



SEN Information Report 2020-2021

The Bridge Short Stay School is a pupil referral unit offering provision for 40 students in KS3 and KS4 across Cheshire West and Chester for students who have been permanently excluded from school, are at risk of exclusion or for a variety of reasons have found themselves without a school place. Although the Local Authority commissions 40 places, rates of exclusions in recent years have meant the school population has consistently been higher than this

The school has two main sites, in Ellesmere Port and Norwich, as part of our initial COVID response however the two sites were consolidated in Ellesmere Port to try and ensure continuity of provision; this arrangement has continued into 2021-22 as we continue to respond to the pandemic.

In addition to the two main sites, some learning may also take place in other satellite centres as a bridge back into group settings.

The kinds of SEN we provide for

As a PRU the nature of our student population is constantly changing, yet our SEN population remains consistently high at around 70-80%. In recent years we have seen an increase in number of students who have an EHCP, again the transient nature of our population means this varies but has been between 10 and 20% of the overall cohort. Therefore, our school must provide additional and/or different provision for an extremely wide range of needs which last year included:

- Communication and Interaction (C&I): autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), Asperger's Syndrome, specific speech and language difficulties, social communication difficulties;
- Cognition and Learning (C&L): dyslexia, dyspraxia, short term memory difficulties, processing difficulties;
- Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiance disorder (ODD), conduct disorder, severe anxiety, emotional and behavioural difficulties, depression, low mood;
- Sensory and/or physical needs (S/P): visual impairments, hearing impairments;
- Moderate, severe and complex learning difficulties (MLD, SLD, CLD): general developmental delay, microcephaly.

Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

Our aim is to ensure that the correct package of support is placed around every student to meet his/her individual needs when he/she leaves our school, whether it be to transition back to a mainstream setting, to a specialist provision, or to a post-16 setting.

Whilst a very high number of students who enter our school are placed on our SEN Register, only a very small number arrive with an EHCP or Top Up Funding already in place. Some students enter having already had their SEN recognised by the referring school and placed on SEN Support; others reach us with unidentified and unmet need.

Consequently, every student's Induction process includes a holistic assessment of student need. This is coordinated by the school's SENCO, an experienced HLTA takes responsibility for the majority of student induction programmes, including administering diagnostic assessment.

The assessments include:

- Reading accuracy
- Reading rate
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Processing speed

- Speed of handwriting
- Specific number skills
- Test of Memory and Learning
- Strength & Difficulties Questionnaire
- Baseline assessments of subject specific attainment

This information is communicated to teachers via a One Page Profile, together with strategies to meet need which are reviewed regularly in order to evaluate and collect evidence of impact of support. This forms the keystone of our graduated approach to identifying and supporting SEN (see assessing and reviewing student progress section for further details).

Staff participate in daily briefings and debriefings during which students' needs are discussed and additional concerns raised. Actions to further identify/meet need arising from these meetings are coordinated by the school's SENCO. In addition, many students are also supported by other professionals and agencies who may request assessment of need or external pathway referrals.

The school's SENCO monitors and evaluates all evidence of need in order to support external pathway referrals and potential EHCP/Top-Up Funding applications appropriate to need.

P1 – Specialist Group Provision

The school has developed a specialist group provision, for students who are identified at the time of induction to be on the pathway for EHCNA, particularly based on cognition and learning needs. This group is led by a consistent teacher and TA partnership and adopts a project based approach to learning more suited to these student's particular needs than a more traditional secondary school model. The lead teacher within this group has significant experience teaching within KS2 and is well placed to identify and address long standing gaps in knowledge and understanding that have accumulated over time.

P2 – Trauma & SEMH Specialism

A second, bespoke, pathway seeks specifically to meet the needs of students who have been particularly impacted by experiences of childhood trauma and/or SEMH needs. This group receive highly personalised behavioural and social/emotional support to enable their learning needs to be met, supported by tutors including a TA who is trained to provide ELSA support.

Consulting and involving students and parents

As part of our enrolment process an initial meeting is held with parents/carers, the student, a member of SLT and the HLTA where any current and potential special educational provision need is discussed. These conversations make sure that:

- All parties gain a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulty;
- We take into account the parents' concerns;
- We agree initial outcomes sought for the student;
- All parties are clear on what the next steps are.

During Induction students complete the person-centre planning process with a qualified ELSA or counsellor in order to create a One Page Profile. This document is reviewed regularly and is frequently amended to reflect students' changing and emerging needs, wishes and feelings.

Once enrolled at The Bridge we inform parents/carers about students' learning through text messages via our Arbor system on a daily basis. Where we have concerns, we will promptly call or invite parents/carers to a meeting to discuss issues. If parents/carers wish to come in to discuss their concerns, there is usually a member of staff available to listen at short notice. This information is then passed on to the school SENCO.



Students are set weekly targets and are provided with a morning tutorial and afternoon reflection during which they can discuss barriers to successfully accessing learning. Progress towards these targets is monitored via our behaviour reporting system.

