

Beacon Hill Academy SEN report 2025
(Produced in accordance with the 2014 SEN Code of Practice)

Kinds of SEN that are provided for

Beacon Hill Academy is a 75 place special school which caters for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties aged 2 - 19. It does not offer places to pupils where there is a primary diagnosis of autism. The majority of the pupils now have profound and multiple learning difficulties and associated medical needs. Most are non mobile and non verbal. All of the pupils have an Education, Health and Care plan or are in the process of being assessed for this.

The Academy works very closely with Thurrock and neighbouring Local Authoritys' around admissions.

Policies for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs

All of the pupils at Beacon Hill Academy come here because they have been identified as having severe and complex learning difficulties. For the younger pupils the initial referrals usually come through multi disciplinary early years staff to the Local Authoritys' SEN team. Beacon Hill staff sit on the Early years referral panel and would then visit potential pupils in pre-school settings or at home to offer support and advice and help to make links for when the pupils join us.

Referrals may also come in via Early Years teams for children outside of Thurrock, often via parental request.

The older pupils will already have an Educational Health and Care plan. This outlines the level of need and the support that the school needs to provide. The Academy only offers places to pupils whose profile of need matches the rest of the school in their key stage cohort so that all pupils have appropriate peer groups.

Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN and involving them in their child's education

Beacon Hill Academy has an open door policy with parents and they are welcome to contact us at any time to discuss concerns.

We have a Pupil Services Officer in the admin team who is the initial contact point for all parents.

Parents are invited into the Academy for formal and informal events. Parents take the lead in sharing information with all partners at person-centred Education Health and Care plan meetings and reviews.

Pupils achievements are shared in these meetings and plans for the future are devised and agreed by all. There are other formal multidisciplinary team meetings held regularly with parents around individual pupils.

Parents are invited in for open days, activity days, talks and information events as well as productions and celebrations. All of the pupils have daily home school communication books to enable them to share messages with class teams. Some pupils will use electronic switches and devices to share communication with home.

Arrangements for consulting young people with SEN and involving them in their education

All pupils are supported to make a meaningful contribution to their Education, Health and Care plan meeting, sharing what they have enjoyed and what they might want to do next. They are also actively encouraged to express their wishes for themselves.

Beacon Hill has taken a leading role in the Local Authority Children and Young Peoples Voice project sharing good practice examples.

Video evidence is collected daily and used by those who know pupils well to help to interpret their voice.

Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes. This should include the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review

Pupils' progress is constantly assessed and monitored throughout the year. Some of the pupils are involved in self-review by identifying what they have done well, and things they would like to do better or differently.

All pupils follow their own personalised Learning Adventure, which reflects each persons aspirations and is devised using the Education, Health and Care plan outcomes. Personalised assessment runs alongside this and is shared with parents on the Earwig electronic platform.

Review meetings are held with parents, pupils and other stakeholders, where teams who support each individual child will comment on and review progress and identify and agree on next steps.

Parents are also invited in for parents' evenings and other multi professional meetings to share ideas around pupil progress. This includes

meetings with physiotherapists, health teams and the Speech and Language Therapy team.

Arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood, outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society

Beacon Hill Academy is divided into 4 different departments, Early Years, Primary and Secondary are based on the main site in Erriff Drive, South Ockendon. The Post 16 unit are currently located on a shared site in Buxton Road, Grays. Team leaders work closely to plan transitions as pupils move across departments. Staff are also regularly moved, so that pupils are always supported by at least one member of staff who they are familiar with.

From year 9 onwards, Education, Health and Care plan meetings include the identification of "preparing for adulthood" outcomes. These reviews enable the students and families to share their wishes and desires for the future. Mixed activity groups are timetabled from Key Stage 3 to allow pupils to make choices about their interests. From KS4, pupils spend at least 1 day a week linked into the Post 16 Unit. All pupils based at post 16 spend at least one day a week on a Transition Link where they explore possible future opportunities beyond school. This can include supported work placements, volunteering, community based projects and independent living.

At Post 16 all pupils follow personalised timetables and as they progress through the team, the amount of time they spend in transition to future opportunities increases. Staff from Post school providers work very closely with the school.

