

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?

DESC will gather information from a range of sources in order to assess any additional need. Sources may include:

- Information from the referring school
- Information gathered at admission meeting in dialogue with DESC staff and school staff
- Information from external agencies eg. CAMHS, TYST, Social Care
- Baseline testing
- Use of the Boxall Profile
- Information from parents
- Information from young people
- Feedback from subject staff

If parents/carers have concerns, they should contact the young person's link mentor in the first instance on 01442 247476. Alternatively, please contact Clare Winter (KS1, 2 & 3 SENCo) or Jade Dixon (KS4 SENCo) via the admin email address (admin@desc.herts.sch.uk)

2. How will school staff support my child?

Staff at DESC will support young people in many different ways. Information will be shared with relevant people and support will be monitored to ensure it is effective. Support may include:

- Quality first teaching in all classes
- All relevant staff are informed about individual needs through student 1 page profiles and information sharing
- Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of each individual student
- Differentiation enables every young person to access the curriculum
- Programmes are bespoke and are adapted to meet the needs and interests of the young person
- Where appropriate, students are offered additional interventions, such as 1:1 support or literacy interventions. In this case, you will be consulted on any decision taken
- Therapeutic Intervention will be requested when necessary
- Students at Key Stage 4 are assessed for exam access arrangements as a matter of course, according to the Joint Council for Qualifications regulations.

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

Staff will keep in regular contact with home throughout the year. Student progress is monitored regularly by all staff.

You will be kept up to date and involved in the following ways:

- Parent review days
- Email
- Telephone calls
- Appointments with individual staff
- Annual reviews (for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan)

The Centre provides information for parents/carers through:

- Information on the website
- Letters home
- Weekly phone calls
- Email
- Text
- Link mentor contact
- Newsletters

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

Provision will be highly personalised to ensure the needs of the individual student are met to the best of DESC's ability. Provision could include:

- A curriculum which meets the needs of the cohort
- High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to meet individuals' needs
- Small group and 1:1 evidence-based interventions
- Monitoring of progress through centre tracking systems and student progress meetings
- Student voice is taken into account through regular link mentor contact
- Additional support is offered in lessons by teaching assistants

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

Pastoral care is highly important to all staff at DESC. We have excellent systems in place to monitor and intervene where necessary to promote general well-being and good mental health. These include:

- Counselling
- CBT
- Mindfulness
- Regular use of assessment tools such as Boxall Profile and SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire)
- Student voice through regular link mentor meetings
- Parent/carer voice through regular contact with link mentor
- Neuro-education lessons

We also have access to a range of specialist services, such as:

- School Nurse

- YC Hertfordshire (Careers guidance and youth workers)
- Trained Mindfulness Practitioners
- Trained counsellors and CBT practitioners

We have a zero tolerance approach to bullying

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

There is a range of specialist services accessed by DESC on a regular basis, dependent on individual need. They include:

- Educational Psychology Service
- SEND Advisory Team
- Specialist Teachers
- Attendance Team
- Child Development Centres
- School Nurse
- CAMHS
- Sensory Services Team
- Communication and Autism Team
- Speech, Language and Communication Base
- Hearing Impairment Specialists
- Parenting Practitioners
- Special School Outreach Service
- Social Care
- Targeted Youth Support Team
- YC Hertfordshire

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

Our team are all experienced in working with SEN. DESC has an ongoing programme of Continuing Professional Development opportunities, both in and out of centre. These are available to all staff. Training within the last academic year includes:

- Extensive training on Mental Health and Well-being
- Anxiety
- Dyslexia
- Mindfulness
- Autism – AET and *Autism in Girls*
- Hertfordshire STEPs
- Educational Psychology Service – EHCP application
- Child Protection refresher
- Completion of units available at *MindEd*

Previous whole staff training has also included

- Pathological Demand Avoidance
- Oppositional Defiance Disorder

- Attachment and Trauma
- Growth Mindset
- Exclusion training

Individual staff also complete CPD in their specialist areas which is then disseminated back to the whole staff. We have staff who have additional training in:

- Lego Therapy
- Drawing and Talking
- Childhood bereavement
- Use of Therapy Dogs
- Reintegration to school settings
- Nurture Group Principles
- Speech and Language interventions
- Communication Disorders
- Mental Health First Aid
- Mindfulness in Schools Project – Paws b, .b and .b Foundations (School Mindfulness Lead)
- ELKLAN
- Protective Behaviours
- Brief Therapy
- NLP
- Dealing with Challenging Behaviour
- Zones of Regulation
- Resilience training
- Attachment Training
- PDA

Both our SENCOs are qualified to the DfE recognise standard and are available to all staff on a daily basis for advice as necessary.

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

Parents/carers can support young people by encouraging them to fully engage with the programme offered, as well as:

- Helping them to be organised for their day, including: ensuring correct uniform is worn and PE kit is in centre when needed
- Encouraging full attendance and good punctuality
- Attending parent meetings when required

DESC will support this process through

- Clear, effective and timely communication
- Using your preferred method of contact where possible (phone, email, text or letter)
- Weekly contact with link mentors

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

There are many opportunities to discuss progress on a regular basis, as well as more formal progress discussions such as:

- Admission meetings
- Weekly link mentor contact
- Parent review days
- Termly reports
- GCSE results day

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact link mentors with any concerns that may arise. Specific concerns can be addressed to subject staff or SENCOs through the admin email address.

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

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to ensure that all young people are able to access off site visits and enrichment activities. Staffing is carefully thought out to ensure that all students are safe and risk assessments are carried out where necessary. If a student is deemed unsafe to be taken offsite, where possible, alternative arrangements will be made onsite.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

Both our Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 centres at Tenzing Road and our Key Stage 4 Centre at Barncroft Campus are accessible to those with physical mobility issues. Barncroft Campus and the Key Stage 1 and 2 Centre are fully DDA compliant. DESC is currently in the process of completing an audit of all centres to ensure they are friendly for those with Autism and sensory needs.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

For more information on this report, please contact either

- Clare Winter (KS1, 2 & 3 SENCO)
- Jade Dixon (KS4 SENCO)

via the admin email address (admin@desc.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?

There may be many transition points throughout a young person's time at DESC, and these transitions are prepared for and supported in a variety of ways. These could include:

- Information sharing with previous and next settings
- Discussion around relationships and safe people in a new setting
- EHCP application and review where appropriate

- Planned, phased and supported re-integration back into mainstream setting
- Advice and Strategies provided for school staff
- Careers and college guidance

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

All students who attend DESC are likely to have an additional need at some point during their time here. Robust assessment on entry identifies need in the first instance and programmes are then designed accordingly.

Continued assessment throughout the year allows for resources to be tailored to meet individual needs. Resources that can be allocated and accessed include:

- Small class sizes
- Additional Staff Support
- Evidence-based interventions
- Therapeutic interventions
- Alternative provision programmes
- Assessment for Access Arrangements

~~Pupil Premium, Pupil Premium Plus and Personal budgets set out within EHC plans are protected for the nominated student. ??~~

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

Decisions are made using a person-centred approach, taking into account the views of young people and parents/carers alongside data collected on entry and throughout the year.

Data collection may include:

- Information received from schools
- Information gathered during the course of normal teaching
- Baseline assessment and ongoing assessment
- Continued monitoring of interventions
- Student voice

Students and parents/carers are entitled to see any information the school may hold regarding educational provision and how decisions may be made.

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?

For more information on projects and services available in the local area, please look at Hertfordshire's Local Offer website available at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer>

