

SEND Information Report

Identification & Assessment

All pupils attending The Heights Academy have been assessed as having Special Educational Needs and have an Education Health and Care Plan before entry.

The admission criteria to the school centres around a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition which affects how an individual perceives the world, communicates, processes information, and interacts with others. Some students will also be recognised as having Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs which can mean significant challenges in managing emotions, wellbeing, and behaviour. Children will have good capacity to learn with some at age related expectations (ARE) who would follow our Adventurer pathway, some students around 2 years below (ARE) who would be part of our Navigator pathway, and some lower than this at around 4 years below ARE who are our Explorers.

The school caters for pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

Teaching & Curriculum

Students enjoy a full curriculum at The Heights, based on the National Curriculum. Being able to offer teaching in a stable environment where transitions are reduced and planning can be bespoke to individual needs means that students are successful. Small class sizes ensure that staff know pupils well.

A variety of approaches are used within lessons, with a focus on visual and structured approaches to support pupil progress. Learning environments are adapted to suit individuals so that if, for example, they are seeking movement alternative seating can be provided. Children have their own work desks organised in a way that they prefer; maybe with a screen around their desk to reduce distractions, for example or a personal visual schedule on the desk. We are able to meet needs flexibly in classrooms so that students feel relaxed and secure- we create a sense of belonging.

Transitions are kept to a minimum which suits pupils and maintains a calm and purposeful environment.

Progress & Review.

In line with the Code of Practice pupils EHCPs are reviewed annually, this is a process with families at the heart. Students are given the opportunity attend the meeting and contribute. Progress against EHCP outcomes is celebrated and documents are updated.

Core subjects are assessed on a termly basis, and parents have a report annually summarising their child's progress and achievements across the year.

Support Staff

Pupils are well supported by a team of specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils in our KS3 and 4 department who are Adventurers gain the benefit of being taught by subject specialist teachers to enable them to gain qualifications. All staff working at the school benefit from an extensive programme of internal professional development, and also from working with external specialists like educational psychologists and Solihull's Sensory Inclusion Service. All staff receive accredited training in Autism Spectrum Condition.

Social & Emotional Development

At The Heights we have a strong pastoral support team which comprises of a Safeguarding and Pastoral lead, Pastoral and attendance support and Positive behaviour support lead. This team is not class based and is able to provide additional support across school. Pastoral staff are able to look over pupil well being, deliver interventions and offer family support.

All pupils at The Heights need support with their Social and Emotional Development, staff are continually working on their skillset through internal and external providers to support this well.

Outside Agencies

We recognise the importance of multi-disciplinary working and employ the services of both an Occupational Therapist and a Specialist Speech and Language Therapy for one day per week. We also contract the services of Educational Psychologists and communication and SEMH specialists from the team in Solihull. Additionally our Trust (Forward Education Trust) provide expertise across the curriculum and specialist areas to work alongside us in school. For example we have regular visits from a reading lead and external behaviour experts.

Inclusion

As a specialist setting we are fully inclusive- all pupils gain access to all areas of the curriculum and school facilities. We are able to adapt practice to suit the needs of pupils attending. As an example, for Good Work Assembly on Friday afternoons KS 3 engage better by staying in their form rooms via video call. This means they can remain in their safe space without having to endure transition, or the overwhelming environment of the school hall.

Transitions

For our pupils successful transition is the key to continued progress. We have a leader who has a focus in managing transition for both pupils joining school and those moving through to ensure they are prepared for their next educational steps.

As the school is now growing into KS 4 we will be planning movement out of school for pupils- when they are 16. This is an exciting new phase for us.

Contact Details

The school's SENDCO is Miss April Newton, she is also the school's Deputy Head Teacher. She can be contacted via email: senco@heights.fet.ac

September 2026

