



The Castle School

ACHIEVE | BELONG | PARTICIPATE

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY

SEN INFORMATION REPORT

Our Commitment

Our aim is for every child to achieve, belong and participate enabling a life of choice and opportunity.

We believe in the absolute moral responsibility we have for equipping students with the best possible exam results; we know that this opens doors for students and equips them with outstanding attitudes and a strong moral foundation.

Equally important is nurturing every student's potential beyond the curriculum. We aim for the participation of every student in an enrichment activity.

Review Date: September 2025

Stakeholders: Parents/Students/School Staff & Governors

Next Review Date: September 2026

What is Somerset's Local Offer?

Information on the services available for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) aged between 0 to 25 and how to access them

Introduction

The information and services on the website are for **all** children and young people with SEND that the local authority is responsible for, whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), to help families to make the best decisions.

Somerset's Local Offer is also an important resource for professionals to support understanding of the range of services and provision for children and young people with SEND across the county.

You can read more about what we aim to do, how we will get there and the rules we are following in The [SEND Somerset's Local Offer Education page](#). And you can read more about our plan for improving services for children and young people with SEND in Somerset on our [SEND Strategy and our plans](#).

How is the Local Offer is produced?

Somerset's Local Offer was first published 1 September 2014. It has been co-produced between [Somerset County Council](#), [NHS Somerset ICB](#), formerly Somerset Clinical Commissioning, [Somerset Parent Carer Forum \(SPCF\)](#) and young people's groups in schools and colleges. Somerset's SEND Local Offer is our local hub of information and guidance for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), their families and professionals in Somerset. Explore services available to support you and how to access them.

How will school staff support my child? Somerset Graduated Response Tool. Quality first teaching underpins all educational provision. It focuses on inclusive practice and breaks down barriers to learning. For the majority of children this can be achieved by identifying specific barriers, followed by personalisation and differentiation using strategies as identified in the Somerset Graduated Response Tool. The Somerset Graduated Response Tool breaks down SEN into four broad areas of need. This targets specific support for teachers to plan and for any interventions to take place. You can learn more about the Somerset Graduated Response at:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer/education/what-to-expect-from-education>

Some of the principles we work towards are described in [Somerset's Local Offer Accessibility Plan](#). We now keep it up to date and to make sure it reflects and embeds the needs of service users through a process co-produced with the SPCF and Somerset County Council's [SEND Participation and Engagement Team](#). Working with parents and young people.

All aspects of services in Somerset's Local Offer are developed in partnership with parent carers, young people and practitioners in agencies and the voluntary sector. Somerset's Local Offer empowers parents, carers, young people and practitioners by setting out clearly what can be expected locally, how to access services and where to find more information. We are working more closely with children and young people with SEND and their families to understand and learn from their experiences when formulating strategies to improve the area.

We work directly with parents and carers through: the [Somerset Parent Carer Forum](#), and [Somerset Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service \(SENDIAS\)](#)

We work directly with young people through:

Somerset County Council's [SEND Engagement and Participation Team](#).

Somerset County Council's [Young People with SEND Voice](#)

Get in touch. Somerset's Local Offer is reviewed regularly. We encourage all forms of feedback – positive and negative – so that we can continue to develop and improve the website and our offer of services to make sure it remains useful. [Somerset's Local Offer](#)

The Castle School SEND Policy

	Universal	SEN Support	High Needs
1. How does the school know if students need extra help?	- Through information given from the Primary School before the Year 6 students transfer to The Castle School - Screening in September of Year 7 & reassessed in Yr8 - Yr9 Access Arrangement assessments - Observations - Teacher feedback - Parental & student concerns - Form Tutor and Head of House concerns - Concerns from other staff such as Pastoral Support Assistants, Welfare Officer and TAs - Interim Assessment analysis	The definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN) is: A child or young person with a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he/she has (a) a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age: or (b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. Clause 20 Children and Families Act, June 2014.	Any student who has specific needs will have full access to an appropriate curriculum; individualised where necessary, and will be encouraged to fully participate in extra-curricular activities with support if appropriate.
2. What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?	In the first instance contact your child's Form Tutor/Head of House. He/she may be able to address your concerns or may put you in touch with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator: Mrs E Higginbottom 01823 274073 office@castle.somerset.sch.uk		
3. What provision is there for students with special educational needs?	School staff will support students at a level appropriate to their needs through effective personalisation in the classroom. This is constantly reviewed & monitored by the Trust SENDCo (National Award for SEN Provision & Attachment Lead in School), SEMHCo (Licensed Thrive Practitioner, Team Teach Tutor, Emotion Coach), Trust Specialist Teacher (PGDip SpLD: AMBDA affiliated) and SENDCo (National Award for SEN Provision) as the child develops and makes progress. Morning Intervention – teacher/parent & student referral	Students requiring more specific intervention to access the curriculum may be supported in a range of ways, for example - Individual or small group literacy and numeracy programmes - Individual or small group social and emotional development programmes - In-class support from a teaching assistant - Individual programmes to meet specific needs	Some students with complex needs require a fully personalised curriculum and support programme.
4. How will I know how my child is making progress?	As a parent/carer you will receive: - Interim Assessment (IA) and a full report, including negotiated 'next steps' between the child, parent, teachers and Learning Support - aiming to help the child make progress - Parent-Teacher evenings - Information about rewards and sanctions	In addition, you may also be involved in: - Annual SEND Review - PEP meeting (held for identified students in Care), which ensures that additional Pupil Premium monies are appropriately targeted. - Early Help Assessment Review Meetings (EHA).	In addition, you may also be involved in: Annual Review/Multi-Professional Meeting, which includes opportunities for the views of parents/carers and the child relating to Progress, Need & Provision.

