

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

1. What will be my child be learning?

At Highfield school our differentiated curriculum is progressive and supports students in developing their communication, independence and social skills on their journey towards adulthood. Some students access a personalised curriculum which is planned by the class teacher and is appropriate for their learning style and age. We have a curriculum document which is available for each year group.

2. How do I know my child is making progress?

Student progress is monitored every day. This does not mean they are tested every day. The assessments are typically staff observing what a student can or cannot do (e.g. in work or interaction or play) or from marking work.

We also assess students via their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

We monitor how well students are meeting their targets and gather evidence so that we know where the student is up to.

We also use B-Squared or MAPPS (Mapping and Assessing Pupil Progress). These assessments help us to identify what progress the student has made and help us to evaluate what they need to learn next. We are currently developing our new assessment system.

Some students are entered for national tests. This tends to be from Year 11 onwards and can include Maths or English tests such as Entry Level English or Entry Level Maths.

Monitoring of assessments helps school leaders to understand the current effectiveness of the education we provide.

3. Who Teaches my child?

Students will access the semi-formal, pre-formal or formal curriculum delivered in a safe, supportive environment and delivered by our experienced teaching team.

Students in the **semi-formal** classes are our **sensory learners** and will access the curriculum through a class-based model with some teaching in specialist areas of the school.

Students in the **pre-formal** classes are our **supported learners** and will access the curriculum through a class or tutor-based model with a range of teaching in specialist areas of the school.

Students in the **formal** classes are our **independent learners** and will access the curriculum through a class or tutor-based model with some teaching in specialist areas of the school.

Students in **post 16** follow a bespoke vocational curriculum which is a balance of class and mixed key stage teaching.

Classes are smaller than in mainstream and have a higher ratio of adult support. Student support is specified in their EHCP. Our ultimate aim is for students is to become independent learners.

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

4. Where are the subjects?

The traditional subjects which you know are woven into our curriculum areas:

Curriculum Area	Formal subjects	Semi-Formal
Cognition	Maths, ICT, Science Problem solving and thinking skills, functional skills through education.	My Thinking Skills
Communication	Reading, Writing, Speaking and listening.	My Communication
Health	PE, Health and Fitness, Sensory & emotional health, PHSE	My Play and Leisure
Personal Development	Art, Music, Outdoor Education, E-Safety PHSE	World Around me
Independence	Cooking, Travel Skills, Self Help Skills, Community Education	My Independence
Preparation for work	Horticulture, Construction, Motor Vehicle, Work Placement, Employability & Enterprise	World Around me

5. What facilities do you have?

Highfield has excellent facilities to cater for our student's needs, these include:

A wildlife area with access to small animals	Post 16 Café Highfield Bank	Project search at Pinderfields hospital,
A large poly tunnel for delivering horticulture	Art room, Cooking room, music room	School library, communication intervention room
Modern fitness suite with gym and trampoline	Small and Large IT suite, laptops and tablets specific IT suite for post 16	Behaviour and Welfare are "The Hut"
Gym and sports hall	Post 16 life skills and work skills areas	2 sensory rooms
Outdoor playgrounds with play equipment	Outdoor sports area for football and sports	Accessible toilets on both floors
A lift to access the upstairs classrooms	Mobile Hoist to manage student positioning	iPads and tablets in classrooms

6. How do I know my child is making progress?

Teaching staff look at the assessment progress of each student. Our assessments help us to decide how we can best teach and support each student. The Head teacher & leadership team of Highfield School monitor the progress of individual students.

Parents are formally informed of a student's progress each year. This happens via the school report and the annual review of the EHCP document. Some times our assessments suggest we might need to seek extra support. This might be because we think we've identified additional needs, which haven't been spotted before. For example, this might be that we've spotted signs that a student may have autism or that their mobility is deteriorating. If this happens, we will discuss this with parents/carers.

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

7. Does my child get 1:1 support?

Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible, however we target support for identified areas as specified in the EHCP.

We have highly trained staff and a specific environment to support the students in accessing their learning.

Safeguarding and Child Protection	Autism	Speech Language and communication disorders
Behaviour management and de-escalation	Physical Intervention strategies (Team Teach)	Childhood trauma
Visual Impairment	Hearing impairment	Risk assessment
Epilepsy	Reading and phonics	IEPs and collecting Evidence
Moving and Handling	First aid	Mental Health First Aid
Storage and dispensing of medication	Attachment	PECS—picture exchange system

Students access whole class, group, paired and individual support throughout their day and this dependent on where we believe they need extra support. If a student does require 1:1 support this will be with a rotation of support staff to ensure they are not dependent upon 1 person.

8. Who else supports my child?

First of all, we try strategies and interventions that we already know and have worked for other students with similar needs. Often, this works very well. However, we do also engage other specialist professionals where we have concerns that we should better meet the needs of a child.

Professionals who support:

Educational Psychologists (EPS)	Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)	Social Care
Occupational Therapist (OT)	Early Help Hubs	Home to school transport
Child and Adolescent mental Health (CAMHS)	Children’s sensory impairment team	Physiotherapist
School Exclusions Team	School Nursing Team	Paediatricians
Social Emotional Mental Health team	Colleges /Elite / UCAN	Other schools

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

9. How do you support my child?

- **Autism:**
 - We try and ensure our classrooms are autism friendly. We display a visual timetable and ensure key routines are in place to support students with their anxiety.
- **Social Emotional Mental Health**
 - We support our students through many strategies in class and with our learning mentors who can offer specific interventions such as anger management. Our Hut resource offers a quiet space which student can access if they need to talk to work on a specific intervention.
- **Communication**
 - We aim for a total communication approach which includes photos, pictures, symbols, words and Makaton sign. We have specific interventions for literacy which are delivered 1:1 or in small groups.
- **Physical Needs**
 - Staff who support students with physical needs have specific training to support them in accessing the full curriculum offer. This includes specific aids where required. We have a lift to ensure students can access all the school building.

10. What do you do about behaviour and exclusions?

We use a range of positive behaviour management strategies to support students. We have a visual reward system which earns bronze, silver, gold and platinum certificates. We also use de-escalation strategies, these include: Distraction, redirection, reminder of reward, choices, humour, take up time and planned ignoring. Visual traffic light system with clear red / amber and green behaviours. Class rules are written and discussed by the students. Teaching of coping strategies through the curriculum. Behaviour plans to support individuals. Access to the Hut area for time out or planned periods of time. Visual timetables for supporting routines and reducing anxiety.

We try our best to avoid exclusions, where it does happen, a wide range of reasonable adjustments for a student's SEN or disability are likely to be in place and students have been involved in an episode so serious no other option is left available. (*See Behaviour Policy*)

11. What happens when my child finishes year 11?

We have a careers programme which runs from year 7. When students are in year 10 we begin to look at post 16 options and support you as parents to decide about whether you think our post 16 or another college is the next step they need to progress. Mostly our students go on to: Our post 16, Wakefield College, Barnsley college, Barnsley Reds, Pennine College, Supported Internship, or Adult Services.

12. What happens when my child finishes year 14?

Our post 16 curriculum is designed to prepare our students for adulthood and either work or further education by developing life skills, independence skills, work skills and functional skills.

Mostly our students go on to: Wakefield College, Barnsley college, Barnsley Reds, Pennine College, Supported Internship, or Adult Services.

We support this by college visits throughout the year.

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

13. What are the interventions you offer?

Some interventions are provided to specific year groups, through pupil premium or year 7 catch up funding.

Lego Therapy	Word aware	Language for thinking
Communication Skills	Mr Bean for thinking	Speech sounds
Talk about—communication	Comedy club	AAC chat club
Social communication group	Habilitation	Touch Typing (VI)
Emotional regulation	Intensive interaction	Forest school
Lunchtime clubs (targeted)	OT input	Physio Input
Fitness programmes	Keyboarding skills	Swimming Y7 RDA Y8

14. How many places are there at Highfield?

We have 196 places which include our post 16, We have 3 classes in each of the years 7-11 and 5 in post 16.

15. How do I apply for a place at Highfield?

Your child must have an EHCP for Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and be transitioning or at secondary school. Highfield will attend the student's EHCP meeting where possible to give advice on whether or not we can meet your child's needs. Your child's current school will send the EHCP back along with your preference to SENART and then a specialist panel of professionals will decide of which provision is best suited to meet their needs. They will then consult with us and we will decide and give a start date.

16. When will they start at Highfield school?

If your child is offered a place you will receive a start date on their EHCP paperwork.

We will then arrange to: Meet your child in their current setting, collate any paperwork and discuss your child with their current school, arrange a series of transition visits for your child and ensure all staffing and resources are in place to be able to start.

Highfield Frequently Asked Questions

17. How do you let me know how my child is doing?

We keep you informed of your child's progress by:

- Feeding back information from school council.
- Dojo communication—individual and class messages
- Telephone calls
- Communication book if required
- Class newsletters
- Annual reports
- Parents evenings—twice yearly

You can also contact us by:

Phone 01924 264240

Email senco@highfield.wakefield.sch.uk

18. What if I am unhappy?

If you are unhappy let us know first. You can contact the class teacher or your

Key Stage Assistant Head:

Nicola Hirst KS3(Y7-9) Jude Hickey KS4(Y10-11) Amanda Sheppard Post 16(Y12-14)

If your issues are not resolved please contact school and make an appointment to speak to the Deputy or Head Teacher. *(See Complaints Policy)*

Our **Parent Support Advisors** are also available to support you:

Kirsty Barr KS3 (Y7-9) Lynne Catchpool (Y10-11) Emma Kitchener(Post 16)

19. How do I get independent advice?

You can speak to a range of other professionals about your child these include:

Wakefield SENART: 01924 302465

SENDIASS: 01924 379015 wesail@barnardos.org.uk

WESAIL: 01924 304152

20. What is the local offer?

You can see what help is available through the local offer website: <http://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/Home>

You may need to Google Local offer if you live in a different Local Authority.