



Introduction

At the heart of our Inclusion department lies the ambition to unlock every student's potential, ensuring they thrive in an inclusive, supportive environment that celebrates diversity and individuality. Our aim is to create a welcoming and non-judgmental space where students feel safe, valued, and empowered to explore their strengths and develop independence.

We foster a culture where self-awareness is encouraged, helping students understand their unique learning styles and equipping them with the tools needed to take ownership of their educational journey. Through a commitment to facilitating success, we provide tailored support that meets the needs of each student, ensuring they experience personal and academic growth.

Our team operates as a reflective, collaborative group, constantly evolving our practices to ensure that we are adaptable and able to meet the changing needs of our students. We believe in the power of diverse perspectives and are dedicated to helping adults—teachers, staff, and parents—see alternative perspectives to better understand and support the unique needs of every child.

Inclusion is at the core of what we do. Our inclusive practice promotes equality of opportunity and full participation for all students, ensuring that barriers to learning are minimized or removed. We actively seek and value the voices of both parents and students, ensuring they are partners in decision-making processes and their insights shape the direction of their learning experience.

Ultimately, our vision is to create a SEN department where students feel confident, capable, and ready to succeed, not just in school but in life. Together, we will build a future where every student's potential is realized, independence is nurtured, and success is celebrated.

The Inclusion department is led by the SENDCO Cate Brown, with the assistance of Carol Brown, assistant head of Inclusion. We have a team of teaching assistants who are known as Inclusion Leaders equivalent to 4 full time with training and experience of supporting a variety of needs such as autism, ADHD, visual impairment, global developmental delay, , speech, language and communication difficulties. We also have full time admin support. The department is supported by Tim Spencer, Headteacher.

We have just over 620 students and approximately 17% have an identified special educational need or disability.

The SEND information report explains our usual approach to supporting students with SEND and how students access additional help they may need. Please contact the school if you have any additional questions about this.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Report 2024-5

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

We liaise closely with local primary schools including a meeting during Year 6 with each SENDCO of every primary school where students are transitioning to us. We plan their transition to secondary

school, use SATS results, baseline assessments and monitor progress in order to identify those making slower progress than their peers. Any member of staff who has concerns about a student's progress can refer them to the Inclusion Department. This can be done via an 'Initial concern' form. Parents who have concerns can speak directly with the form tutor or relevant subject teacher, but if the difficulties persist, can contact the school SENDCO for advice. A conversation / meeting with parents/carers and young person will take place and appropriate next steps actioned.

The SENDCO Ms Cate Brown and the Inclusion team can be contacted on:

sendco@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk

2. How will Fearnhill support my child?

Evidence suggests that the best support for all students, including those with special educational needs, is high quality teaching. All teachers are teachers of and responsible for SEND, they are also responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class. The social, emotional and mental health of all students is also monitored by the pastoral team, Mental Health Lead and Student Support manager.

Inclusive teaching strategies will mean every pupil will be able to access lessons fully. Our aim is to support pupil learning in timetabled lessons and to allow access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, we recognize that some pupils may need additional support and interventions are provided accordingly, either by the inclusion team or from local services. More details of these are given at the end of the report. In Key Stage 3 there is a guided options process which allows a greater personalisation of the curriculum at Key Stage 4.

Parents are able to meet with subject teachers at consultation evenings once a year. The SENDCO is also available at consultation evenings to meet with parents. Parents may also be invited in to meet with the pastoral or Inclusion team at the request of either.

Further information can be found in the school's [accessibility plan](#) which covers the following areas:

- Increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in your curriculum
- Improving your school's physical environment to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of the education, benefits, facilities or services you provide or offer
- Improving the delivery to pupils with disabilities of information that is readily accessible to pupils without disabilities

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

The school will send home individual reports once a year which will show assessment grades and year group average grades and report on attitude to learning. Reports will be issued with just attitude to learning at two additional points in the year. We hold parent consultation evenings with subject staff and information evenings with a specific focus for GCSE options and transition into Year 7. Parents may also be contacted at any point by either subject teachers, pastoral team, or the Inclusion team to discuss specific issues or areas of concern. You will be notified if your child is offered additional support through a targeted intervention. Parents of students with an Educational Health Care plan have an additional annual review meeting with the SENDCO. As part of this process students complete the Hertfordshire 'All about Me' form with an Inclusion leader.

Fearnhill uses Arbor, emails and phone calls to communicate with home about rewards and sanctions. We hold regular rewards events and these are outlined in our Behaviour Policy.

