Buckler's Mead Academy

Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

Special Educational Needs

Information Report

2026 - 2027

Review Date: September 2027

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Our SEN Information Report

- sets out our operational procedures for identifying and managing Special Educational Needs at Buckler's Mead Academy.
- explains our resources and staffing structures
- Should be read in conjunction with Buckler's Mead SEND Policy BMA SEND Policy

Other documentation which has influenced and guided this information report.

- Somerset SEND Local Offer
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010

Introduction

At Buckler's Mead Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every student enjoys a high-quality learning experience that enables them to achieve their full potential. Our inclusive ethos underpins all that we do, valuing every individual equally and working to remove barriers to learning and participation. We believe that education should be inspiring, empowering, and accessible for all, and our school values reflect this

Success	Sky High Expectations and aspirations for all, making success inevitable.
Ambition	Building desire and determination. Inspiring hope to be the best version of yourself.
Enjoyment	Challenging one another, finding the joy in every day and fostering a lifelong love of learning.
Opportunity	A wealth of opportunities to acquire powerful knowledge and culturally rich experiences.
Community	An inclusive community working together to succeed together.

We take a proactive approach to supporting our students throughout their learning journey. While high-quality teaching forms the foundation of our practice, we recognise that some students may, at times, require additional support to fully engage with the curriculum and reach their goals. Our aim is to foster independence, equality, and mutual respect, equipping learners with the skills and confidence they need for adult life.

The Learning Support Team works collaboratively with subject departments and the wider student support services across the Academy. Through effective communication, shared expertise, and a coordinated approach, we ensure that the needs of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are met. By removing barriers and personalising learning, we enable all students to access the curriculum and participate in the wider life of the school, ensuring that their time at Buckler's Mead Academy is both successful and rewarding.

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1. Defining Special Educational Needs

A student is considered to have SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

2. Types of SEND

Our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- **Communication and interaction**, where children and young people have speech, language, and communication difficulties that make it difficult for them to make sense of language or to understand how to communicate effectively and appropriately with others, for example, autistic spectrum disorder or speech and language difficulties.
- **Cognition and learning**, where children and young people learn at a slower pace than others their age, have difficulty in understanding parts of the curriculum, have difficulties with organisation and memory skills, or have a specific difficulty affecting one particular part of their learning performance such as in literacy or numeracy. For example, dyslexia, and dyspraxia.
- **Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties**, where children and young people have difficulty managing their relationships with other people, are withdrawn, behave in ways that may hinder their and other children's learning, or that have an impact on their health and well-being, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**, Children and young people with visual and/or hearing impairments, or a physical need that means they must have additional ongoing support and equipment for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy.

3. Resources, Facilities, and Equipment

Our SENDco and Deputy SENDco have gained the National Award for Special Education Needs, which is the legal requirement for the post held. Ms S Perkins is allocated 3 days a week to manage SEND provision.

The SENDco attends relevant SEND courses, and network meetings and facilitates and signposts relevant SEND-focused external training opportunities for all staff. All Teaching Assistants are offered training opportunities through a range of local agencies working with specific students at the school.

The SENDco, with the Senior Leadership Team, ensures that training opportunities are matched to school development priorities and those identified through the use of provision management.

The Learning Support Department is made up of Eleven teaching assistants (TAs). The department has 20 hours of admin support for the SENDco and Deputy SENDco. The TAs have a variety of expertise and training that they can use to support students at Buckler's Mead. These include THRIVE practitioners, Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, Speech and Language support and Literacy specialists.

The Learning Support Department has three main spaces available for students with SEND. They are The Learning Support Classroom (LSC), The Learning Support Base (LSB) and the THRIVE base. The purpose of these spaces is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for students who present with barriers to accessing the mainstream environment to help support their day to day access to education.