		• Home Contact Book • Information from specific intervention programmes At any time, you may contact your child's Form Tutor/Head of House) or the SENDCo for further information.	At any time, you may contact your child's Form Tutor/Head of House or the SENDCo/SEMHCos for further information.
5. How do I know what progress my child should be making?	All teachers are aware of every student's starting point from Key Stage 2, and are aware of the rate of progress we expect each child to make whilst at The Castle School over the 5 years. Progress can vary in each year, but the overall progress is tracked.	Annual targets will be assessed against progress during the Annual Review Meeting. Progress will be conveyed at the end of bespoke interventions.	
6. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?	Broad and balanced curriculum (See Website).	Where possible students follow the same curriculum as their peers, perhaps with minor adjustments. Teachers are expected to support students by personalising the lesson content to meet the needs of all.	Where students have complex needs teachers are supported by the SEND Team.
7. What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?	All students are supported through the House System. Each student has a Form Tutor who takes them through the 5 years at The Castle School. Every House has a Head of House, overseeing approximately 200 children. This provides 'mini schools' each with their own ethos, but working within the values of the whole school. An addition to this a member of the SLT will have oversight over a students' year group. Meetings, led by the Head of House, are attended by the SENDCo/SEMHCos/Trust Specialist Teacher, Careers Team, Attendance Officer Welfare Team and other members of SLT linked with Progress and Support. At these meetings students who are of concern for academic and/or emotional issues will be discussed and appropriate interventions identified. These students are then carefully monitored. We adopt a graduated response in all situations. First Aid The Castle School is mindful of the need to safeguard the well-being of all students and management of first aid arrangements will be undertaken in such a way as to ensure there is adequate training of staff, provision of first aid equipment and recording of first aid treatment. Any medications given are logged.	All students who are identified with concerns about their well-being will be offered appropriate interventions including: • Mentors • Clubs • Counselling • Mediation • Rewards • Pastoral Plans • Opportunities to work outside the classroom in a supported environment • Careers advice • Support from other agencies, as appropriate Students with SEND may have a Key Worker, usually a Teaching Assistant, who offers support with organisation, emotional needs and liaises with parents/carers. The Key Teaching Assistant is an important member of staff for students with SEN, as they will constantly monitor student well-being both academically and emotional/health.	Personal Care Needs are met in a discrete and individual basis in consultation with any appropriate agencies. These will then be reviewed at Annual SEND Review.

	Students with medical conditions Students with specific health conditions will have an individual Health Care Plan which will be drawn up in consultation with the School Welfare Officer, parent/carers and other health professionals as necessary. This will outline the arrangements for administering medication and provide advice for staff, in the event of an emergency. Staff will take note of the Health Care Plans when arranging any curriculum enrichment activity. Safeguarding If we have any concerns that a student is at risk we will always follow our Safeguarding Policy. This means the child's welfare is the paramount concern, over-riding concerns for staff and parents/carers. We will involve external agencies if we consider this to be in the child's best interests. Bullying The Castle School is a fully inclusive school with a strict anti-bullying ethos. Students are encouraged to discuss any worries with any member of staff.	Trust SENDCo/SEMHC trained and part of school safeguarding team. PHSE 'Theme Weeks' – Key TA works with students [1:1] to ensure thorough understanding and comprehension of key strands at the most appropriate level (Keeping Children Safe 2025). On-Line Safety – Close working with students (SEN), parents and agencies where appropriate on an adapted and appropriate user agreement.	Research has shown that students identified with an additional need, including Children Looked After, can be more at risk of abuse. Questions addressing their safety will be addressed through the various Review processes. It is important to acknowledge that students will be monitored carefully, and for parents/carers to see this as a positive move and not accusatory.
8. What Specialist Services are available within, or accessible to the school?	School based • Testing, and support for Specific Learning Difficulties such as <u>Dyslexia</u> and <u>Dyscalculia</u> • Speech and Language support • Teaching Assistants have experience and training of working with students with general learning difficulties, Dyslexia, Autism, Sensory Impairments and any SEMH difficulties. • Some Teaching Assistants are trained to provide personal care • Counselling • Careers Advisors	External services • Educational Psychology • Somerset New Virtual School team: • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) • Mental Health Schools Team (MHST) • Young Somerset • Education Safeguarding Services (attendance) • School Nurses • EAL • Integrated Therapy Services, including Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy • Counselling • TDPC (PRU) • NHS Educational Support & Liaison	

