



Community College

# Stoke Damerel Community College

## **SEN Information Report**

Stoke Damerel Community College is part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.  
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4AF.

# Stoke Damerel Community College

## SEND Information Report

This report describes Stoke Damerel Community Colleges provision for pupils with SEND. This report has been produced in accordance with and pursuant to the Equalities Policy of the Greenshaw Learning Trust, the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and relevant legislation, and the Funding Agreement and Articles of Association of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

### **Approval and review:**

This report is the responsibility of: Karen Merricks

This report was reviewed and updated: January 2026

This report was approved by the college Governing Body on: 21st January 2026

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If you would like to discuss any concerns regarding your child(ren) and possible special educational needs, please speak with the relevant Head of Year. Please contact them via their email (below) or on 01752 556065.

The Local Offer explains the support and services that are available in Plymouth for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0 to 25 years.

[Local Authority Local Offer](#)

### **Heads of Year**

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## **1. College Context**

Stoke Damerel Community College is a large inclusive secondary college that works in partnership with children and their families to support needs across all four broad areas of need (Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Sensory and Physical, and Social Emotional and Mental Health). Any support follows the colleges' graduated approach so that pupils, first and foremost, access high quality inclusive teaching within their classes. Where more support is required, pupils will access targeted and specialist support as detailed below. Our greatest areas of need are Social Emotional and Mental Health and Communication and Interaction. Therefore, a particular focus within the college is building whole-college and whole-class approaches to support these pupils. For those with complex needs in these areas there is a designated space within the college for pupils to access at appropriate times to support their sensory and/or emotional regulation. Stoke Damerel Community College also has a resource provision for pupils with autism. This resource provision is commissioned by the local authority. Admissions to the resource provision is separate from the main college. The resource provision is for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan whose primary area of need is identified as autistic difficulties. For more information about the resource provision, please contact the SENDCo. Our local authority page can be found [here](#).

Stoke Damerel Community College currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD),
- Communication and interaction, for example, autistic spectrum condition, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties
- Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia,
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy
- Moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties

## **2. Whole-college approach to inclusive mainstream offer**

Stoke Damerel Community College is committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to an inclusive mainstream offer alongside their peers, with a focus on maximising children's access to the broadest possible curriculum offer. As part of our generally available provision, all teaching staff receive professional development to build whole-class approaches that support pupils with a range of learning needs. For example, teachers plan their lessons to ensure that any lesson is sequenced in small steps to reduce cognitive load. Teachers will also build in the use of visuals into their resources to support children's understanding of key vocabulary and concepts. Teachers make resources available to the pupils to reference during the lesson to reduce any barriers pupils face due to their working memory. The 'I do, we do, you do' lesson sequence is prioritised for all children so that all children benefit from explicit modelling. All pupils on the SEN register have a pen portrait detailing the strategies to prioritise for particular pupils with special educational needs. All staff are required to know which pupils in their class(es) have a pen portrait and to actively engage in the information so that all staff know which pupils to prioritise for support.

## **3. Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs**

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. (SEN Code of Practice, 2015)

A learning difficulty is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.

A disability that requires special educational provision is a disability that prevents or hinders the pupil from accessing the educational provision generally provided for others of the same age.

Not all pupils with a disability will be identified as requiring special educational provision. Appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure we remove or prevent barriers experienced by all pupils with a disability.

Parents/carers are informed when pupils are added to or removed from the SEN register. When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and aspirations of the pupil and their parents/carers. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether this can be provided by adapting our core offer, or whether something additional is needed.

The SENDCO and the teacher responsible for KS2/3 transition will liaise with all primary schools to ensure that information on pupils is shared effectively, in line with the Local Authority transition protocol.

At the start of Year 7, or on entry, the college will undertake relevant assessments of all pupils to ascertain their ability/difficulties and a profile of their needs. This information will be used alongside data from primary schools to ensure that pupils who may need additional support are identified. Once needs are identified, a graduated response to supporting the pupil's need will be initiated. Where relevant, the SENDCO will enlist the services of specialist professionals such as Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers.

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social needs.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

Details of each pupil with Special Educational Needs and Disability, including the nature of their learning disability, recommended teaching strategies, strengths and history of provision will be available to all teaching staff. All teaching staff will be made aware of this information and informed when any significant changes are made.

It is the responsibility of all staff to liaise with the SENDCO should they have any concerns that a pupil may have previously unidentified Special Educational Needs. As the Code of Practice states in Chapter 6 section 6.36: "Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class".

Should parents have concerns about their child who is not currently on the SEN register they should make contact with the appropriate Head of Year.

#### **4. Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN within the classroom**

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class(es).

We support all children, including those with SEND by using high quality teaching strategies which include modeling, breaking information up into smaller 'chunks', repeating instructions, checking for understanding and allowing time to respond. These approaches are known as our baseline strategies.

