

Bingley Grammar School: Neurodiversity Procedure



Staff:

- Miss Sophie Wilkinson – Associate Assistant Head/SENCO
- Mrs Gemma Avery – Deputy SENCO and Teacher of English

Bingley Grammar School believes that neurodivergence—including Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette's, and FASD—represents natural variations in human brain function rather than deficits.

Identification and Assessing Needs

We use a graduated response based on the **Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review**.

- Assess: Observe, screen, listen to staff, pupil & parent feedback
- Plan: draft a Pupil Profile & agree reasonable adjustments and put on Arbor
- Do: deliver high-quality inclusive teaching & adaptations
- Review: Formally evaluate and discuss together

Early Identification:

Subject teachers monitor academic progress, attendance, emotional wellbeing, executive functioning (organisation/forgetfulness), and sensory distress.

The SEND team uses standardised tools (e.g., profiles, sensory profiles, executive function questionnaires alongside classroom observations and staff/parent feedback.

We recognise that neurodivergent pupils—especially girls—may "mask" (suppress neurodivergent traits) during the school day. Observations from parents regarding at-home exhaustion or distress are treated as vital evidence.

Diagnosis vs. Provision:

A medical diagnosis of a neurodivergent condition does not automatically mean a student requires placement on the SEND Register or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

- Support is driven by individual need and operational impact at school, not by a diagnostic label alone.

- Many neurodivergent pupils thrive in mainstream environments purely through high-quality inclusive teaching and universal reasonable adjustments without formal SEND support.
- Conversely, a formal medical diagnosis is not a prerequisite for receiving support; adjustments and interventions are implemented based on observed need.

Working with the Local Authority:

The Graduated Response (SEND Support)

When quality-first teaching and reasonable adjustments do not enable sufficient progress, the pupil is placed on SEND Support K register (with parental consent). The SENCo coordinates targeted interventions and collaborates with Local Authority (LA) services (e.g., Specialist Teaching Services, SCIL Team, Educational Psychology, Speech & Language Therapy). The SENCO will require parental consent for this to happen, and parents may be asked to fill out forms and documents.

Applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

An EHCP is for young people whose complex needs require provision beyond what the school's delegated SEND budget can supply.

- **Threshold:** Evidence must demonstrate that despite structured cycles of *Assess-Plan-Do-Review* and external professional input, the pupil requires individualized funding/provision.
- **The Process:**
 1. **Request:** The school or parent submits an EHCP Needs Assessment application to the Local Authority.
 2. **Evidence Collection:** Includes school data, Pupil Profiles, specialist assessments (Educational Psychologist, NHS/Community Paediatrics), and parent/pupil views.
 3. **Decision:** The LA decides within 6 weeks whether to assess, and within 20 weeks whether to issue a final EHCP.
 4. **EHCPs are determined by the LA, not the school.** The plan belongs to the LA and they are responsible for the updates and funding allocations, not the school.

Classroom Strategies & Reasonable Adjustments

- **Executive Function Support:** Break multi-step tasks into explicit, single instructions. Provide visual checklists, exemplar end products, and pre-printed lesson templates to minimise copying from the board.
- **Processing Time:** Allow processing time after asking a direct question before expecting a response.
- **Sensory Environment:** Reduce visual clutter, seat away from high-traffic zones or direct glare, permit small and silent fidget tools (with the SENCOS permission), and accommodate noise-cancelling headphones during independent work.
- **Communication:** Avoid idioms or ambiguous language; use clear, concrete phrasing.

Subject-Specific Adaptations & School Operations

Physical Education (PE)

- **Changing Rooms:** Option to change early or use private facilities in Hive (e.g., accessible changing cubicles) to avoid communal sensory overload and unstructured social noise.
- **PE Kit:** Sensory-friendly kit adaptations (e.g., removing labels), reminders to bring kit and changes of PE activities.
- **Activity Design:** Providing non-contact options or individual roles (e.g., timekeeping, route planning) during intense team sport units.

