confidence and independence.

Our vision is that every pupil:

- Feels safe, valued and understood.
- Develops the skills needed to manage emotions and behaviour positively.
- Achieves academic success appropriate to their abilities.
- Builds meaningful relationships.
- Prepares successfully for adulthood, employment and participation in society.

We believe that positive outcomes are achieved when education, therapeutic support and family partnerships work together.

Our staff have high expectations of all learners and seek to be fully equipped with the skills, enthusiasm and supportive attitude allowing our learners to overcome any barriers to learning.

We use a child-centred approach when identifying strengths, areas of development and strategies for support.

We communicate frequently with parents through face-to-face conversations/meetings, over the telephone and via Weduc.

Impact

All learners will receive support to build on current knowledge and have access to a curriculum that is ambitious to encourage both personal and academic development.

Teaching staff feel confident delivering a relevant and appropriate curriculum to enable all learners to make progress regardless of their starting points.

Parents and carers feel supported and can communicate effectively with all members of staff to share and support their child's learning in school.

2. Provision

What kind of special educational needs do Horizons Academy make provision for?

Horizons Academy is a specialist school for pupils with:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Attachment and Trauma-related needs.
- Anxiety disorders.
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).
- Co-occurring learning difficulties.

Many pupils also have additional needs relating to:

Cognition and learning

- Delayed academic attainment.
- Literacy and numeracy difficulties.
- Executive functioning difficulties.
- Memory and processing challenges.

Communication and interaction

- Social communication difficulties.
- Language processing needs.
- Difficulties forming and maintaining relationships.

- Emotional communication barriers.

Social, emotional and mental health

- Emotional dysregulation.
- Anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Trauma-related responses.
- Difficulties with behaviour regulation.
- Risk-taking behaviours.
- Difficulties engaging in learning.

Sensory and physical needs

- Sensory processing needs.
- Medical needs requiring support within school.

3. Extra Support

How does Horizons Academy know if my child needs extra help?

As a Special Academy all learners who attend Horizons Academy have an EHCP identifying their special educational needs, aspirations, strengths and needs, provision and arrangements.

Each child's EHCP is reviewed annually during an EHCP Annual Review Meeting. At this meeting the child's strengths and needs, progress against outcomes and the provision put in place to support the child are discussed.

Annual Reviews take place with parents and carers, teachers and other relevant professionals to ensure that the provision put in place supports the child.

Support is also provided through liaison with previous settings, educational psychology reports, occupational therapist reports and ongoing staff observations.

Internal School Team Around the Child (STAC) meetings are also coordinated as required to ensure learners are being supported consistently and effectively by all key adults.

4. Assessment

How does Horizons Academy assess and review learner's progress towards outcomes?

All learners at Horizons Academy have individual learning targets which are linked to their EHCP outcomes and their academic priorities.

All learners make progress towards their learning outcomes, and we use assessment tools to monitor, track and celebrate progress. These tools include the national curriculum standards, B-Squared Engagement Steps, B-Squared Progression Steps, reading assessments, therapeutic targets and qualification specifications and criteria.

Assessment focuses on both academic progress and personal development, recognising the importance of emotional wellbeing as a foundation for learning.

5. Evaluation of effectiveness

How does Horizons Academy evaluate the effectiveness of its provision for the learners?

The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of our provision is carried out in the following ways:

- Monitoring EHCP outcomes
- Discussions with the child and their parents/carers
- Discussions and advice from other professionals
- Deep Dives into different curriculum areas
- Learning walks
- Coaching visits
- Internal and external moderation
- Pupil progress meetings
- Quality assurance activities
- Behaviour and attendance analysis
- Safeguarding monitoring
- Analysing attendance records
- Pupil voice surveys
- Parent and carer feedback

6. Teaching approaches

Our approach to teaching learners with SEND includes how adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environments.

