

Aim High - A Parent's Guide to Disability and/or Special Educational Needs

What are Disability and/or Special Educational Needs (DSEN)?

When a student has particular difficulty in achieving his or her best in normal school activities this is described as a "Special Educational Need". This need may be long term or short term, it may be physical, intellectual or emotional.

How is DSEN identified?

Before students arrive at Purbeck School in Year 7, a great deal of information is passed on to our Aim High Team from the primary schools. Mrs Watson, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) visits all our primary schools, during the summer term. The information is made available to every classroom teacher so that all Purbeck School staff are able to plan their lessons with full knowledge of any barriers to learning that individual students may have.

Progress of all students is reviewed by all their teachers on a half termly basis. As part of this, students can be identified at any point during the school year as having a specific educational need. Teacher or parents are welcome to put forward students for a Special Educational Needs review at any time by contacting the student's tutor.

Students who are identified as having additional needs after a Special Educational Needs review will then be placed on a Tier on our SEN register and this will inform the additional support that they receive. At The Purbeck School there are 4 Tiers of intervention:

Tier 1 – in class support and quality first teaching.

Tier 2 – as above but also some intervention from Aim High.

Tier 3 – the above and also intervention from an outside agency (such as SENSS)

Tier 4 – very complex needs – students will be placed on an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

What does the school do to help?

Like most schools, we adopt a "whole school approach". All students have access to the same curriculum in mainstream teaching groups but we make sure individual needs are met in several ways.

Specialist educational needs teaching is made available as part of the school's option system. Where appropriate, additional Literacy and Numeracy teaching is provided across key stage 3 through interventions such as, 'Lexonik' and 'IXL'.

At key stage 4, there is a tailored curriculum available to support any identified students.

We also have a trained ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) to support students who are on the DSEN register. This is a nationally recognized program that supports students who may have emotional barriers to learning; it supports them by building confidence and identifying strategies which can overcome some of the learning difficulties faced.

Our team of Teaching Assistants/Learning Mentors work with teachers to provide extra support in subjects where a student's need has been identified.

In addition to this, all faculties and pastoral staff run a range of support activities in the lunch hours and after school at various times which are open to all students.

Aim High - A Parent's Guide to Disability and/or Special Educational Needs

Aim High is open throughout the school day and there are members of staff available to support students during unstructured time, especially for those lacking confidence to use the general facilities.

What is an 'Education, Health and Care Plan' EHCP ?

When the school feels it cannot provide all the support a particular student needs, we can ask the Local Education Authority for an EHCP Needs Assessment. This involves some specialists from outside the school being asked to assess the student as well as the school. The EHCP assessment follows a person centered approach. EHC plans are developed in collaboration with the child/young person and their family, and will focus on the outcomes that a child/young person and their family want to achieve.

If it is agreed that the school needs extra resources in order to support the student, the details will be written down in an Education, Health and Care Plan" by the Local Education Authority. All students who have "Education, Health and Care Plans" at Purbeck School are automatically tracked and reviewed by their tutor; subject teachers; and Aim High. Alongside this, there is a formal Annual Review meeting including the student and parents each year. In these meetings the outcomes of the EHCP are reviewed using a person centered approach.

Students with an EHCP will be provided with a Personal inclusion Plan (PIP). This identifies the specific needs of the student and contains information on how best to support the student.

What should you do if you think your son or daughter needs more help than is currently being provided?

The school offers numerous opportunities across the school year to formally discuss your son/daughter's progress and the support that is in place. Opportunities include your son/daughter's tutor evening in Year 7; the subject teacher evening; communication with your tutor during communications week each term and coffee mornings. Each of these meetings will provide a timely and informative update of your son/daughter's progress and allow you to raise any concerns that you may have.

If you have a concern that requires a more immediate attention, please don't hesitate to contact the school and the Aim High team will return your call as soon as is possible and address any issues that have been raised.