

Welcome to Penrice Academy

SEND Transition Information



SEND Support

At Penrice we welcome everyone into our community and recognise that families need to feel involved and listened to with regards to additional support to make learning more accessible. As a school, we endeavour to make available inclusive provision to ensure that all young people, including those students identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), can enjoy and benefit from a rich educational experience.

Everyone should have access to an ambitious curriculum, so they may realise their full potential whilst at the school. We actively encourage our students to immerse themselves fully in the wider enrichment opportunities afforded by the school, allowing them to flourish, developing independence and life skills outside of the classroom environment.

The transition to secondary school is an anxious time, however we pride ourselves on our relationship with our primary schools to ensure a smooth and timely transition is in place. For those students that require additional support a detailed discussion with our Operational SENDCo will take place with key staff at the primary school, informing us of the best provision for your child and share key information to ensure success continues. A pen portrait of students on the Record of Need is created and will be disseminated to key staff, in addition to being allocated a 'Key Worker'. We welcome collaboration with parents and carers to ensure the provision is bespoke and targeted for every child, removing barriers to learning, enabling your child to make progress, develop their character and be successful.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan our SENDCo and Operational SENDCo will be part of the annual review process whilst your child is in Year 6 to ensure provision is considered and shared. We establish on-going positive relationships with our parents and welcome 1:1 discussions with families to answer any queries or concerns. Please contact Mrs Macdonald or Mrs Gurd should you have any questions; amacdonald@penrice.co.uk cgurd@penrice.org.uk.

The SEND Team

The SEND Team includes Autism Champions, Literacy and Dyslexia Support Specialists, SEND teachers and several SEND Teaching Assistants. Members of our well-established team supporting students across the school and we are based in the Art Block.

Meet some of the Team:



Mrs Gurd: Assistant Principal and SENDCo. Mrs Gurd is a teacher of Drama and English at the Academy and is the Inclusion Lead. She is an advocate for children and young people with SEND and endeavours to support your child during their time at the Academy. Mrs Gurd focuses on the accessibility of the curriculum, adaptive teaching methods and teaching and learning strategies to best support your child based on their need.



Mrs Macdonald: Operational SENDCo. Mrs Macdonald has worked in the SEND team since 2006 and has a wide knowledge and experience of working with young people who have additional needs. Mrs Macdonald works closely with the Head of Year 7 to ensure that transition arrangements for young people with SEND are carefully considered, with additional transition days organised to ensure familiarisation and support the transition process.



Mrs Davey: Assistant to the SENDCo. Mrs Davey assists Mrs Macdonald and the team. She joined Penrice in 2018 and has 20 years of experience in administration. Mrs Davey coordinates the EHCP process, teacher requests (for trip/activity cover), and SEND referrals amongst a myriad of other things!



Mr Smith: Assistant SENDCo. Mr Smith has 22 years SEN experience working in special schools. His current role is to support the SENDCo and Operational SENDCo to ensure effective use of resources and identify SEND School Improvement needs. Mr Smith has a small caseload of students with significant cognitive impairment and supports our bespoke curriculum learners.



Mr Carter: Specialist SEN Teacher. Mr Carter has lots of experience teaching students with additional needs at Penrice Academy. Mr Carter delivers our Reading Recovery programme to targeted groups in Years 7 and 8 and he also works closely with our literacy team and is the Academy's assessor for exam access arrangements.



Mrs Hunter-Craig: Specialist SEN Teacher. Mrs Hunter-Craig works within the SEND department and teaches literacy, humanities, CLASS and bespoke courses as part of a KS4 provision. She is also our Reading and Communication Lead, focusing on improving reading. Mrs Hunter-Craig also supports our English as an Additional Language (EAL) students at the Academy.



Mrs Westwood: Specialist SEN Maths Teacher. Mrs Westwood has a wealth of experience and was a former head of a primary and SEND school. She works within our RS3 provision and delivers Reading Recovery. Mrs Westwood also works with small bespoke groups of learners as well as individuals and is also 'Dyscalculic' trained.