4. High Quality Teaching for All Students

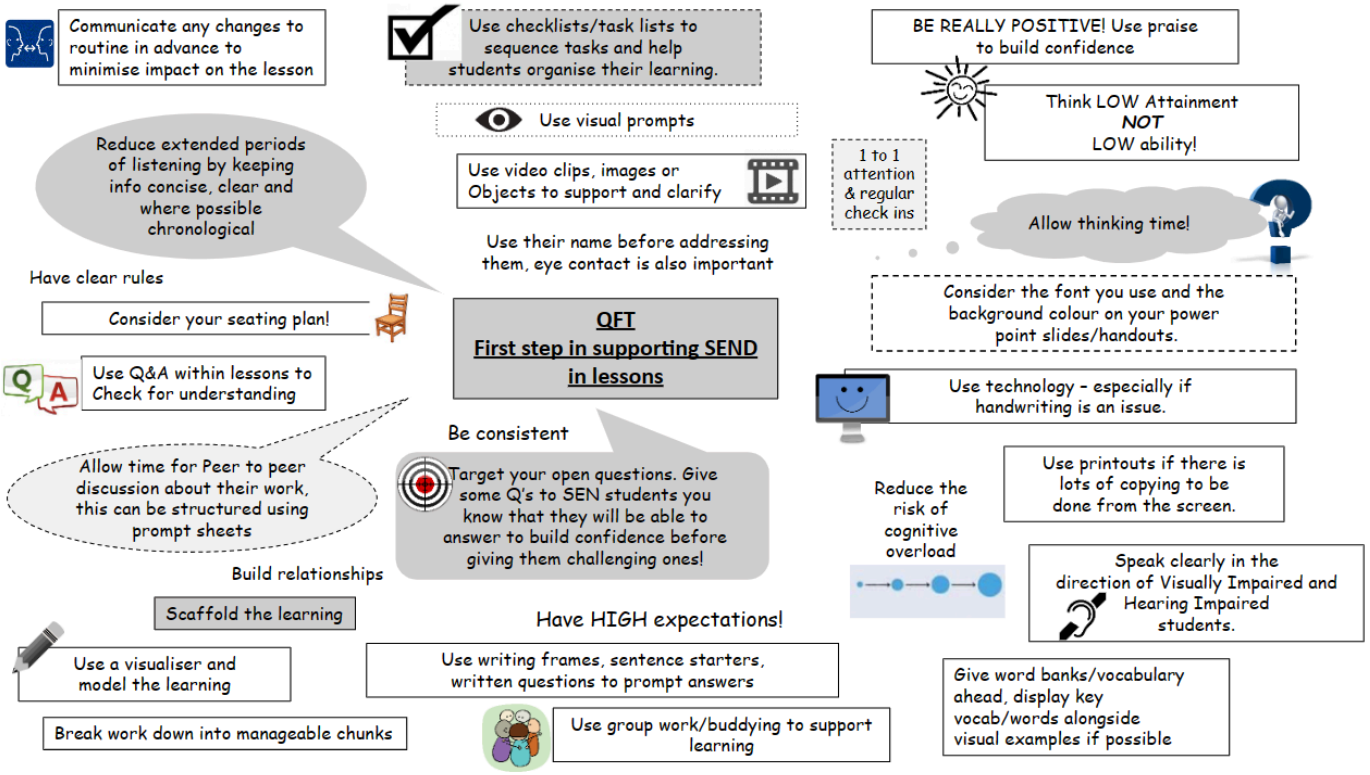
In every classroom, the teacher has an inclusion box available to them. The box contains items the class teacher can use and deploy to help remove barriers to learning. For example, timers, now-next, -then cards, letterbox reading aids, timetable squares, and coloured overlays.

Our lessons are taught through the 'Learning Cycle'. This is an evidence-based approach to ensuring learning objectives are met for each student.



	Do Now	Students **Do Now** a spaced retrieval task immediately on entry
	Engage	Teachers **Engage** students with learning objectives and discuss Keywords. The lesson is placed in the context of learning sequence (linked to prior and future learning).
	Learn	In the **Learn** phase teachers provide direct Instruction and model through physical resources, worked examples and thinking aloud. Students actively listen, make notes and ask clarifying questions.
	Build	Teachers **Build** knowledge incrementally with interactive instruction and whole class assessment and feedback. Adjust pace and depth.
	Apply	Students **Apply** their new knowledge by working independently. Students use prompts and resources to break problems into manageable steps. Teachers circulate, support and extend.
	Review	Students **Review** and improve answers. Plenary/exit tasks where students articulate new learning. Extended review follows homework and assessments where students demonstrate improvements in purple pen.

Teaching staff are encouraged to use a variety of Inclusion strategies to support all students in their learning. This forms part of our Quality First Teaching for SEND students.



5. Identification and Assessment of SEND

The majority of students with SEND are identified before joining Buckler's Mead Academy. Working closely with our feeder primary schools and primary SENDco's we ensure all documentation is transferred before a student begins their education with us. If a child transfers in-year to Buckler's Mead the same process is followed with their previous school, ensuring discussions with previous SENDco and the transfer of documentation occurs in a timely manner.

