



## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY INFORMATION REPORT

<b>SCHOOL NAME:</b>	Castle School, Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust
<b>TYPE OF SCHOOL:</b>	<p>Castle School, situated in Ashington, Northumberland, is a day community Special School that serves children and young people ranging from 2 to 19 years old. Currently, our school accommodates 134 children and young individuals, all of whom possess an Education Health and Care Plan.</p> <p>Our institution specialises in providing tailored education and support for children and young people with diverse and complex needs. This includes those with severe or profound learning difficulties, multiple learning disabilities, multi-sensory impairments, and individuals on the autistic spectrum.</p> <p>Castle School's admissions process is overseen by the Northumberland County Council, serving as the Admissions Authority. Parents and caregivers seeking a placement for their child should reach out to the SEN Section at County Hall in Morpeth.</p> <p>We warmly invite parents and caregivers to get in touch with our school directly. This will afford them the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions about their child and the range of services and support available, facilitated by a member of our School Leadership Team. For those interested, arrangements can be made for visits to our school premises.</p>
<b>ACCESSIBILITY:</b>	<p>Castle School is committed to upholding the rights of all its students, ensuring equal access and opportunities regardless of age, cultural background, religious beliefs, gender, abilities, disabilities, or sexual orientation. Our school actively fosters a culture of respect for every individual.</p> <p>In line with our dedication to meeting the evolving needs of our student community, Castle School has undertaken a comprehensive initiative to enhance and expand its facilities. Notably, our most recent efforts have focused on modernising our Sixth Form provision.</p> <p>Our campus enhancements include the installation of wheelchair-friendly playground surfaces and ramps, the reinforcement of security measures through improved fencing, and enhancements to the accessibility of outdoor sensory swings. Additionally, Castle School is equipped with two minibuses, one of which is fitted with a tail lift for the convenience of our students.</p> <p>For more detailed information, we encourage you to explore our School Accessibility Plan and Equalities Policy and Objectives, which are accessible on our school's website.</p>
<b>CORE OFFER:</b>	<p>We are fully committed to inclusivity at Castle School.</p> <p>At Castle School, each child receives a tailored and aspirational curriculum that takes into account their unique strengths, needs, and desired outcomes. This approach aligns with the SEND Code of Practice (5.33), which emphasises that special education provisions should be based on a thorough understanding of each child's specific strengths and needs. We offer a core curriculum tailored to individualised pathways, determined through detailed profiling in areas such as communication, access technology, physical development, social and emotional well-being, and engagement support (covering attention, concentration, postural management, and sensory skills), as well as functional skills. Our curriculum comprises five elements: Early Years Foundation Stage, Engagement, National Curriculum, Qualification-led, and a PHSEE-based extension of the engagement curriculum. The choice of curriculum depends on factors like a pupil's age, cognitive ability, social communication, and emotional regulation needs.</p> <p>Castle School provides an array of qualifications and accreditations, including Entry Level Certificates, Functional Skills (English, Maths, and ICT), ASDAN qualifications (Bronze and Silver Awards), AQA Unit Award Scheme, and Ascentis English and Maths Qualifications.</p> <p>We maintain close oversight of pupil progress, with results communicated to parents/carers through summative Annual Pupil Reports and during Annual Review meetings. Annual Pupil Reports, issued in the summer term, offer a comprehensive overview of a child's progress and experiences across all subject areas.</p> <p>Parents/carers are invited to engage with subject teachers at Parent's evenings for further discussion. All pupils also undergo an Annual Review of their EHCP, held throughout the school year, where progress and targets for the upcoming year are discussed by</p>

parents/carers, pupils (if deemed appropriate), teachers, and other professionals. The attainment, progress, and achievement of pupils are continually assessed through formative and summative assessments using relevant systems like Cherry Garden, MAPP, iASEND, and Qualification Tracker.

Our school premises have undergone significant expansion and updates to accommodate the diverse needs of our students and the substantial growth in student numbers. Castle School is proud to have a large, well-qualified, and talented team of teaching and support staff who collaborate to provide a personalised and high-quality learning experience for every child. Additionally, we receive strong support from a team of visiting professionals, including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists.

Class sizes at our school vary from 6 to 14 pupils, and each class group is supported by 1 to 4 Teaching Assistants. This ensures that students receive an appropriate balance of whole-class, small-group, and individualised instruction. All teaching is highly personalised within each class, ensuring that all pupils can access and benefit from learning opportunities that maximise their achievements and success. Initial identification of your child's needs is carried out through their EHCP.

We conduct annual reviews of EHCP and long-term targets, involving parents/carers and other relevant agencies. Short-term targets are collaboratively identified to support the child's ongoing progress and are documented in the child's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which is closely monitored. Castle School offers a wide range of interventions to help every child overcome learning barriers in all areas of need, including Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Social Emotional and Mental Health, and Sensory and Physical development.

<b>POLICIES:</b>	Are the school policies available on the website for:	SEN	<b>YES</b>
		SAFEGUARDING	<b>YES</b>
		BEHAVIOUR	<b>YES</b>
		EQUALITY & DIVERSITY	<b>YES</b>
		<b>Additional policies also available on the website</b>	
	Are you aware/familiar with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010?	<b>YES</b>	

**RANGE OF PROVISION:** Please indicate what your school has to offer (over and above your core offer) in each of the following areas:

At our school, we firmly believe in the inherent rights of all children and young individuals. They have the right to enjoy good health, happiness, and safety, to be cherished and treated with respect, and to aspire to lofty goals for their future. We are dedicated to ensuring that every one of our students not only thrives but also relishes their time with us, cultivating positive and enriching learning experiences.

A significant focus is placed on nurturing independence and social skills among our students, providing ample opportunities for them to partake in a variety of experiences rooted in the realms of Spirituality, Morality, Society, and Culture.

Our school is proud to employ a dedicated team of specialist teachers and support staff. Our teaching staff possess qualified teacher status and often hold additional professional qualifications. We boast a team of 12 Teachers and 52 Teaching Assistants (TAs), which includes 5 Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs). We are also fortunate to have a Jigsaw Occupational Therapist, NHS Speech and Language Therapist support, Forest School practitioner, as well as staff trained in Rebound Therapy and Hydrotherapy.

Complementing our teaching staff, we maintain a proficient administrative team consisting of an Office Manager and three administrative staff members. All new staff members follow our school's comprehensive induction program, ensuring they acclimate effectively to our environment.

Our commitment to professional growth and development is unwavering. Staff members receive thorough and ongoing training to meet the diverse needs of our students, as evidenced by our extensive and focused Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program. Safeguarding training is mandatory to ensure the welfare of all pupils.

We dedicate five annual training days (or their equivalent) to further enhance staff awareness, knowledge, and expertise while fostering collaborative efforts toward whole-school improvement. Our staff undergo annual Appraisal/Performance Development meetings, which identify strengths, talents, targets, and training requirements. Interim meetings are held to discuss progress.

Our curriculum is designed based on several pillars, including the Early Years Framework, the subjects outlined in the National Curriculum, and a diverse Sixth Form Curriculum encompassing Functional Skills, Life Skills, and externally accredited units of work. Every child is presented with a comprehensive and balanced curriculum tailored to their age and developmental stage. We take pride in providing each child with a personalised curriculum that is carefully differentiated to address their specific needs and abilities.

Our commitment to safety and support is further exemplified through our in-house moving and handling trainers and teaching assistants who possess additional qualifications in the field of Speech and Language Therapy.

Our commitment to providing specialised facilities and equipment to support our students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is unwavering. We continuously assess and enhance our resources to ensure they align with the evolving needs of our pupils.

In our classrooms, we have integrated high-quality ICT facilities, including interactive whiteboards, projectors, personal computers (PCs), laptops, iPads, and specialised equipment designed to assist visually impaired students in their learning journey.

Our school's extensive grounds play a pivotal role in enriching the curriculum. We boast spacious, accessible play areas, including an Early Years soft play area, a sensory garden, a sports field, and a dedicated horticulture teaching area.

To cater to the diverse needs of our students, we offer specialised areas, such as the Sensory Room, Calming Room, Swing Room, Hydrotherapy, Rebound Therapy, and a Library. These spaces are carefully designed and equipped to promote a supportive learning environment.

In addition, we provide a range of specialised equipment, including hoists, seating arrangements, cutlery, and communication aids, to ensure that every pupil can access the support they require.

Our commitment to integrating our students into the wider community is evident through their regular participation in activities such as swimming, work experience programs for Key Stage 4/5 pupils, physical education-based activities at local Leisure Centers, and attendance at careers fairs and vocational industry visits. We also provide essential facilities such as disabled toilets and shower facilities for the convenience of our students.

Our approach to supporting our students' learning encompasses a variety of specialised methods and programs, including:

Tacpac®: a program that combines touch and music to promote communication, social interaction, sensory development, and emotional growth.

SCERTS (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Transactional Support)

PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)

Total Communication

Occupational Therapy equipment for sensory integration, handwriting development, and personal independence.

To ensure that every child can overcome barriers to their learning, we offer a comprehensive range of interventions.

	<p>We have a team of professionals from various agencies who collaborate with our school to support the health and education of our students. These dedicated individuals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech and Language Therapists</li> <li>Physiotherapists</li> <li>Special School Nurse</li> <li>Specialist Teachers for Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired pupils</li> </ul> <p>We also maintain strong connections with other health-related agencies, fostering partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CYPS (Children and Young People's Service)</li> <li>Diabetes Nurse</li> <li>Epilepsy Nurse</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, we host a variety of clinics within the school premises for the convenience of our pupils and their families. These clinics encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wheelchair clinics</li> <li>School Dental Service</li> <li>Medical appointments conducted by Pediatricians and other medical consultants</li> </ul> <p>Our commitment to providing a well-rounded educational experience is further enriched by a diverse group of professionals who work within the school community. These professionals encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musicians</li> <li>Music Therapists</li> <li>Artists</li> <li>Sports Coaches</li> <li>Enterprise and vocational support workers</li> </ul> <p>Our on-site school nurses are readily available to provide medical support as needed.</p>
<p><b>INCLUSION:</b></p>	<p>At our school, inclusivity is at the heart of our approach to education. We ensure that all children have equal access to a wide range of activities and trips, making appropriate adaptations when necessary.</p> <p>For children with intimate care needs, we conduct careful assessments and create Intimate Care Plans, addressing dietary and toileting support. These plans are collaborative efforts involving school personnel, health professionals, class teachers, and parents. Regular monitoring and reviews are conducted, and you can find comprehensive information about this in our Intimate Care policy.</p> <p>Upon entry to our school, pupils with mobility difficulties undergo assessments, leading to the development of Moving and Handling plans, which are shared accordingly. We place significant emphasis on staff training in safer handling techniques, with periodic refresher courses and updates to maintain current skills. Additional details on this can be found in our School Accessibility Plan.</p> <p>To ensure the well-being of our students, we require notification of all regular medications. Medications intended for administration during school hours should be clearly labeled and in their original packaging, submitted to the school office, via the bus escort, or the person bringing the child to school. Consent forms are required, and we request parents to promptly inform us of any medication changes. Health Care Plans are established for all medicated children and undergo annual or more frequent reviews as necessary. Our policies and procedures regarding this can be found in the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy on our school website.</p> <p>To maintain a healthy and hygienic environment, we ask parents not to send their child to school when they are unwell, especially for 48 hours after experiencing sickness or diarrhea. Additional information is available in our policy on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions on our school website.</p> <p>Emotional well-being is a top priority at Castle School. We provide students with additional emotional support through various avenues including staff trained in Mental Health First Aid.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, we offer a range of interventions to support Social Emotional and Mental Health and Well-being, including Music Therapy.</p> <p>Our staff members are well-prepared to handle emergencies, as they receive training in emergency first aid. Additionally, we have staff members trained in pediatric first aid, epilepsy seizure management, diabetes management, and Managing Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA).</p> <p>What proportion of children currently at Castle School have an SEND?</p> <p><b>100%</b></p>
<p><b>PARENT SUPPORT INVOLVEMENT/LIAISON:</b></p>	<p>At our school, we consider it paramount to establish and maintain a strong partnership with parents throughout a child's educational journey. Our commitment to collaboration with parents and caregivers begins before their child even starts at Castle School.</p> <p>Parents and caregivers are actively encouraged to take an integral role in their child's education. They are invited to join us for the annual review of the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where we discuss their child's progress and individualised goals.</p> <p>Throughout the school year, we facilitate open and ongoing communication between school staff and parents or caregivers. This communication occurs through various channels, including the Home-school diary, telephone conversations, and additional meetings as requested.</p> <p>To further involve parents in the school community, we extend invitations for their participation in various events, such as coffee mornings, Christmas performances, social gatherings, class assemblies, and sports activities.</p> <p>Our dedicated Parent/Carer Group actively supports the school's endeavors and convenes regularly to contribute to our shared mission. Additional information about this group can be obtained from the school office or our website.</p> <p>We uphold an open-door policy for all parents, providing accessibility for discussions and inquiries. Planned transition events are organised to ensure smooth transitions for students. Annual Review Education Health Care Plan meetings offer an opportunity for detailed discussions about each child's progress and needs.</p> <p>To facilitate consistent communication about student progress, we employ tools like the Home School Diary and regular telephone contact. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are shared with parents on a termly basis, accompanied by parent consultations.</p> <p>In addition, we host regular Coffee Mornings and Enterprise Days to foster connections and provide opportunities for parents to engage in their child's educational experience. Moreover, parents of all our students can utilise "Evidence for Learning," an online learning journal, to track and contribute to their child's educational journey.</p> <p>How will school prepare children with SEND to join their next setting/college/stage of education or life?</p> <p>Our commitment to providing a dynamic range of qualifications and accreditations is ever-evolving, ensuring that our courses consistently offer an appropriate level of challenge. We actively collaborate with mainstream secondary schools within our trust to enhance our educational offerings.</p> <p>We prioritise preparing all our pupils for the next phase of their education and life journey, focusing on the development of their social interaction skills, independence, and travel skills.</p> <p>To facilitate this transition, we have meticulously designed and structured transition programs. These programs are tailor-made to meet the individual needs of our pupils and may encompass visits to their current schools or placements, as well as thoughtfully planned induction activities to introduce them to Castle School.</p> <p>Within our sixth form curriculum, students receive preparation for their upcoming educational endeavors. This includes fostering independence in essential home skills and,</p>

	<p>where applicable, providing guidance on independent travel and work experience opportunities.</p> <p>Recent graduates from Castle School have successfully transitioned to various destinations, including Tyne Met College, Newcastle College, Dilston College, Buzz, Brightside, and Northumberland College (both Kirkley Hall and Ashington sites). The transition planning process from Castle School to future placements is a pivotal component of our Key Stage 4/5 curriculum, formally integrated through our Annual Review system.</p> <p>Students who are approaching their departure from school are offered the chance to explore colleges and providers and participate in taster days to ensure well-informed decisions about their future. Our staff collaborates closely with parents, caregivers, and colleagues in post-16 provision to support this process.</p> <p>Our overarching goal is to facilitate the smooth and successful transition of every student to their chosen post-school placement. To further assist our students, all pupils in Key Stage 4/5 receive comprehensive Careers Education, Information, and Guidance interviews conducted by Northumberland Careers and Guidance Service.</p>
<b>COMPLETED BY: (Name and position)</b>	Patrick Ford-Hutchinson – Headteacher
<b>DATE COMPLETED:</b>	September 2023
<b>REVIEW DUE:</b>	September 2024