We provide a curriculum that is relevant and meaningful for all our learners and work hard to ensure it is developmental and progressive in nature; reflecting areas important to each child in our academy.

Therefore, our curriculum is individualised, meeting the specific needs of learners at Horizons Academy. Our curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for learners to develop skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable them to be successful lifelong learners, with appropriate balance between the academic and personal aspects of development.

Whilst our curriculum is developmental and progressive in nature, we ensure that our teaching and learning practices enable our learners to be active learners. We aim to teach skills and then provide opportunities for learners to use these skills in a variety of contexts. This helps learners to consolidate and bring to life their skills and understanding.

We embed specific approaches and programmes including:

- Safe environments with structure and consistent routines
- Small class sizes with high staff-to-pupil ratios
- Literacy and numeracy interventions
- Trauma-informed practice
- Adaptive teaching strategies
- Restorative approaches
- Sensory regulation strategies
- Positive behaviour support plans
- Individual risk assessments
- Indoor and outdoor learning environments
- Access to offsite educational visits
- Specialist support from physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists.

We have a supportive and nurturing approach in relation to supporting our learners who sometimes find it difficult to engage in learning and whose behaviour for learning may need further development. Some learners have a positive behaviour support plan to help them access their

learning and to ensure a consistent approach. If a child requires a positive behaviour support plan, this is written and agreed with parents/carers.

7. Emotional and social development

How does Horizons Academy improve the emotional and social development of learners including extra pastoral arrangements for listening to the views of learners with SEND and measures to prevent bullying?

We are committed to supporting the emotional wellbeing and safety of each child.

Staff work tirelessly to connect and engage learners through a relational approach promoting each child's ability to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour. When necessary, staff help learners through co-regulation. Daily emotional check-ins are conducted as appropriate along with timetabled interventions where it is identified that this will benefit a learner positively.

We pay great attention to personal development and weave this into our curriculum. Learners are encouraged to be as independent as possible, to emotionally regulate and develop their communication skills.

We encourage a respectful relationship between staff and learners so that learners feel comfortable expressing their feelings or concerns with a range of trusted adults. We have a School Council which gives learners the opportunities to give their views and ideas regarding the day-to-day experience at Horizons Academy.

Each class has its own staff team who understand the needs of each child in the group very well and build up trusting and professional relationships. Learners are always encouraged to be as independent as possible in their learning and personal development.

Our Horizons' habits are an important part of the development of our learners. All our young people are encouraged to be respectful, be brave, be resilient and build relationships.

Horizons Academy has a strong safeguarding culture as our learners in the academy are vulnerable due to their SEND. There are two designated safeguarding leads within the academy and three deputy designated safeguarding leads.

8. Staff development

How does Horizons Academy ensure staff have the expertise and training in relation to learners with SEND and how specialist expertise will be secured?

Staff are trained in how best to teach and support the learners who attend Horizons Academy.

Staff training and development features consistently in the Academy improvement plan and an annual schedule of continuous professional development. Specific training needs are identified through the Personal Development Programme.

As a minimum requirement, we train all our staff (with regular refreshers) in the following;

- Safeguarding
- Fire safety
- GDPR
- Moving and handling
- Team teach

Some staff have received training (with regular refreshers) for the specific needs of learners including;

- Administering emergency medication
- Managing asthma
- Administering an EpiPen
- Emergency first aid
- Epilepsy training

We have a first aid team which has numerous staff trained in First Aid at Work and some staff trained as Paediatric First Aiders.

9. External agencies

How does Horizons Academy involve other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations in meeting the needs of learners with SEND and their families?

We use outreach services for speech and language, physiotherapy and occupational therapy provision. We have an occupational therapist from Speak Easy who is based at Horizons Academy two days per week. Therapy is mainly carried out in class and integrated into learning.