There are many ways to gather information and identify needs. These can include

- Gathering information from parents/carers, education, health and care services, and feeder primaries prior to the child's entry into the school.
- Data from KS2 SATS tests, and Cognitive Ability Tests (CATS). Completed in September / October of year 7 to increase our knowledge of student strengths and barriers.
- NGRT reading and spelling ages. Established in the Autumn term and reviewed in the Summer term at KS3 & KS4.
- Teacher monitoring the progress of all students in their classes. Continuous monitoring of those students with SEND by their teachers will help to ensure they are able to reach their full potential.
- When concerns are raised by a parent at any time during the child's educational journey.
- When a concern is raised by the child themselves.
- By pastoral colleagues.
- A significant and or prolonged change in a child's behaviour presentation at school or home.
- Collaborating with and supporting outside agencies to work with children and young people. Buckler's Mead may receive further support from external agencies for example, Education Psychology Services, Speech and Language Therapy, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Visual Impairment Services, and Hearing Impairment Services.

What happens if concerns are raised by a parent or staff member about a child's SEND?

The following is not an exhaustive list, but an example of the types of responses the school will give in order to establish any barriers the student is experiencing.

- Round robins to all staff asking specific questions regarding a child's presentation in their lessons.
- Analysis of progress checks and other internal assessments.
- Book reviews from all subjects to identify any inconsistencies or difficulties.
- Further testing to establish barriers to learning. E.g. reading comprehension
- Co-produce a student passport published to all staff.
- Adaptation to provision e.g. Speech and Language sessions.
- Gain student voice to find out their thoughts and opinions about their education and progress.
- Start an Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle (This is explained in detail later in this document)

Once a student has been identified as possibly having SEND they will be closely monitored by staff in order to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties. The subject teacher will take steps and use inclusion strategies (as outlined above) to help the student's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied.

Parents will be informed of every stage of their child's development and the circumstances under which they are being monitored. Parents are encouraged to share information and queries with Buckler's Mead Academy.

The student is monitored if concern is raised by parent or teacher but this does not automatically place the student on the school's SEND register. Concerns are discussed with parents/carers. It is recorded by the school as an aid to further progression and for future reference.

Student progress meetings and parent evenings are used to monitor and assess the progress being made by all students. The frequency of these meetings is dependent on individual progress.

6. SEND Support

Where it is determined that a child does have SEND, parents/carers will be formally advised of this before inclusion of the individual on the school SEND register. The aim of formally identifying a student with SEND is to help the school ensure that effective provision is put in place and so remove barriers to learning. The support provided consists of a four-part process The APDR shown below.



This is an ongoing cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of an individual grows. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions which are the most effective in supporting the student to achieve good progress and outcomes. Student voice is collected and shared throughout the process.

Assess	Carry out observations, hold discussions with key staff and parents/carers to identify and analyse the students' needs.
Plan	Hold discussions and meetings with parents, colleagues or any specialists who are involved to plan for what support will be put in place. This will be outcome focused.
Do	Implement the support as planned. Continue to observe and monitor to see how the student responds.
Review	Discuss with stakeholders how effective the support has been. Next steps are then carefully planned before the cycle starts again.

Targeted and Personalised Support

The following is some of the targeted and personalised support available for students at the Academy.

Individualised Literacy Intervention (ILI) Some students at Key Stage 2 may be experiencing difficulty in reading and/or writing because they have missed or misunderstood a crucial phase of systematic phonics teaching. This intervention allows for tailored individual support for students to improve their literacy skills. This is normally aimed at students with a reading and/or spelling age of below 7 years.

The Read Write Fresh Start programme is a catch-up and intervention programme, with proven results, for 9-13-year-olds still learning to read. Developed by Ruth Miskin, it teaches pupils to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension, to spell correctly, and to compose their ideas for writing step-by-step.

Speech, Language and Communication (SpLC) Speaking, listening, reading and writing are four aspects of language development that are at the core of the school curriculum. There is evidence that children with speech and language difficulties suffer difficulties with all four skills that adversely affect their educational progress and vocational prospects. This intervention is aimed at those children who have a significant need in this area or who have been seen by the Speech and Language service and have a care plan provided for them.

Emotional Literacy (ELSA) This can be delivered through a group session or on a 1:1 basis. Emotional Literacy is the term used to describe the ability to understand and express feelings. ELSA involves having self-awareness and recognition of one's own feelings and knowing how to manage them. It includes empathy, i.e. having sensitivity to the feelings of other people. Emotional Literacy also includes being able to recognise and adapt to the feelings of other people, whilst at the same time,

learning how to manage and express one's own emotions effectively. This is helpful to developing good communication skills and the enhancement of our relationships with other people.

THRIVE is based on established neuroscience, attachment theory, and child development, the Thrive Approach provides adults with the knowledge, insights, and resources needed to develop the relationships that help children and young people to flourish and learn. THRIVE promotes children's and young people's positive mental health by helping adults know how to be and what to do in response to their differing and sometimes distressed behaviour.