Practical Lessons (Design & Technology / Cooking)

- **Sensory Adaptations:** Provide alternative tools, permission to wear gloves for tactile food aversion, and clear advance warning of loud equipment (food processors, extraction fans).
- **Safety Protocols:** Explicit, visual step-by-step safety cards mounted at individual workstations.
- Allow ALL children to participate in cooking lessons as part of the curriculum.

Educational Trips & Visits

- **Pre-Trip Preparation:** Social stories, photo guides of the venue, and detailed itineraries shared at least one week in advance.
- **Risk Assessments:** risk assessments to focus on sensory triggers, wander/elopement risk, and anxiety management rather than excluding attendance.

- **Quiet Spaces:** Designated quiet zones identified at destination sites prior to travel.
- Ask the SENCO for advice on the number of adults needed if high SEND needs are apparent.
- Take a school work phone, first aid equipment, and read pupils EHCPs/Passports for individual needs.
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedure if any incidents arise whilst on the trip, and report information to the DSL immediately.

Social Times, Time-Outs, and Early Passes

Social Times (Break and Lunch)

Unstructured times present high sensory and social demands. The school provides:

- **Quiet Provision:** Access to a supervised, low-arousal indoor space in Hive called BBLC (Breakfasts, break and Lunch club) during all breaks and before school from 8am. This is always adult staffed.
- **Alternative Dining:** Option to collect food early or eat in a quieter designated room (BBLC) away from the main dining hall rush with the use of a 5 minute early pass.

Time-Out and Early Corridor Passes

- **5 minute Time-Out Cards:** Discreet cards issued to students allowing them to leave a classroom without dynamic challenge if experiencing sensory or emotional overload. The student presents the card and moves directly to an agreed safe space (e.g., outside the classroom or outdoors close by).
- **5 minute Early Pass:** Permission to leave lessons 5 minutes early to transit corridors before main movement bells, preventing physical congestion and auditory stress.
- **Access to Hive/Thrive:** If agreed by the SENCO, some students may require a drop in to Hive/Thrive to regulate if overstimulated.
- **BBLC pass** – A pass to eat in the quiet space in Hive, if agreed by the SENCO.
- **Toilet pass:** Can only be given by the medical team if there is a doctor or health care professional letter/diagnosis.

Behaviour, Sanctions, and Executive Functioning

Please read the School's Behaviour Policy for more details on this.

- Detentions or sanctions must **not** be issued for traits directly linked to ADHD/Autism (e.g., forgetting equipment, loss of focus, involuntary fidgeting, unreadable handwriting, or missing room changes due to disorientation).
- A sensory or emotional meltdown is a crisis response, not a discipline issue. De-escalation, non-confrontational space, and recovery time are mandatory prior to any reflective conversation. This can be assisted by the Hive Team.
- Reasonable Adjustments to Sanctions: If a sanction is necessary for serious breaches, the environment and delivery can be adapted (e.g., avoiding isolation rooms, providing visual processing time during restorative meetings).

How Parents/Carers Can Support at Home

- **Maintain Consistent Routines:** Use visual schedules at home for morning and bedtime routines to support executive function.
- **Create a Home Decompression Strategy:** Allow 30–60 minutes of low-demand, quiet downtime immediately after school to recover from masking and sensory fatigue.
- **Organisational Systems:** Use color-coded binders/folders matching school subject timetables and establish a single fixed home location for equipment and bags.
- **Open Communication:** inform staff of sleep disruptions, medication changes, or high anxiety.

External Support and Resources for Families

Parents/carers can access free independent advice and support through the following organizations:

Organisation	Description / Purpose
SENDIASS (<i>Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice & Support Service</i>)	Statutory service offering free, impartial advice on SEN procedures, EHCP applications, and legal rights in your Local Authority.
National Autistic Society (NAS)	Guidance, resources, and local support groups for autistic individuals and their families.

