

1. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

The school uses key information sought from our feeder primary schools and uses this in conjunction with parents and primary teachers to identify pupils, who it is felt may struggle at school or with the transition in particular. Those who would benefit from it are invited to visit the school to tour around and meet with members of the LS (learning support) department to help familiarise themselves with their new surroundings in a small and supportive group.

All pupils are assessed on entry to Dame Alice Owens school. This information, alongside regular in-class testing and teacher feedback, is used to highlight students who require intervention.

A first step for if you think your child may have an SEN (special educational need), would be to contact the school to speak to the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator). We can then decide on the best route forward.

2. How will school staff support my child?

The school uses a person centred approach and support is therefore matched to each student's particular needs. The learning support department will ensure teaching staff have access to relevant SEN information and will advise and support staff as well as coordinate support and intervention for those students for whom it is deemed necessary.

Currently the school offers a number of interventions, including individually targeted programmes of 6 weeks for areas such as spelling, reading, numeracy and individual student mentoring.

Each student is placed in a Form Group that has a Form Tutor that takes care of day to day pastoral needs. Each Form also has Form Prefects that have been selected from the Sixth Form. There is a Pastoral Manager and Pastoral Director who can be involved in more complex pastoral matters.

3. How will I know how my child is doing?

All students will receive 2 school reports over the year. These will feedback on both academic and pastoral progress. There will also be an interim progress check on whether students are in line to achieve their target grades. Parents and carers will have at least an annual meeting with student's teachers and other meetings will be arranged as necessary.

Each student receives a numerical report, a full written report and a parents evening per year.

4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?

The school follows the person centred approach to SEN and all provision will be matched to the individual student. Classroom teachers all use differentiation within lessons and work with the learning support department to ensure student's needs are being catered for. There is a strong network of information sharing and students are regularly monitored. The school maintains excellent relationships with parents/ carers and encourages feedback.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

Each student is placed in a Form Group that has a Form Tutor that takes care of the day to day pastoral needs. Each Form also has Form Prefects, that have been selected from the Sixth Form. There is a Pastoral Manager and Pastoral Director who can be involved in more complex pastoral matters.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

The school has access to a number of external agencies including; An Educational Psychologist; a Speech and Language Therapist; Autism Advisory Service; CAMHS; Connexions; the Visual Impairment Service; the Hearing Impairment Service; the Park outreach service; GPs; Occupational Therapists and Speaking Therapists.

7. What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

The Head of Learning Support coordinates training for SEN and both support and teaching staff have undertaken a range of courses aimed at the 4 broad areas of special needs. The Head of Learning Support is completing the national SENCO qualification.

8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

There will be an annual parents evening as well as the above mentioned reporting system. The Learning Support department and pastoral department work alongside each other to highlight students and contact home when it is felt intervention may be needed. The school has good relationships with parents/ carers and encourages an environment of information sharing through a range of mediums.

9. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

The school will use the reporting system alongside teacher feedback to ensure that parents/carers are informed of student progress. Where there are concerns parents/carers will be contacted and the best course of action will be discussed, with action points drawn up. The school planner is used for home-school contact and is a key tool for passing brief messages.

10. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

The school aims for no student to be disadvantaged during out of classroom activities or trips and the Learning Support department will assist in the planning when deemed necessary.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

The Schools Accessibility Policy aims to eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and ensure full participation in the school community for all. The Learning Support department will ensure that information regarding students with identified specific disabilities is passed on to staff and when it is deemed necessary will provide inset for staff. This may include the use of outside agencies such as hearing impaired services or occupational therapists. The majority of the school is wheelchair accessible.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

Mr A. Wharton- Head of Learning Support and SENCO
whartona@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk
Dr D Mitchell. Assistant Head Pastoral
mitchelld@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk

13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

At the end of Year 6 the School holds a parent and student evening where the students can meet up with the rest of their Form Group, the Prefects and Form teacher. The first day of term is dedicated to Year 7 students to allow them time to find their way around the school.
All year 11 students have an interview to discuss their movement into post 16 education and there are a range of resources available to assist with the transition.
Due to the academic nature of the school, a majority of pupils apply to university and are allocated a UCAS tutor. The school also has a careers advisor.

14. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

The school has a range of resources available including online and physical resources, teaching assistants and programmes of study. These will be matched on an individual basis to the needs of a student.

15. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

The School takes a person centred approach and makes all decisions based on the support deemed necessary. Parents/ carers, staff and students will all be involved in the planning of the provision.

16. How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?

Information about the local offer can be found here:
<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/localoffer.page>