The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN

Beacon Hill pupils are grouped into small classes of between 5 - 8 pupils. Pupil groupings are carefully considered each year to maximise learning, and there are vertical age groups within the primary and secondary team. Each class is supported by a number of teaching assistants, who work closely with the class teacher to deliver the educational as well as care aspects of each pupils day. Some teaching is done with whole groups but the majority will be paired, small group and individual work. Each pupil has his or her own individual Learning Adventure which identifies achievements and next steps.

There are a number of additional support programmes and interventions offered at Beacon Hill and these are delivered within classes and by specialised trained staff. Physical and communication programmes are embedded in each pupils individual learning adventure and personalised curriculum programme

How adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment of children and young people with SEN

Beacon Hill Academy is divided into 4 distinct age based departments - Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Post 16.

The curriculum and delivery change in each team to reflect pupils progressing into different areas of the school, however the learning is personalised in all departments to meet each pupils individual needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Beacon Hill has an assessment nursery offering part time, full time and split placement places for children from the age of 2 1/2 .

Stay and play sessions are initially offered, where parents are invited to join their child for their first few sessions whilst we get to know them.

New children are offered 2-3 sessions. These can be morning/afternoon sessions or a combination of both. The number of sessions will vary depending on individual need and will increase as they become more settled and confident.

The early years curriculum is immersive, play based and individualised for each child. Learning is fun and messy!

The roots of our curriculum diagram shows through which each individual child grows.

Each child then has their own curriculum map with varied content and targets set against our four colour coded areas of learning:-

My Voice - communication and Interaction

Me - Inside and out

Physical - On the Move

My World

The content of these areas provides pupils with a holistic curriculum and allows us to focus on what is most important for each pupil. We provide meaningful experiences through topic based activities, the topics are linked to the children's interests. Our learning takes place in a range of environments both inside and outside the classroom.

We work closely with multi-disciplinary teams to ensure an integrated approach embedding all therapy programmes into the child's day. We work towards personalised targets that are important to the child and their families. We develop confidence and encourage independence.

Weekly focused activity plans show how the content is linked into the curriculum areas and which skills each pupil is working on.

Primary curriculum

Children usually move into the Primary team either in Reception or Year 1, depending on what is appropriate to their needs. Most of the learning is class based and the primary classes are roughly grouped into similar learning needs.

The primary children follow a topic based curriculum and each pupil has an individual learning adventure plan each term, broken down against the 4 primary curriculum learning areas which are:-

Communication and Sensory

Wellbeing and Independence

Physical

Exploring and understanding the world

Content is planned for each pupils adventure using and expanding on the ideas in the topic plans, making sure that it is personalised and relevant to each individual student.

Secondary curriculum

When they complete year 6 in primary, pupils move into the Secondary team in the school.

Pupils are grouped into base groups but there are lots more opportunities for students to choose activities that they are more interested in and to learn in mixed groups across the Key Stages.

They become familiar with a wider range of staff and peers and there is a greater emphasis on learning beyond the classroom.

All pupils complete the Asdan New Horizons course at the end of KS3 and pupils begin to link into Post 16 for up to 1 day a week when they reach year 10. Some pupils may move on full time to Post 16 either in or during year 11.

In year 10 pupils begin a personalised accreditation route and aim to complete an award sized qualification at the end of year 11, this is currently delivered using the Asdan Personal Progress qualification

Each Secondary pupil has a personalised adventure plan which is based on the Secondary team 4 areas of learning:-

Communication and Sensory

Personal Development

Physical

Exploring and understanding the world

Secondary pupils continue to follow a topic based curriculum, but this is on a three year cycle, with those in year 10 and 11 revisiting previous topics but accessing them at a different level with new content.

Post 16 curriculum

Beacon Hill Post 16 Unit is located on a separate site in Grays.

Pupils begin to link for 1 day a week in year 10 and will move to Post 16 full time by the end of year 11.

The focus of learning changes significantly to look at preparation for adult life. We work extremely closely with partners who provide opportunities for students beyond school.

All of the Post 16 and KS4 students spend one day a week linking into activities which are sustainable beyond school. They are encouraged to try a variety of different things and identify their preferences so that post school options can be designed to meet individual need.