All external pathway referrals require parental and student consent. Therefore, parents/carers of any student who is assessed by the SENCO as potentially needing a referral to an external agency or an EHCP application, for example, is informed at the earliest opportunity and supported throughout the referral/application process.

Assessing and reviewing students' progress towards outcomes

As detailed in the identification and assessment section, as a PRU our operational structure is specifically designed to follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review:

Assess: the Induction process provides a clear analysis of a student's needs, alongside information from the referring school and other professionals/agencies;

Plan: the SENCO and curriculum lead put in place a package of support based on assessment of need.

Do: the package includes the universal entitlement of Quality First Teaching (QFT) in small groups of no more than 8 students, with access to additional adult support and/or initial time-limited intervention on a needs-basis (for example, 1:1 ELSA to rebuild resilience and engagement with learning following negative experience of Permanent Exclusion);

Review: all staff participate in daily and ongoing reviews of need and impact of additional provision as detailed in the identification and assessment section; time-limited interventions are reviewed formatively via the corresponding baseline assessment tool (e.g. Follow Up SDQ for ELSA interventions); overall provision is reviewed by the SENDCO and curriculum lead on a half termly basis, drawing on teacher assessment and experience of the student, the views of parents and students, and input from external support services (if relevant).

We use the One Page Profile to communicate to all staff our students' needs, the outcomes sought, the support in place, and any teaching and learning strategies or approaches that are required.

Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

The information gathered by our assessment and review systems form the basis of student transition plan, which are completed in collaboration with students, parents/carers, external agencies including CWAC's SEN Team (where appropriate), and with the support of CWAC's Education Access Team and Young People's Service.

Multi-professional teams support the student prior to, during and post-transition to another setting in varying capacities depending on student need and barriers to access. School involvement may include, for example: several pre-transition meetings between school staff and parents/carers/students to address reluctance to return to a mainstream setting, liaison with other professionals such as CAMHS or a family's Social Worker to assist with external factors affecting a potential transition, and/or school staff accompanying a family to a transition meeting at a new setting.

During 2020-21 additional transition support funding was made available to PRUs, this was utilised to second time from our outreach coordinator to act as a transition mentor to offer ongoing support to Y11 students, including those with identified SEN, who were at risk of becoming NEET.

Our approach to teaching students with SEN

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High quality teaching is our first step in responding to students who have SEN. This will be differentiated for individual students based on the information provided through the assessment and induction process and the One Page Profile.



If the induction or graduated approach processes identify a need that required additional provision, we also provide the following interventions:

- Literacy, utilising precision teaching techniques and programmes such as Lexonic
- Numeracy, utilising precision teaching techniques
- Pre and post topic learning
- Processing and working memory
- Social communication and interaction, including ASC specific strategies such as Social Stories
- ELSA group and 1:1
- 1:1 CBT
- Bespoke behaviour support plans, such as daily regulation and preventative time out

These interventions are provided on a time-limited basis and evaluated by an appropriate assessment tool, with expected and actual outcomes shared with staff before commencing another graduated approach cycle.

From the beginning of year 9 all students are assessed by our SENDCo for Access Arrangements. Any resulting adjustments, such as 25% extra time, are communicated to teaching staff and are put in place to reflect students' normal way of working.

Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

Our Key Stage three curriculum is designed to support a successful transition to a mainstream setting, or specialist setting if appropriate. Our KS3 curriculum offer includes core and humanities subjects, in addition to PSHE, RSE, Life Skills, Our World, Oracy and Learning Outside the Classroom. The purpose of this curriculum is to minimise disruption to learning and gaps in knowledge/understanding post-transition as well as develop key skills vital to the success of their future school and working careers. However, due to the nature of many students' needs upon entry to our school it is often necessary to make personalised adaptations to an individual's timetable in order to rebuild resilience, address high levels of anxiety as well as entrenched learned behaviours which are not conducive to successful learning.

Many students who enter the school in year 10 and year 11 commonly complete their GCSE programmes with us, and accordingly our KS4 offer includes core subjects, an option of GCSE PE or Art, Duke of Edinburgh, as well as PSHE, Life Skills and Oracy. Unfortunately, a combination of student need, a substantial history of school failure, as well as external factors can act as significant barriers to accessing a full-time timetable, and consequently we also provide personalised packages which may include work placements, college placements, and off-site tuition.

Our behavioural support systems include daily, structured sessions for reflection and positive reinforcement for students with their tutors and so provide frequent opportunities for students to express their views and feelings in a controlled environment. This allows staff to make small personalised adjustments on a needs basis which reduces the potential for undesirable behaviours elsewhere.

In the classroom, as already detailed, QFT in small groups is every student's universal entitlement. Within this structure, staff also make reasonable adjustments as recommended by the SENCO such as the use of laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger fonts as well as approved Access Arrangements adjustments.

