

Frequently asked Questions

How does a school know if my child needs extra help?

The students are assessed subjects every term and results are recorded in the school's database. Students' progress is tracked by subject teachers and is overseen by the Senior Leadership Team.

Parents'/carers' views are sought at Parent Consultation meetings. But if there are concerns before this time we will always speak with parents to gain their views and understanding.

Regular subject and Year team meetings are held where any causes for concern are raised and passed to the Special educational Needs Co-ordinator.

Who do I speak to if I have concerns about my child?

In the first instance it is always best to approach your child's Home Base Tutor with any SEN concerns. The Tutor will then discuss these concerns with the Special Educational Needs and disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo). However, you can always make an appointment with the SENDCo directly through the school office if you feel that your concerns are not being addressed sufficiently.

If the school has concerns about your child's individual needs, the Tutor will arrange a meeting with you to discuss these concerns at the earliest available opportunity. If necessary, a further meeting will be arranged which may include the SENDCo and a professional from an external agency.

What support can the school offer if my child has additional needs?

- High quality differentiated teaching within all classes
- Specialist teaching for students with specific literacy difficulties
- Speech and Language support from HLTAs with specific training in this area
- Access to the PD base and highly trained Teaching Assistants that support for Physiotherapy programmes
- Teaching Assistant support and a daily lunchtime supervised classroom
- Intervention groups including support for developing fine and gross motor skills, support for language development and support for developing social skills
- Specialist support from staff with children who experience high levels of school anxiety
- 1:1 tuition for students at risk of not making expected progress in Maths and English
- A school emotional well-being support service
- Allocated staff trained to meet medical needs
- Close links with professionals from external agencies including an Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teachers service, TADDS, Speech and Language Therapists, Children's Therapy Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Relate, The Targeted Youth Team, the Community Paediatrician, Hearing and Vision Support Service, Social Services, Locality and Family Help Teams

How is extra support allocated to children with special educational needs?

Students are continually monitored and their progress is carefully tracked and reviewed using the school's tracking system. Support is allocated based on advice from external agencies in consultation with parents/carers, SENDCO and Home Base Tutors.

Inclusion on the school's Special Needs Register and the school's Provision Map ensures that all staff are aware of the students' special educational needs and how these needs are being met.

Who are the people who provide services for students with Special Educational Needs?

Directly funded by the school

- Special Educational Needs and disability Co-ordinator
- Leader for Pupil Well-being
- Specialist Teacher for students with specific literacy difficulties
- Pastoral Support Workers
- Higher Level Teaching Assistant
- Trained Teaching Assistants

Paid for by Local Authority but delivered in school

- Educational Psychologist
- Advisory teachers and technical support from the Hearing and Vision Support Service
- Mobility Officer
- Specialist Teachers
- Family Help workers

Provided and paid for by Health Service but usually delivered in school

- School Nurse
- Mental Health in Schools Team
- Support from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Children's Therapy Service
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Physiotherapy and OT services

What support is available for Parents with children with Special Educational Needs?

The school has close links with several services that support parents/carers:

- Family Hubs (offer family support and parenting advice) [Family Hub - Dorset Council](#)
- Dorset Local offer (offer information and guidance to help children, young people and their families) [SEND Local Offer - Dorset Council](#)
- Dorset Parent Carer Council (run by parents of children with disabilities for other parents) [Home | Dorset Parent Carer](#)
- SENDIASS [Dorset SENDIASS](#)
- Dorset Neurodiversity Hub [Neurodiversity – NHS Dorset](#)
- Dorset Youth [Dorset Youth's Homepage](#)
- Kooth (online SEMH support) [Home - Kooth](#)

Is the school accessible to all children with additional needs?

Dorchester Middle School adheres to an Equality Plan.

We are proud to be able to offer specialist support through our PD Base to children with a range of physical disabilities. Each student's needs will be individually assessed and catered for appropriately wherever possible. The school strives to ensure that all children,

regardless of their additional needs, can achieve their best in all aspects of school life. The school accommodates students with hearing and sight impairments, students with physical disabilities and students with medical needs.

How does the school support the child to transition to another year, school or setting?

- Transition meetings between Tutors are held during the summer term in preparation for students moving to their new classes
- The SENDCo and Year Leads liaise closely with staff at feeder schools and at Upper schools to ensure the smooth transition of students with SEN and offer an enhanced transition program
- Additional visits and pastoral support sessions are offered to vulnerable students who are moving to Upper school
- Paperwork relating to SEN which is held in school by the SENDCo is passed to the SENDCo of the receiving school
- Where a child has spent some time in another provision then the SENDCO meets them regularly with them and the provision to ensure the relationship is maintained and a transition timetable is put into place to help them to return successfully

Bespoke transition support packages are designed for students with complex needs