9. What training is available to staff supporting students with SEN?	Training for teaching students with Special Educational Needs is considered essential. There is an on-going programme of whole school training in teaching and supporting students including • Specific Learning Difficulties • Autism • Hearing impairment • Visual impairment • EAL • Sensory support • Attachment/SEMH Learning Support Services, along with other advisory services provide specialist training for support staff. In addition there is training in • Child Protection (Safeguarding) • First Aid awareness e.g. use of epi-pen, asthma awareness, epilepsy awareness • Disability Awareness • Outstanding Teaching • Behaviour for Learning	Individual members of Learning Support and Pastoral Support • Manual Handling • Evac Chairs • Restorative Justice • Sexual Health • Anger Management • Self-Injury • Access Arrangements • Diagnostic Assessment • Attachment Lead in Schools • Zones of Regulation • Low intensity CBT • Emotion Coaching • Mental Health First Aid Supervision is an integral part of the training programme within the school.	
10. How will I be involved in making decisions about and planning for my child's education?	In addition to the opportunities listed above, (4) there are many other occasions to be involved in your child's education at The Castle School: • Induction process from Year 6 to Year 7 • Meet the Tutor and Head of House evening • Year 7 & Meet the Teachers Year 7 • Year 8 Curriculum Choices Evening • Year 9 Option Evening • Year 10 GCSE Launch Evening • Year 11 Study Evening • Post 16 College Open Evenings We do encourage parents to be involved in their children's education and expect parents to contact us if they have concerns. Similarly, teachers will contact parents to address issues promptly.	Students will be fully engaged in discussions regarding provision at all stages of their time at The Castle School, primarily through Annual Reviews and the Raising Achievement Process. • Learning Support Events • Yr8 Greater Depth Curriculum Support • Yr9 GCSE Option Support	
11. How will my child be included in activities outside of the classroom?	As stated in our school aims, we expect all children to participate in enrichment activities and we will endeavour to overcome any barriers to inclusion.	Key Adults in conjunction with other staff provide support to allow participation.	

12. How accessible is the school environment?	As a school we have worked with outside agencies to improve accessibility.	Most areas are accessible and if necessary, we will adjust timetables to ensure children have full access to their curriculum.	Individual audits are carried out to meet the needs of students with specific conditions (e.g. Visual Impairment) as appropriate.
13. How will the school support my child through transition, both to the school in Year 7 and from the school in Year 11?	We gather a lot of information about your child from their primary school, and any agencies involved, in order to make the best possible preparation for joining The Castle School. As a school, The Castle School has excellent links with all the Post 16 providers locally, and has a strong tradition of supporting students to find the most appropriate course. As students progress through the school, they are given a lot of support from the Careers Advisor within the school, who will personalise support.	This is usually in Year 6, but when a child has more complex needs the process of transfer may begin earlier, sometimes even in Year 4. In addition to the usual induction days for all students, vulnerable students (not necessarily all children with SEND) are invited to extra days in the school to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and to take part in a tailored induction programme: Vulnerable Student Induction Programme. Transition Post 16 plans organised with individual students.	Personalised (1:1) early transition plans set up with students, families and outside professionals, both before Yr7, as well as post 16. High Needs students have transitional Annual Reviews which includes representatives from the Post 16 destination of choice.
14. How are the school's resources allocated?		As a school we have a Learning Support Department, led by SENDCo with support from the SEMHCo Trust SENDCo, Trust Specialist Teacher and Trust Speech and Language Therapist. Within this team there are Primary trained Teachers & a number of Teaching Assistants, whose number varies depending on derived funding from the LA.	Those students identified with High Needs through Education Health and Care Plans. Within this team is our Return to Learn and Willow areas which supports vulnerable students. These students may have Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health Needs.
15. How is the decision made about how my child will receive support?	The decision-making process is informed by the data and information provided by all agencies involved. Support is then personalised, within available resources, to maximise progress – following a set Graduated Response.		This is regularly reviewed, and in the case of High Needs students discussed with parents at Annual Review. Where a student makes good progress, and bridges the gap, support may well be reduced, even to the extent of being taken off the SEND Register. When significant changes to provision occur, parents are automatically involved.
16. What if I have a complaint?	As per the Suggestions and Complaints Policy we aim to provide many opportunities to keep you informed and involved in your child's progress, and we actively encourage communication between student-home and school. Co-operation between parents, staff and governors leads to a shared sense of purpose and good atmosphere in the school. However, sometimes misunderstandings arise but these can usually be sorted out by speaking to the right person. Your concern can then be investigated, and a response given.		

[SEN INFORMATION REPORT SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SEND & ACCESSIBILITY POLICY]