We seek to respond quickly to emerging additional needs and work closely with other agencies including:

- Early Help Team
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychology Service
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- ICDS Specialist Support Team
- Local NHS services
- Multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Youth Offending Teams where appropriate
- Alternative Provision providers
- Virtual School

We have a clear point of contact within the academy who will coordinate the support from outside agencies. Jessica MacLean is the member of staff who is the designated teacher for CLA.

10. Child voice

How do Horizons Academy consult learners with SEND and involve them in their education?

We recognise that all learners have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choices. We use a range of approaches to enable our learners to make simple influential choices. This can be during learning or reviewing their performance, during the Student Council meetings, during the EHCP review meeting or during the LAC review. Child voice is also listened to during every minute of daily life at Horizons Academy.

11. Parent / carer relationships

How does Horizons Academy consult parents and carers of learners with SEND and involve them in their child's education?

The academy aims to work in partnership with parents and carers by:

- Making parents and carers feel welcome
- Giving parents and carers opportunities to play an active and valued role in their child's
- education
- Pre and post admission meetings, regular parent and carer conversations
- Frequent contact is maintained with home and the academy through face-to-face conversations, telephone calls and WeDuc
- Conducting home visits where appropriate or necessary
- Regular parent/carer evenings in person at the Academy
- Encouraging parents and carers to inform the academy of any difficulties they perceive their child may be having or other needs their child may have that need addressing
- Instilling confidence that the academy will listen and act appropriately
- Engaging parents and carers in opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the academy can help their child
- Keeping parents and carers informed and giving support during assessment and any related decision-making process
- Making parents and carers aware of the Parent Partnership services available as part of the Local Offer
- Providing all information in an accessible way, including, where necessary, translated information for parents and carers with English as a second language
- The academy website is updated regularly

12. Transitions

How does Horizons Academy support learners to transition between phases of education?

We aim to ensure smooth transition into our academy from the previous phase of education and from our academy into the next phase of education.

When a child has been offered and accepted a place at Horizons Academy parents and carers are invited to attend a meeting which involves meeting staff at the academy, having a tour of the academy and sharing information about the child.

Learners are invited in for transition visits before their start date. For some learners, the initial transition may be gradual on a personalised timetable.

13. Governing body

Arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents and carers of learners with SEND concerning the provision made by the academy.

If there are any complaints these will be dealt with in the first instance by the class teacher and/or a member of the leadership team, then, if unresolved, by a Director of Education. In the case of an unresolved complaint the issue should be taken through the Governors complaints procedure (Concerns and Complaints).

14. Equipment and facilities

Information about the equipment and facilities to support the learners at Horizons Academy.

Horizons Academy is housed within a brand-new state-of-the-art building. All areas inside and outside the building are accessible. The academy has a range of specialist equipment and specialist areas including:

- Specialist learning spaces to include food technology, science, design and technology, fitness suite, art, IT, 3G football pitches x 2, MUGA and outdoor gym
- Sensory and regulation areas
- Soft play
- Classroom with interactive boards
- Calm rooms in each classroom
- Outdoor learning environments directly off each classroom
- Hall with interactive board and lighting, badminton court and table tennis tables
- ICT resources
- Accessible facilities
- Adapted learning resources

15. Contacts

Who can I contact for further information or if I have any concerns?

If you wish to discuss your child's additional needs or are unhappy about any issues regarding Horizons Academy's response to meeting these needs, please contact the following:

Class teacher for your child's class

Assistant Principal: Gemma Bendell-Whittaker or Jessica MacLean

Vice Principal: Zoe Clayton

Principal: Lee Beesley

For complaints, please contact the School Governor, Patricia Bryn-Jones with responsibility for SEND. You can find this information within our complaints policy on our Diverse Academies website.

Information, Advice and Support Agency Network offers independent advice and support to parents and carers of all learners and young people with SEND and will direct visitors to their nearest IAS service;

https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network

16. Horizons Academy Local Offer

All our Academy policies can be found on our school website:

https://www.horizons-ac.org.uk/