4. How will Fearnhill's approach to teaching and learning be matched to my child's needs?

The SENDCO works with the Deputy Head in charge of Teaching and Learning to ensure robust teaching and learning is in every classroom. We use the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on Special Educational Needs in Mainstream schools applying the '5 a day' recommendations. Students on our Special Educational Needs register are marked as 'K' or 'E' so that staff are aware and a one page profile (devised with students and parents) outlines their needs, strengths, adjustments and preferred approaches. High quality teaching and learning will meet the needs of most learners however, we do provide interventions where necessary to support young people's needs so that they can make further progress.

Reviews explore the impact of interventions and they are adjusted accordingly. Subject teachers work with Heads of Department to carry out a clear analysis of student progress which draws on subject assessments. Students who are not making progress are highlighted and targets are set within subject areas. The approach at Fearnhill is to assess, plan, do and review as outlined in The Graduated Approach. We will continue this cycle with students and families to support students to make progress and will ensure all teachers and support staff will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

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

At Fearnhill we take our pastoral responsibilities seriously and we pride ourselves on providing a high level of bespoke student support and guidance. Students receive support from their form tutor, Head of Key Stage/ Head of Year and Student Support Services. All students have a form tutor who is their first point of contact for parents and oversees the wellbeing of students in their form. If additional support is needed this may be provided by the Head of Key Stage/ Head of Year, Pastoral Support Assistants and the Student Support Services manager who can signpost students and their families to information and support services. Referrals can also be made to the school counsellor and external professionals through the Mental Health Lead.

For pupils with a medical condition, parents and school complete a Care Plan outlining their child's needs. If pupils need to take medication in school, parents complete a medical administration form and trained staff help administer medication.

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

Our SENCO has worked as a Head of English for six years and a Head of Year for six years as well as holding a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychotherapy. Ms Brown has also completed the National Award for SEN coordination and is currently facilitating the new NPQSEN award with the National Institute of Teaching.

We have a team of Inclusion Leaders, four full time. The Inclusion team attend external training courses and where appropriate we work closely with external organisations to implement their advice. The SENDCO in conjunction with the Deputy Head for teaching and learning provide internal professional development opportunities to develop staff skills and knowledge. The SENDCO attends the local DSPL1 Secondary SENDCO forum on a termly basis.

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

External expertise is requested from agencies such as the ASK SALI (LA SEND services), DSPL (Delivering Provision Locally) 1, Speech, Language, Communication and Autism Team, Safe Space therapy, GRIT (Growing Resilience in Teams), Academy 21, Stevenage ESC and North Herts ESC. as

well as the Speech and Language team. Within the Inclusion team we completed autism training to Level 2, ADHD training, Speech and Language training, and drawing and talking therapy training.

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

All parents can support their child's learning by encouraging them to fully engage with their learning and any interventions offered by the school. You can help them be organised for their day (including bringing the right equipment and books), ensuring your child has full attendance and good punctuality. Homework is set on Google Classroom where parents can see exactly what homework has been set. Homework club is run every night after school and at lunchtime. At KS3 Homework is compulsory in Maths, English and Science and these are delivered by intuitive online platforms.

As well as parent's evenings with subject staff and form teachers, we also offer additional information evenings for making important decisions such as GCSE and Post-16. Our weekly newsletter, 'Fearnfile' also includes information from departments about upcoming events, activities, and trips.

9. How does the school enable constructive partnership working with families?

The inclusion team follow a person-centred approach so that all families and pupils are part of the discussion about their learning, progress and needs. We regularly meet with and speak to parents regarding provision. We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review. Subject teachers will work with the SENCO to carry out a clear analysis of pupils' needs. Parents, children, and staff will work together to set clear targets so that your child can make progress. The plan will be reviewed regularly. If your child has an Educational and Health Care plan, your detailed comments will be requested in advance of the annual review meeting and the views of all parties including your child's will be discussed at the review.

On a wider level parents can be elected as a Parent Governor. Parents are also invited to school performances and sporting events.

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

Fearnhill is a fully inclusive school and all efforts will be made to accommodate any student who wishes to participate in extra-curricular activities and trips. No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their special educational need or disability. Appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary. Additional adults with expertise in supporting your child can accompany pupils to provide support if necessary.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

Fearnhill is fully wheelchair accessible with small lifts in the ground floor to enable access to all departments and a lift up to the first floor. The Student Support Centre and Inclusion Department are located on the first floor next to the lift. There is visual signposting throughout the school and there are disabled changing and toilet facilities. Technology rooms including Catering have height adjustable workstations. We encourage parents to visit our site at the Open Evening to make their own assessment of suitability and contact us to discuss any specific requirements.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

Please contact Ms Brown, SENDCO / Head of Inclusion in the first instance via the school switchboard on 01462 621200. You can also contact the Inclusion team on sendco@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk. We also have a Governor with responsibility for overseeing arrangements for SEND and they can be contacted via admin@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk.

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

Strategies to support transition include:

- Induction visits for all new Year 7 students (summer term Year 6).
- Year 6 Parent's Information Evening (summer term Year 6).
- Additional visits for students with SEND (summer term Year 6).
- Year 7 induction during the first two weeks of term where all form groups have enhanced support from an inclusion assistant.
- All students will have advice for their options during Year 9 and the opportunity to seek career advice. Students with an EHCP attend a PfA (Preparing for Adulthood) meeting as part of their annual review process, including a careers advisor attending the review. Students will also have another PfA meeting in Year 11 to discuss their transition Post-16.

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

For the majority of children in Hertfordshire mainstream schools, including those with SEND, money is allocated to the school to meet their needs through the school budget. The school receives a nominal budget allocation for SEND which is spent on support according to student need, taking account of any provision requirements outlined in Education, Health & Care plans. We prioritise support for students who have Education, Health and Care plans in core subjects or in lessons where there may be a health and safety risk. In addition to employing teaching assistants, we use our resources in a range of ways, for example to provide smaller class teaching for students working significantly below age-related expectations in English, Maths and Science.

Hertfordshire's funding system will be allocated funding for students who have Education, Health & Care Plans according to the descriptors of need system set out by the local authority. We have no capacity to change this and it does not take into account the amount of hours of support a child has. For students who may have significant and complex needs but no EHCP we are able to apply for the local Exceptional Needs Funding. More information about this can be found on the Hertfordshire Local Offer website.

15. How are decisions made about the range of support my child will receive?

Robust screening procedures allow us to allocate extra support based on the level of need. Some decisions about additional support will be made by the SENDCO. There are clear thresholds as to when the Inclusion Department will be involved with a pupil and the screening process in Year 7 across the whole year group supports us in making consistent and transparent decisions over the allocation of extra support. Our aim is to always encourage independence and parents will be consulted about support and interventions. Advice from external agencies can also determine support allocations.

16. Where can I find out about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with SEND?

Please see Hertfordshire's website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/localoffer/the-hertfordshirelocal-offer.aspx>

Please contact the Inclusion team for further support or SENDIASS for independent advice and guidance: <https://www.hertssendiass.org.uk/home.aspx>

Signposting to further support and resources can also be found here: [Fearnhill SEND resources](#)

The following range of provision and support may be offered after consideration of an individual student's SEND needs, taking account of progress data, the views of external professionals, their teachers, their parents and the student themselves.

Communication and Interaction

- Social Skills programmes/support including strategies to enhance self-esteem
- lunch time club for students such as lego club
- Access to a supportive environment via ICT and other equipment

Cognition and Learning

- Touch typing tuition via a computer-based program, mainly aimed at Key Stage 3 students
- Homework Club runs after school every day, providing access to school computers
- Academic mentoring support is put in place in Year 11 for targeted students
- Strategies to support/develop literacy including reading
- Library challenges and competitions to encourage reading for pleasure run throughout the year
- Opportunities for weaker readers to read to an adult in Year 7 are provided within a weekly Library lesson
- Individual support from the SENDCo, Intervention Teacher or Teaching Assistants. In exceptional cases, this may involve withdrawal from a subject.
- Strategies to support/develop numeracy
- Computer-based numeracy programmes
- Core Maths skills intervention
- In-class support and mentoring from Teaching Assistants
- Access Arrangements for external exams - Testing is carried out in the Autumn term of Year 10 and the autumn term of Year 12 to determine the eligibility for arrangements, based on the most up-to-date criteria issued by the Joint Council for Qualification

Social, emotional and mental health

- Peer mentoring with 6th Formers
- Mentoring with GRIT coaches
- Safe Space Counselling
- Movement Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Mental Health Support Team practitioner (1 day a week)
- Student Support Centre & pastoral support
- Drawing & Talking therapy
- A Key worker (Inclusion Leader) is allocated to students with Education, Health & Care plans
- Where there have been concerns, an individualised support plan (Safety and Support Plan) may be needed, drawn up by the Head of Year or Designated Safeguarding Lead, and involving parents and the student.
- Referral to Hertfordshire's Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) service for students who are absent on medical grounds for a prolonged period

Sensory and/or physical needs

- Specialist equipment can be accessed via the external Hearing and Visual Impairment teams dependent on individual needs assessment
- Early lunch break and lesson change over
- Ear defenders