Staff also receive professional development on strategies that are particularly beneficial for children with particular needs, such as working memory.

Teachers are made aware of pupils' strengths, needs and appropriate adaptations and adjustments via the pen portrait. The portrait guides teachers to know which strategies to prioritise for each pupil and/or which adaptations or adjustments are required to ensure the pupil can access the learning. Pen Portraits are reviewed termly by the SEND Team in partnership with the pupil. The pupil passport is shared with parents/carers and they are invited to meet to discuss/review the contents.

Further examples of how pupils with additional needs are supported at Stoke Damerel Community College:

- Nurture classes are provided for vulnerable pupils in order to support their social and academic transition.
- The pastoral team is actively involved in areas of transition across phases of education, but particularly at KS2-3, ensuring that support is available for pupils who require it at key points in their education.
- Teaching Support Assistants operate in all areas of the curriculum including registration and Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE). They offer general in class support, small group support and individual assistance to remove barriers to learning in the classroom and provide support to the highest level appropriate to the needs and abilities of the individual.
- The pastoral team offer bespoke 1:1 and small group lessons to impact positively on the most challenging areas of college for all individuals.
- Within our Support Base, nurture facilities provide quiet areas and areas where support and resources can be accessed including learning support staff for our pupils.
- There are aspects of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 that are specifically designed and personalised to develop an individual's life skills and promote lifelong learning.
- If there are any needs that cannot be met within our normal college provision, we will endeavour to seek the support of partner agencies in developing an appropriate provision or securing alternative placements.
- pupils at any point in their college career can receive bespoke timetabling arrangements to meet their needs.
- Regular contact both formally and informally with parents and carers to ensure that there is an effective supportive educational partnership.
- Class marksheets collate information so key strategies are easily accessible

#### **5. Adaptations to the curriculum for pupils with SEN**

At Stoke Damerel Community College we prioritise flexible grouping for the majority of the college day. The focus on high challenge, high support through the high quality inclusive teaching means that pupils are encouraged to engage with the resources that are made available and the modelling that takes place through the teaching.

We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.

- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger fonts, etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

## **6. Targeted Interventions**

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class as stated in the Code of Practice. High quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEND. This will be differentiated for individual pupils.

Where a pupil's needs are not able to be met through this universal offer a selection of targeted interventions are available. Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings occur each fortnight with key stakeholders to ensure interventions are appropriate and timely.

Exemplar interventions:

- Literacy and Numeracy support
- Social Skills group (e.g. anger management)
- Specific Social skills for pupils with ASD.
- Behaviour for learning support groups
- Access to specialist support staff at any time during the college day.
- Speech, Language and Communication interventions
- Homework support
- 1:1 support and mentoring
- Specialist support for pupils with English as an Additional Language.
- Counselling

The onsite Specialist Provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition provides up to 8 places for those identified as having more significant Social Communication difficulties and/or a diagnosis of ASD. Decisions on placement into the specialist provision are made by a multi-professional team at the Plymouth City Council, in consultation with the college.

pupils within the ASD specialist provision access mainstream lessons when it is appropriate for each individual pupil and the facility is one part of the whole college provision for pupils with additional needs. It is an expectation that all pupils follow the same rules of dress, conduct and behaviour in and out of the classroom, with the additional resources being made available to pupils as required. Reasonable adjustments are made within this context.

Stoke Damerel Community College also has an Onsite Alternative Provision. Pupils identified in the TAC process may be assigned to a package for bespoke, targeted support. Here, small cohorts of selected pupils work with highly skilled practitioners to support re-engagement into education. Pupils remain very much part of the College and have daily interactions with the pastoral and inclusion staff.

## **7. Specialist Interventions**

Stoke Damerel Community College works in partnership with a range of external agencies and will support the planning and delivery of specialist interventions. This might include mentoring, specialist speech and language therapy sessions focused on speech sounds or access to specialist mental health support.

Where appropriate, teachers are made aware of the focus of any intervention so that they can support pupils to generalise the skills learnt back to the classroom.

Interventions are reviewed at least every half-term to check the impact against the intended outcome. Where the intervention is not having impact as expected, changes will be made to the intervention.

## **8. Partnership working and pupils' access to external (inc. specialist) agencies**

Stoke Damerel Community College is committed to working in partnership with all external agencies. Referrals will be made to specialist agencies when it is clear that additional advice from experts in other fields would be beneficial to inform the support that is in place in college. Our focus when seeking specialist advice is to build opportunities to tailor the pupils' support so that they are then able to access as much of the curriculum as possible alongside their peers.

Referrals will only be organised after the college has consulted with parents about the need to get additional support. Professionals can come into college to meet with pupils to assess their particular needs, providing specific advice and resources to help remove barriers to learning, which would be incorporated within the pen portrait.

Agencies that Stoke Damerel Community College work with currently include:

- Plymouth Advisory Team for Sensory Support (PATSS)
- Psychology Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Child Development Centre (CDC)
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Counsellors
- Communication Interaction Team
- Careers South West
- Youth Offending Team
- School Nursing service
- Youth Service
- Inclusion Workers

## **9. Adaptations to the learning environment**

Stoke Damerel Community College has a sensory space, located in the Support Base. The space is timetabled for the delivery of interventions, recommended by the Occupational Therapist, for particular pupils but can be made available to pupils who require regulation time.

Support Base access passes are issued to pupils who require a movement break or emotional regulation during lesson time.

## **10. Adapted curriculum pathways**

Pupils are identified for the adapted pathway if they have an Education Health Care Plan and assessments indicate that they would benefit from the curriculum.

Adapted pathways can include a reduction of subjects studied, or use of alternative providers.

## **11. Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress**

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENDCO to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs.

This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data
- The views and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external support services, if relevant
- The assessment will be reviewed regularly.

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

## **12. Consulting and involving pupils and parents**

All parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to attend and participate in all activities for parents and families. In addition to the activities aimed at all parents SEND coffee mornings occur termly. These coffee mornings are an opportunity to ask any questions, and provide parental access to external professionals for support and guidance.

## **13a. Supporting pupils moving between phases / transition**

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this.

If your child is moving to another school or college we will:

- Contact the school SENDCo for information sharing and transition planning.
- Organise enhanced transition and pre-visits as needed

## **13b. Preparation for adulthood**

Pupils with special educational needs receive enhanced careers support. Visits to post-16 colleges as well as access to careers events will be arranged to support pupils with SEND to make informed choices.

## **14. Training for staff**

Our SENCO is an experienced teacher who has completed her NPQSENCO qualification. The college prioritises time for the SENCO to be able to work alongside other staff in the college to build expertise in the classroom, for example, through coaching so that all teachers build their confidence and competence. There is also a team of TAs who receive regular training with a particular focus on verbal scaffolding and adult-child interactions.

Some staff also receive additional training in a particular specialism, such as teaching assistants who are trained as Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and the College has a specialist ASD Lead Practitioner to support children in 1:1 sessions as well as small group interventions.

Our staff also receive support from the Education Psychology Service, Communication Interaction Team and Plymouth Advisory Team for Sensory Support (PATSS).

#### **15. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision**

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after every cycle
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENDCO/Deputy SENDCo
- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Annual audit completed by Greenshaw Learning Trust
- Participating in Plymouth Local Authorities quality assurance / review process
- Appointing governors, Jane Cole and Sandra Trathen, to regular monitor and report on SEND provision

#### **16. Enabling pupils with SEN to engage in activities available to those in the college who do not have SEN**

All of our extra-curricular activities and visits are available to all our pupils, including our before-and after-school clubs. All are encouraged to go on all of our residential trips and to take part in all aspects of college life including sports day, the college production, the Duke of Edinburgh award and all other events. No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability. We monitor and track which pupils are accessing the enrichment offer to ensure that we identify and remove any barriers to participation.

#### **17. Support for improving emotional and social development**

We provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils with SEND are encouraged to be part of the college council
- Pupils with SEND are also encouraged to take part in the character curriculum to promote teamwork/building friendships etc.
- We have a zero tolerance approach to bullying and this message is shared throughout the college through PHSE and is ingrained into the college ethos.

#### **18. Pupils with disabilities**

Stoke Damerel Community College is committed to its inclusive nature and when a pupil wishes to join who has a disability the admission process will be led by the SENDCO. Pre-admission information gathering will enable an effective admission planning meeting, which will involve all stakeholders. Accessibility to the college is supported by:

- Access parking spaces provided.
- Lift available to promote independence

- Risk assessments in place for all pupils with medical conditions and disabilities

Any specialist equipment required will be bid for through the additional funding application process. We have a graduated approach to all that we do. Specialist equipment and facilities are secured after cycles of assess, plan, do, review which show no progress has been made at a universal or targeted level.

#### **19. Complaints about SEN provision**

Complaints about SEND provision in our college should be made to the SENDCO in the first instance. They will then be referred to the college's complaints policy.

The parents of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our college has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

#### **20. Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN**

0-25 SEND Statutory Assessment Team 01752 307409

Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND 01752 258933

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service 01752 435125

Child Development Centre and ASD Pathway Coordinator 01752 439400

Children's Speech and Language Service 01752 434844

Communication Interaction Team (CIT) 01752 305252

PD (Physical Disabilities) Outreach 01752 300108

Plymouth Advisory Team for Sensory Support 01752 305252