Most of the learning on the Post 16 site takes place in much smaller groups or could be individual. It could be led by a teaching assistant, HLTA or teacher. Families are supported to prepare for adulthood, including understanding how services change and the implications of the mental capacity act.

The curriculum is divided into 4 areas:-

Communication and sensory

Relationships and the community

Physical and recreation

Independence and transition

Further details on curriculum content can be found in the Beacon Hill Adventures curriculum handbook which is on our website.

The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist experts will be secured

All staff at Beacon Hill take part in a variety of specialist training on a regular basis. The Academy follows the Proact-Scip positive behaviour support model, for which all staff receive annual training.

All staff are trained in manual handling, and each pupil has an individual handling and care plan. Staff are trained to meet individual care needs which include gastrostomy feeding, oxygen, suction, catheterisation, use of epipen, administration of buccal midazolam. All staff are trained in the management of epilepsy and there are trained first aiders on each site.

There are paediatric first aiders in the early years team.

Communication training includes Signalong and Elklan speech and language programmes. A number of staff hold additional qualifications in areas such as Special Yoga, Aromatherapy, Rebound and Trampoline therapy.

Beacon Hill has a specialist Sensory and Communication team which includes 2 full time Speech and Language Therapists apprentices, supported by part time senior therapists. We also employ Music Therapists for 3 days a week.

There are health teams based at the Academy during the week including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and nursing team. Clinics are also held regularly at the Academy.

A number of pupils are supported by outreach services from St Cleres School around their specific VI and HI impairments and we have a qualified QTMSI teacher who leads the sensory and communication team.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEN

As Beacon Hill caters exclusively for pupils with special needs, this forms part of the whole school evaluation cycle. In addition the Academy regularly reviews which interventions are offered to individual pupils and

the rationale behind this. Progress meetings are held with teaching staff, team leaders and the sensory team to look in depth at the progress that each individual child is making. Assessment information is collected termly from the Learning Adventures.

How children and young people with SEN are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the school who do not have SEN

Beacon Hill Academy caters exclusively for pupils with special needs, however there are links within each team to mainstream peers in other schools, particularly through our Trailblazer programme. For Post 16 students the majority of the learning is community based.

Some individual pupils have split placements with their local school. For other pupils there are individual weekly links for specific activities, supported by Beacon Hill staff.

Support for improving emotional and social development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEN and measures to prevent bullying

Pupils work in very small groups and are able to access individual support from key members of staff whenever this is needed.

Therapeutic support including 2 speech therapists is available to all of our pupils

Emotional and Social Development is promoted throughout the curriculum. Primary team have shared team activity afternoons and celebrations times. In the secondary team, group circle times are held and pupils mix into different groups for chosen activities. There is whole school celebration assembly every Monday.

Pupils at Post 16 are given increased opportunities to become independent learners and encouraged to take part in recreational and social activities within their community.

How the school involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting children and young people's SEN and supporting their families

The Academy works very closely with Health and Social care to support the needs of individual pupils. Most of the children within the Academy are known to the Children with Disabilities team and have named social workers. Once the students are 14, the Transition Team social workers also become involved. The transition social work teams send representatives to all of the Academy Reviews and EHC meetings. The Academy hosts Team Around the Child and CLA meetings. Social Care and Health teams have a significant contribution to the EHC plans and teams are working well together at Beacon Hill to facilitate this. The Academy hosts teams from Health, a member of the School Nursing team is always contactable or on site. The Nursing Team oversee all of the pupils care plans and provide training to all staff. The Physiotherapy team work closely with the Academy to plan targets and programmes and there is a co-ordinated approach to the planning and delivery of therapeutic support. The Academy has links to a number of voluntary organisations which support parents, including PATT, the Sunshine Centre, Family Information Network and Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions.

Arrangements for handling the complaints from parents of children with SEN about the provision made at the school

Parents receive daily communication from the class teacher via the home school book. There is a Pupil Services Officer who receives and makes all calls to parents. Through her, parents are able to make an appointment to see any staff, including the Principal and Vice Principal. Parents are actively encouraged to share any concerns that they have with the Academy as soon as possible. If parents are not satisfied with the response they receive, the Academy has a Complaints Policy, a copy of which can be obtained from the office.