Foundation Learning (Years 10 & 11) This is a small number of students who have had difficulty accessing the full curriculum at the school, or who benefit from having nurtured time within the school week to support their learning in all other curriculum areas. A focus on completing Entry Level English and Maths may be considered.

Individualised Learning Programmes In some very extreme circumstances it may become necessary to remove a student from timetabled lessons. We never do this lightly and only when all avenues of support have been tried. Normally if a student has been removed from the main curriculum they will initially work in the LSB under the supervision of Mrs Coate and /or an SEND Teaching Assistant, until a decision is made about how best to meet the needs of the student. It might be decided that the needs are best met in another educational establishment.

In-Class Support All the learning support staff regularly support students in lessons across all curriculum areas. The amount of in-class support provided will need' assessed and increased or decreased depending on how successful the support is. Most subject areas will deploy their own subject-specific teaching assistant to help support some learners in lessons.

AQA Unit Award is a nationally recognised qualification that allows students to gain credit for completing small, achievable steps of learning. It is designed to celebrate progress and achievement, particularly for students working below mainstream GCSE level or with additional learning needs. Unit Awards can cover a wide range of subjects and skills, helping to build confidence and motivation while providing evidence of learning and personal development.

Exam Access Arrangements All Year 10 students (previously receiving support or new to Buckler's Mead Academy) are screened to assess if they require access arrangements for public examinations. The gathering of information and further assessments are completed. Applications are made for students who meet the criteria set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Parents/carers of students requiring access arrangements will be informed by letter.

7. Referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan

If a student has lifelong or significant difficulties, they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process. This is usually initiated by the school, but can also be requested by a parent or any professional working with the child. This process is considered when a student's needs are complex, or where there is uncertainty about how best to support them, requiring a coordinated multi-agency approach to assess their needs, plan provision, and identify appropriate resources.

The decision to request an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is made during a progress review, involving parents, the SENDCo, and relevant pastoral colleagues.

The application for Education, Health and Care Plans will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents / carers
- Teachers
- SENDco
- Social Care
- Health professionals
- Educational Psychologist
- Other professional bodies

Information will be gathered regarding the student's current provision, along with a summary of any action points taken. The preliminary outcomes of the targets set form the basis of the student's profile. A decision is then made by a panel of professionals from education, health, and social care to determine whether the student is eligible for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

Parents have the right to appeal if the decision is made not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

Further information about EHC Plans can be found via the SEND Local Offer: EHC Plans Somerset's Local Offer

Or by speaking to an Education, Health, and Care Plan Coordinator from the SEND team at Somerset Local Authority.

8. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Following Statutory Assessment, an EHC Plan will be provided by Somerset County Council, if it is decided that the needs of an individual are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available.

Both staff and parents will be involved in developing and producing the plan.

Parents have the right to appeal against the content of the EHC Plan. They may also appeal against the school named in the plan if it differs from their preferred choice.

Once the EHC Plan has been completed and agreed upon, it will be kept as part of the student's formal record and reviewed at least annually by staff, parents, and the student. The Annual Review enables provision for the student to be evaluated and, where appropriate, for changes to be put in place.

9. Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

Buckler's Mead Academy ensures that reasonable adjustments are made to both the academic and pastoral needs of the students with SEND, allowing them to develop their skills, achieve their potential, and prepare for the future. Our intention is to enable all students, whatever their needs, to benefit from access to a full curriculum and to the life of the school.

There are, however, areas of Buckler's Mead Academy that are inaccessible for those who use wheelchairs. Students with more acute needs may need a higher level of in-class support or a modified curriculum. Both the academic and pastoral needs (emotional & social needs) of students are met by a range of staff within Buckler's Mead Academy such as Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Heads of Department, subject teachers, and learning support staff. Further support is also available through links with external agencies.

We make the following adaptations to ensure all students' needs are met:

- Using an inclusive approach in lessons (Inclusion boxes and QFT inclusion strategies)
- Adapting our curriculum to ensure all students are able to access, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, and the content of the lesson.
- Adapting our resources in lessons.
- Using recommended aids, for example, coloured overlays, visual timetables, and larger fonts.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing time, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

10. Working with External Agencies

Here are examples of external agencies we work closely with to provide support for students with SEND:

- Somerset Parent Carer Forum C.I.C
- Somerset SENDIAS
- School Health
- Educational Engagement Service
- Virtual School
- Local Authority Support Services
- Inclusion Advice Line
- Educational Psychology Service
- Children's Social Care and Family Intervention Service
- REACH Youth
- Future Roots – Ryland's Farm
- Core Creative Education
- https://www.torschool.org/

Representatives from voluntary organisations and other external agencies are invited to meetings throughout the year to discuss SEND provision and progress and keep staff up to date with legislation.