Expertise and training of staff

Our Assistant Head Teacher is the school's SENDCO has achieved the NASENCO qualification, is a qualified Level 7 Specialist Assessor for Access Arrangements, and is in the process of completing a MA in Behaviour Analysis. She is trained in Precision Teaching techniques as well as Behavioural Skills Training. Managing SEN provision is her primary priority and she does not carry a teaching timetable. The importance of the SENDCO role is recognised structurally by the school as an integral part of the SLT.



Our Pastoral Lead is a qualified experienced Cognitive Behavioural Therapist for Children and Young People. She leads on all aspects of our emotional and mental health provision. She is the school Safeguarding Lead and also delivers 1:1 CBT for identified students.

Our Deputy Head Teacher previously acted as the school's SENCO for 8 years. She had also worked as a SENCO in her previous school for 9 years.

We have a team of support staff who are trained to deliver interventions:

- An unqualified teacher who is a qualified and experienced ELSA, who leads our whole-school PSHE curriculum and delivers 1:1/group wellbeing/social communication interventions for
- An experienced HLTA who is also a qualified ELSA, and who leads on delivery of the induction process. She also delivers 1:1/group wellbeing/social communication interventions and literacy/numeracy/processing/working memory interventions.
- An experienced teaching assistant who delivers literacy/numeracy/processing/working memory interventions and pre/post topic learning;
- An experienced teaching assistant who is a qualified Integrative Counsellor and who delivers 1:1/group wellbeing/social communication as well as processing/working memory interventions
- An experienced Primary teacher and SEN teaching assistant who collaboratively deliver a bespoke curriculum to students identified as being on an EHCP pathway with a likely outcome of transition to a special school
- An Outreach Coordinator who supports students who are learning off-site as part of their support package, and who has completed drugs counselling training.

In the last academic year, staff have been trained in:

- Person Centred Planning
- New ELSA training
- Ongoing ELSA supervision
- Group supervision from Educational Psychology team
- MAPA approach to de-escalation

Where student need necessitates, we access input from the following agencies:

- Educational Psychology Service
- CWAC SEND Team
- CWAC Education Access Team
- CAMHS
- Community Paediatrics
- Speech & Language Therapy Paediatric Service
- School Health
- Occupational Therapy Service
- RASAC
- Young People's Service
- Community Safety Team
- Youth Offending Service
- Children's Services



Securing equipment and facilities

Student places at our school are funded through CWAC's high needs budget, although on a place-by-place basis. This allows us to provide the universal entitlement as detailed above; any additional equipment relating to a specific SEN over and above what could be deemed a reasonable adjustment for a non-special PRU would need to be procured in liaison with the commissioning service.

Evaluating the effectiveness of our SEN provision

In addition to the graduated approach detailed in earlier sections, we evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEN by:

- Reviewing student progress and interventions as detailed above;
- Using provision maps to monitor and measure progress;
- Whole-school monitoring by the SENCO, including SEND audit, action planning and comparative data analysis;
- Undertaking student and parent voice activities;
- Holding annual reviews students with EHCPs.

Enabling students with SEN to engage in activities available to those in the school who do not have SEN

Due to our adaptive and personalised approach to provision, we ensure that there are no barriers to students with SEN enjoying the same activities as students without SEN. All of our off-site activities are available to all students: our Learning Outside the Classroom offer is specifically designed to support all needs; all students participate in off-site PE activities which cater for all abilities; all KS4 students are offered enrichment trips in support of their GCSE curricula such as a theatre trip to see 'Blood Brothers' and an Art excursion to visit the Lady Lever Art Gallery. No student is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability.

All students are treated equally regardless of need or difficulty. We embed this message from the outset with all of our students through the positive reinforcement of desired behavioural choices, consistent consequences for negative behavioural choices, alongside structured opportunities during reflection and curriculum-led sessions to discuss the impact of those less desirable behaviours. This is supported by an annual 'awareness' program which includes the themes of bullying, inclusion and diversity.

Our school building at Appleton is partially accessible. The building at First House is fully accessible. Both buildings have accessible toilets.

Complaints about our SEN provision

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations when responding to complaints from parents of students at the school, and others. Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the SENDCo in the first instance (at the contact details below). They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy, which can be found here: http://www.thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk/serve_file/225716

The parents of students with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions;
- Provision of education and associated services;
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

Contact details for raising concerns



If you have a concern about any other aspect of school's provision, please see our complaints policy (see hyperlink above) or contact our Headteacher, Andy Stewart at:

The Bridge Short Stay School Short Stay School

Appleton Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH45 7EP

Phone: 01513376873

Email: enquiries@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk

Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

If you are unable to find contact details for a support service via the Local Offer (see below) or from our SENDCO's office, our local Information Advice and Support Service is an independent service specifically set up to help parents and carers of children and young people who have difficulties with learning and/or a disability from birth to 25 years.

They are based at:

Council Offices

4 Civic Way

Ellesmere Port

CH65 0BE

They can be contacted by:

Telephone: 0300 123 7001

E-mail: iasservice@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

The local authority local offer

Our local authority's local offer is published here: <https://livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk>