

FAQs:

I think my child might be dyslexic, how can school support?

Students do not need to have a diagnosis or screener to access additional supports. Shirebrook Academy adopts the approach of adaptive practice informed by SENDCo-led CPD to make all lessons accessible for all of its students, following government guidance that best progress is made through quality first teaching and is compromised by anything less and that additional interventions cannot compensate for lack of quality first teaching.

It is important to understand that screeners are not diagnoses, but give an indicator of likelihood of low-level language difficulties. Screeners and diagnoses are not necessary for your child to access support in lesson or have Access Arrangements for examinations. Shirebrook Academy already will have an accurate understanding of your child's language needs through 6-monthly assessments of a nationally recognised and comprehensive reading assessment called NGRT. Children are then identified from these tests for further intervention for Fresh Start Phonics. Reading levels are identified at each stage, and all levels are allocated appropriate challenge as follows:



Here are some useful links:

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>

I am interested in getting an EHCP for my child, what do I need to know?

It is important to first read and understand what an EHCP can and cannot support your child with to see if it is appropriate in applying for a needs assessment. The government provides useful advice here:

<https://www.localoffer.derbyshire.gov.uk/apply-for-an-assessment/ehc-plan/ehc-plan.aspx>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7dcb85ed915d2ac884d995/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (chapter 9, pg. 141)

EHCPs are part of a graduated response from multiple professional services, namely education, health and care. The graduated response consists of a collation of evidence to show what supports have first been tried and the impact of them over time. EHCP needs assessments therefore take a lot of time to compile evidence for, and it is important to understand that many children are already identified on this pathway which will also affect waiting times; please be advised that parents/carers and other professionals can apply independently of schools.

I am concerned about my child's social emotional mental health, how can school support?

Children can struggle with their mental health just as adults can; with pressures of exams, transitions into different key stages in their lives, puberty, friendships and relationships and not forgetting the impact of the pandemic... children have a lot on their shoulders, particularly so if they have a neurodiversity.

We recognise SEMH as one of our most prevalent areas of need. Our whole-school approach includes:

- Pastoral Learning Leaders and Managers for each year group plus a tutor as identified keypersons for your child, in addition to a senior leadership link staff member
- Y11s have an additional identified tutor
- Inclusion Team as keypersons for children with SEND available for check-ins during unstructured times
- PSHE units delivered through form time to include explicit teaching on emotional literacy

Our targeted approach could include interventions such as ELSA to develop emotional literacy and resilience.

Our specialist approach will reach out to external professionals for their specialist advice how we can best support your child in setting but it could also include such as supporting you to make a CAMHS referral.

I think my child might have a condition like Autism or ADHD, how do I get a referral for diagnosis?

Diagnosis for neurodiversity assessments such as Autism and ADHD have to be conducted by a medical professional who are specialists in this area, these professionals are called Clinical Psychologists. Parents/carers can go to the GP to ask for this referral to be made. Please be advised that waiting times are very long and schools cannot speed this up. It is helpful to bring information with you to support the discussion with your GP such as specific signs and traits you have noticed.

In some cases, school can refer to CAMHS, or support you to refer to CAMHS, for a diagnosis, but this pathway is not always appropriate for everyone.

When your child is progressed to assessment, medical professionals will contact school for supporting evidence regarding how your child presents in school.

Here are some helpful links:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/getting-diagnosed/how-to-get-diagnosed/>

<https://www.autismeastmidlands.org.uk/>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism>

My child will be coming up to secondary school in September, how will Shirebrook Academy support their transition?

Shirebrook Academy liaises with all its feeder primary schools to gather historic files such as SEND files to get a good picture of what support your child needs before starting in year 7. The SENDCO also contacts the primary schools to request to be invited to annual reviews for EHCPs, and key meetings to start to be included in the process. This might also include visits to the primary setting.