Organisation	Description / Purpose
ADDISS & ADHD Foundation	Information, training, and advocacy resources specifically for ADHD and co-occurring conditions.
Autism Central	Peer educator support and workshops for families of autistic individuals.

Tests and examinations

Classroom tests

Where appropriate, a student's established classroom adjustments should also be used in internal assessments. This helps the school judge what support is effective and establishes the student's **normal way of working**.

The school will not introduce arrangements only at the point of an external examination unless a new need or temporary difficulty has arisen and the relevant regulations permit it.

Exam access arrangements

Exam access arrangements allow an eligible student to demonstrate what they know without changing what the assessment is designed to test. They are **not an advantage** and are not awarded automatically because a student has Neurodiversity.

Possible arrangements may include:

Arrangement	What it may involve
Extra time	Additional time where evidence shows that the student is substantially disadvantaged by relevant processing, reading or writing difficulties.
Supervised rest breaks	Pausing the examination under supervision where this is more appropriate than extra working time.
Computer reader or reader	Questions being read through approved technology or, where permitted, by a person. Restrictions apply in some assessments.
Word processor	Typing answers where this reflects the student's normal way of working and meets the relevant rules.

Arrangement	What it may involve
Scribe or speech recognition	Recording dictated answers where the required evidence and conditions are met.
Reading aloud	The student reading text aloud to themselves, normally in a separate room where required.
Prompter	Limited prompting to help an eligible student remain focused on the examination.
Modified papers	Papers in an approved format, such as enlarged or modified language papers, where the relevant criteria are met.
Coloured paper or overlay	Use of an agreed visual aid where it is genuinely needed and allowed.
Alternative room	A smaller or separate room where this is supported by evidence and is part of the student's normal way of working.

Availability depends on:

- The student's specific needs.
- The qualification and assessment being taken.
- Evidence from teachers and school records.
- The student's normal way of working.
- Any required specialist assessment.
- Approval under the relevant awarding-body regulations.

A diagnostic report does **not by itself guarantee** extra time or any other arrangement. Similarly, a student may qualify for an arrangement without having a private diagnosis where the required evidence of need is available.

The SENCO and exams officer are responsible for deciding, applying for and implementing arrangements in line with current Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) rules. Parents cannot apply directly to JCQ or an awarding body for an arrangement; applications must be managed by the examination centre. JCQ states that arrangements are based on evidence of need and the student's normal way of working. jcq.org.uk

The school will:

1. Identify possible needs as early as practicable.
2. Gather evidence from lessons, tests and student records.
3. Arrange an assessment by an appropriately qualified person where required.

4. Consult the student, teachers and parents or carers.
5. Make applications within the required deadlines.
6. Give students opportunities to practise using approved arrangements.
7. Keep required records securely.
8. Review arrangements when needs, courses or regulations change.

JCQ regulations are updated periodically. The school will always apply the version in force for the relevant examination series. The current JCQ guidance was updated in March 2026.

Use of technology

Assistive technology can improve access and independence. Where funding allows, children may have access to a laptop in some lessons. This is not a guarantee.

Students will be taught how to use agreed technology effectively and safely. Use in lessons does not automatically mean that the same technology will be permitted in public examinations.

Staff training

The school will provide appropriate training so that staff:

- Understand neurodiversity and recognise possible indicators.
- Know how to access student support information.
- Use inclusive classroom strategies consistently.
- Understand their responsibility to make reasonable adjustments.
- Use assistive technology where relevant.
- Know how classroom practice contributes to evidence for exam access arrangements.
- Maintain high expectations without creating unnecessary barriers.
- Seek advice from the SENCO and Hive Team when support is not effective.

Raising a concern

Parents or carers who have a concern should follow these steps:

1. Contact the **subject teacher or form tutor** first.
2. If the issue is unresolved, contact the **SENCO**.

Concerns about examination arrangements should be raised with the exams officer as early as possible, because evidence and application deadlines may apply.