In cases where a child is under observation or has a cause for concern, focused meetings may be arranged with the appropriate agency. Parents will be invited to and informed about any meetings held concerning their child unless there are overriding safeguarding issues.

11. Supporting Students' Social and Emotional Wellbeing

We provide support for students to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Students with SEND are encouraged to be part of student voice collections.
- Students with SEND are encouraged to check-in, in the Learning Support Base.
- We have trained THRIVE practitioners and ELSA trained Teaching Assistants.
- We have pastoral care, which consists of five pastoral support assistants and two Associate Assistant Headteachers.
- We have a school counsellor.
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. Please see separate Anti-bullying policy.

12. Opportunities Beyond the Classroom

All extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our students, including before- and after-school clubs. For all activities out of school, a risk assessment is carried out and procedures, or reasonable adjustments, are put in place to enable all students to participate.

If it is considered that additional 1:1 support is required to support a student, on the grounds of disability, needs or safety, an additional staff member may be asked to accompany a student during the activity/trip. If, on the basis of the risk assessment, it is considered that a student poses a health and safety risk to themselves or others that cannot be reasonably managed, it may not be possible for a student to access a trip. The headteacher will take this decision, balancing carefully the school's responsibilities to provide reasonable adjustments and fair access alongside health and safety needs.

All students are encouraged to take part in sports day, school plays and special workshops.

13. Supporting Transitions

The school has a well-established transition programme for students moving from KS2 to KS3. The SENDco is fully involved in this primary liaison programme, to ensure that all relevant information is successfully transferred for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The SENDco contacts all the main feeder primary schools, to discuss individual needs with relevant primary staff. This information contributes to the support arrangements for all new students in Year 7.

There are several opportunities for Year 6 transitional students to experience life at Buckler's Mead Academy before the September start date. All students with SEND are fully included in this programme, which includes a taster day during the summer term. Additional visits to the school, to meet key staff or become familiar with routines and layout, can be arranged with the SENDco during the summer term. This is completed in liaison with parents and the primary school and is tailored to suit individual needs.

Transition arrangements for students between KS3 and KS4 are more individually based, to help students with SEND plan appropriate KS4 option choices and carefully consider post-16 education and future employment opportunities or interests.

Students with an EHCP or who are Looked After are prioritised to meet the school's careers advisor to ensure a clear plan is in place to enable them to move on to an appropriate post-16 educational or employment-based training opportunity.

14. Evaluating SEND provision

In order to make continuous progress in relation to the SEND provision at Buckler's Mead Academy, we encourage feedback from staff, parents, and students during the academic year. Parents can access the SENDco and Learning Support Department regularly by making an appointment or sending alternative communication e.g. email.

Staff surveys are conducted throughout the academic year as well as collecting parental feedback at parent evenings/consultation evenings. This will be collated and published by the directing body of a school on an annual basis in accordance with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

15. Communication and Complaints

You can get in touch with the SENDco in any of the following ways

1. Ring the school office on 01935 424454 and request a call back.
2. Email the main office at: office@bucklersmeadacademy.com and mark it F.A.O Mrs Perkins
3. Email the Senco on senco@bucklersmeadacademy.com
4. You can write a letter, please find the school address on our Website.

In the first instance, we would encourage all parents/carers to discuss their concerns or complaints with the SENDco. However, you can also raise a complaint to the SEND Governor Mr M. Gulliver, or the Headteacher Mr. M Lawrence. Please see the Academy's complaints procedures for how to do this.

16. Somerset County Council's Local Offer and Graduated Response

The local authority has a wealth of supporting information about Special Educational needs. The main documents to familiarise yourself with are

- The Somerset Local offer Somerset's SEND Local Offer
- The Somerset Graduated Response to Need and Graduated Response Tool
- Somerset's Graduated Response Tool - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership

Somerset's Graduated Response Tool sets out the barriers to learning that children and young people may have and the strategies and provisions that could be in place to support them.

Somerset's Graduated Response Tool has been created to support all users to understand the Graduated Response to Special Educational Needs in the context of current legislation. The document makes it clear 'what to expect' in terms of what is provided and is written for parents/carers, children and young people, school staff, and those who provide services to families. The tool sets out the provision that is ordinarily available in Somerset schools at both the Universal and Special Educational Needs (SEND) Support levels.