We also have taster days planned through the year to support the big step into secondary where children can practice a typical day in the secondary setting with their known cohort and teachers, whilst being introduced to new peers and teachers.

Additionally, Shirebrook Academy holds open evenings for year 5s and 6s and their parents to have a look around the school and meet and greet some of the staff. Children and parents are invited back if they need further meetings to meet and greet key staff, discuss key concerns such as SEND needs, or have another look around at different times of the day so

your child can have a better understanding of what a typical day at the academy looks like. You know your child best, and if you feel they need a more enhanced transition plan, please get in touch with the academy so we can support with the adaptations.

My child is in year 11, how will Shirebrook Academy support my child with their transition to their next steps post-16?

In best practice, Preparing for Adulthood starts from the early years, but has more enhanced preparation from year 9 onwards. We support this preparation with:

- Two identified staff members for careers advice
- Careers fairs in school
- Leaflets of different provisions for post-16 available in the area
- Y11 information evening
- Reviewing Preparing for Adulthood strengths and difficulties, and setting targets and provision for children with EHCPs during the annual review process
- PSHE/PD provisions as part of form time which are tailored to age-related outcomes
- PD calendar includes external professionals to come in to deliver events on such as finance and budgeting

My child struggles with homework, what can we do to support?

Children on the SEND register have access to Inclusion before school, at break and lunch times. Additionally, after school on a Tuesday and Thursday there is Homework Club. At these times, there is adult-led support to help your child with your homework in school should they wish to access it as a drop-in facility. There is a minibus to support transport home if parents/carers wish to book.

What do I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Firstly, speak to your child's class teacher and pastoral team to discuss their progress and/or any barriers to learning. If further support is needed, the teacher will liaise with the SENCo in school. You can also arrange a meeting with the SENCo to discuss the next steps. If you think your child might have an undiagnosed neurodiversity, you can go to your GP for referral.

How will school support my child?

Every child is different, so the level or types of support given and resources allocated will be dependent upon the individual child's needs.

the class teacher will adapt their own class practises to accommodate the child initially, before seeking advice and support from the SENCo.

Children who need additional to and from their peers, such as small group interventions and booster groups, will be identified in accordance to their need and performance scores; they do not require a diagnosis or an EHCP to access provisions, nor do children who have a diagnosis or EHCP automatically have access to additional provisions where their progress and needs are met with adaptive practice within the classroom.

If necessary, a Grid For Learning (G4L) will be drawn up by the inclusion team and SENCo, to provide class teachers with key information on your child's difficulties and strategies, including professional advice and specific targets for your child to work on. These targets will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure progression is achievable for each child. Parents/carers and children will be invited to review Grids For Learning at least twice per year.

If a child requires significant support to access the mainstream curriculum, school may applying for extra funding for adaptations to the building, curriculum and staffing, as necessary.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

Initially, each class teacher is responsible for providing in-class support for the students in their class. If further support is required, the teacher will liaise with the SENCo and Heads of Faculty during meetings (where concerns are raised and progress is monitored). The SENCo and/or Pastoral Team will be responsible for seeking external support for children, if required.

How are the school resources allocated and matched to children's SEN?

The school is funded on a national formula per pupil. All schools are expected to find the first £6,000 from within the school's budget to support children and young people with SEN who are on the school's Inclusion/SEN register. The school can apply for a 'top-up', based on strict criteria, if it is felt that a child's needs are above that which can be provided through the £6,000. The school uses the funds to put appropriate support in place to meet the specific needs of a child. The look of this support will depend upon the child's individual needs.

The school does not provide 1:1 additional classroom support 100% of the time for any child, nor does it provide teaching assistants for every classroom; instead, the classroom teacher adapts provision in conjunction

with SENDCO and other professional guidance in order to promote independence, and teaching assistants are deployed strategically according to most need. There are a small number of Teaching Assistants who are targeted and timetabled for specific interventions. The rest of their timetabled allocation is shared evenly across the identified additional needs.