

Hill Top School Offer



About the School

Hill Top School is a maintained special school for students from the ages of 11 to 19 years and has Post 16 provision for students up to the age of 19.

In September 2011 Hill Top School formed a soft federation with Dryden School. Following consultation the schools moved to a hard federation with a single Governing Body in April 2013. The Federation has allowed us to have a shared leadership, strengthen the governance of both schools, enhance training opportunities and to develop opportunities that benefit pupils.

The school motto 'Believe Achieve Succeed at Hill Top School' reflects the high aspirations and expectations of all our pupils.

The school caters for students with moderate learning difficulties and also has a specialist provision for pupils who have Autism Spectrum Condition. Pupils are placed at the school by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team at Gateshead Council.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) is the Head of School (Louise Coulson) who can be contacted by telephoning the school- Tel: 0191 4692462

Identifying needs

The school caters for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties and Autism. In addition, pupils might have other needs such as, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Speech and Language, Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) and Social Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH). Some pupils may also have additional medical needs which will be met by the skilled staff within school.

All pupils at the school have some special educational need and have either a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan. If additional needs are identified while a pupil is at Hill Top School, the SENCo/Head of School will liaise with external stakeholders involved such as Children and Young People Services (CYPS), Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) or Educational Psychology Service in order to provide the right support and intervention for each individual.

All students follow a broad balanced curriculum that is appropriate to their age and stage of development which is personalised to take into account their needs and abilities. Progress is rigorously tracked. We make use of National Progression Guidance and Data Sets, as well as CASPA as an analysis tool. Several of our pupils successfully gain GCSE's or equivalent as well as unit awards alongside ASDAN accreditation.

If a pupil is not making the progress that would be expected, we will discuss our concerns with the parent/ carer and pupil and get their views about the

- the pupil's strengths and areas of difficulty
- any concerns that the parent/carers and pupil have

Following discussions with parents/carers and the pupil, we will then agree outcomes that the student will be working towards and the support that is needed to meet these outcomes.

If a pupil's needs are deemed to be exceptional even within our special school setting the School

Leadership Team will ensure that further support is available to them. Concerns are not always based on academic progress but could also be linked to the social and emotional development of the student. Any concerns that school staff or parents raise in this area may lead to a further investigation by the SENCo/Head of School and family Support Worker

Wherever possible, teaching staff or our family support worker will attend meetings related to the pupils in their care.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review

Each pupil's progress is continually monitored by their subject teacher and the SENCo/Head of School.

Progress of individuals and vulnerable groups is evaluated to assess the effectiveness of provision, raise expectations and form the basis of intervention strategies.

Your child's progress is continually monitored by their form tutor, subject teachers, Heads of Department and the senior leadership team. Assessments are discussed regularly in debriefs and staff meetings. Progress is reviewed formally on a termly basis. This will be discussed with parent/carers in detail, along with staff comments within the review meeting and during our yearly parents evening.

Depending on the pupil's needs, referrals can be made to the Educational Psychology Service or Behaviour Support Service within Gateshead Council, health services such as Speech and Language Therapy, School Nursing Service or Children and Young People's Service or social care teams such as the Family Intervention Service. School might suggest completing a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form in order to get a team of professionals (Team around the Family -TAF)) together to work with the pupil and their family. This needs to be done with the parent/carer's agreement.

Involving Parents/Carers and Pupils

Parents can contact school if they have any concerns about their child by telephoning, writing or coming into the school office and requesting a meeting or speaking to staff at a convenient time of the school day.

Parents and carers are kept informed through a variety of methods depending on the specific needs of the pupil, for example home/school books/diaries, phone calls. Staff will endeavour to contact parents or carers to discuss issues, concerns or progress of individual pupils in whatever way is most appropriate.

The school holds a parents evening for all parents in the spring term every year. In addition, parents and carers are involved with Annual Review meetings e.g. to discuss progress towards current outcomes and setting outcomes for the future. A report is sent out in the summer term to parents/carers with an option to meet teachers if required.

Annual Reviews are held for pupils with single plans or statements of special educational needs. These reviews focus on achievements; the progress made towards the outcomes; support and future plans and are held with parents/carers, the student and any other agencies involved. Currently we are systematically working towards transferring all pupils from a Statement to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Pupils are encouraged to share their aspirations and views in review meetings and this will be done in a way that is appropriate to their age, ability and individual needs. We value our relationships with parents and carers. We offer support in e-safety, ICT, Disability Living Allowance/Benefits and Makaton/PECS as requested.

We also have links with the Extended Family Learning Service where parents are given strategies in how to support their child with their Literacy/Numeracy skills and opportunities to work with their child in a variety of crafts

Staff

There are a number of people in school who are responsible for identifying and supporting our pupil's special educational needs

The Head of School/SENCO is responsible for:

- The day to day management of all aspects of the school, including support for children with SEN.
- Making sure that your child's needs are met but they will share this responsibility with class teachers.
- Making sure that the Governing Body is kept up to date about any issues in the school relating to SEN.
- Coordinating all the support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and developing the school's SEN Policy to make sure all children get a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs in school.
- Ensuring that parents/carers are:
 - involved in supporting their child's learning
 - kept informed about the support their child is getting
 - involved in reviewing how they are doing
 - involved in planning for their future.
- Contacting other people who may be coming into school to help support your child's learning for example, an Educational Psychologist.
- Making sure that there are excellent records of your child's progress and needs.
- Provide specialist support for teachers and support staff in school so they can help pupils with SEN in the school make the best possible progress.
- Support class teachers in writing plans that specify your child's targets.
- Ensuring that all staff working with the pupil in school are helped to deliver the planned work/programme so the pupil can make the best possible progress. This may involve the use of additional adults, outside specialist help and specially planned work and resources.

The **Class Teacher** is responsible for:

- Making sure that all children have access to excellent classroom teaching and that the curriculum is adjusted to meet your child's individual needs (this is called differentiation).
- Checking on the progress of your child and identifying, planning and providing any additional help your child may need and letting Head of School /SENCo know if necessary. This could be things like targeted work, additional support.
- Ensuring that all staff working with the child in school are helped to deliver the planned work/programme so the child can make the best possible progress. This may involve the use of additional adults, outside specialist help and specially planned work and resources.
- Ensuring that the school's SEN Policy is followed in their classroom and for all the pupils they teach with any SEN.

The family Support Worker

(In liaison with the Head of School)

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- To monitor, assess and improve attendance throughout school.
- To develop programmes for pupils where the attendance record requires improvement.
- To produce written documentation on attendance records, to ensure all protocols are followed within the attendance policy.
- To liaise closely with local authority staff and other external partners.
- To promote positive links with parents/carers of pupils at Hill Top School within a home and school setting.
- To liaise with parents specifically to set up home/school programmes.
- To provide training for parents on an individual and group basis.
- To organise and ensure communication files are up to date

The Teaching Assistants work with the class teacher to:

- Support pupils to access the curriculum
- Support the implementation of differentiation and specialist support strategies in the classroom
- Keep pupils focused on learning activities during lessons
- Attend all training opportunities related to SEN and differentiation.
- Help pupils to develop effective ways of becoming independent learners

The SEN Governor is responsible for:

- Making sure that the school has an up to date SEN Policy
- Making sure that the school has appropriate provision and has made necessary adaptations to meet the needs of all children in the school.

A wide number of professionals work in school to support our pupil's health and education, these include:

- Counsellors
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Social Workers
- School Nurse
- Youth Workers