SEN Specialists

Students at Penrice Academy who are on the RoN and are identified as requiring additional support have a named Key Worker. This member of staff is a key contact for families as well as the student during their time at the Academy.

Literacy Specialists

Some students arrive from Primary Schools with an existing diagnosis of Dyslexia or an associated literacy difficulty. We use the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) to assess your child's current reading level and comprehension skills, including phonics within the first few weeks of starting Year 7. The test is made up of two parts: sentence completion (which measures decoding with some element of comprehension); and passage comprehension (which measures a range of comprehension skills of increasing difficulty). Following the screening, a reading age will be calculated and shared with you, with further recommendations for intervention if required.

This testing informs SEN staff who will share specific issues with teachers via the child's 'SEND Support Plan' (SSP). The profile provides practical, adaptive teaching and learning strategies for your child's teachers, in order to best their needs within the classroom.

Autism Champions

Our Autism champions value each child as an individual and tailor support around specific individual needs. As a team we offer one to one individualised support through the option process, securing work experience, exam support (where needed) and transition through to further

education and/or apprenticeships. We also offer specifically targeted interventions aiming to improve practical, social and communication skills, organisation and emotional wellbeing. We work closely with Katy Frampton from the County Autism Team and hold Parent Café events throughout the year where you can come in and speak to the team.

We Are Here To Help

The nature and extent of support we offer is dependent upon the young person's needs and provision will be linked to their setting. We consult with parents/carers of young people with additional needs to ensure that interventions and support are purposeful and monitored carefully throughout their Penrice experience.

Within the school we have several highly specialised provision centres and interventions including;

- A Bespoke Curriculum for students as recommended by the SENDCo - you will receive notification if your child is part of this group on entry to Year 7
- We currently have a Bespoke Curriculum provision in Key Stage 4. The Bespoke Curriculum is designed for students working at Entry Level 2 and 3. It provides an introduction to a range of vocational sectors including Animal Care, Food and Nutrition and extra support through small group work and team teaching in academic subjects. As well as vocational provision we offer two additional certificated qualifications design to support our Bespoke learners

Entry into Vocational studies: This qualification provides an engaging and relevant introduction to vocational learning, allowing students to choose units across different vocational sectors. Students will study 1 mandatory unit that helps identify their learning goals and shape their progression (self assessment and career progression). It also supports development of communication skills such as extended writing and drafting, critical skills of analysis, team-working, working from a prescribed brief embedded in a life skill environment

Step Up to English: This helps Entry level students build basic and relevant literacy skills and is specifically designed to be co-teachable with GCSE English Language

- Small class opportunities with specialist teachers, to nurture development and knowledge
- Lunch Club: This is located in the Art Exhibition space and is staffed by the SEND team. This provision gives students the opportunity to share a game, eat their packed lunch with friends, support with social interactions and mediate where necessary with a member of staff. Outside, students can use our Sensory Gym equipment, a safe area to enjoy some outside play, this is also overseen by a member of the SEND Team during break-times
- The canteen has a table for those students who wish to enjoy a cooked meal, SEND staff are available to support with carrying trays, food choices and encouraging peer relationships
- We have a Ready to Learn Breakfast Club provision. This provision is a fantastic opportunity for your child to access a safe and nurturing environment before the start of the school day, ensuring they are ready to learn, accessing help with organisational skills, with an opportunity to complete homework, as well as checking they have the necessary equipment or reassuring students who may be anxious about the day ahead.

- Some students will have a pass that allows them to leave Period 1 and Period 3 five minutes early; this is to avoid crowded social times, and perhaps to get to the canteen earlier than the rush as this can often create unnecessary anxieties
- Homework club and support after school – Our homework club can be accessed every Monday-Thursday and is supported by members of our team
- Social development programmes delivered by our Autism specialists. Social and Life Skills - for some students provision is made for after-school interventions designed to develop life and social skills. These are run by SEN Support Specialists; for others where the need is both academic and social, there may be curriculum content delivered in small group settings
- Interventions for students identified with dyslexic characteristics delivered by our dyslexia champions, including screening tests
- Application for exam access arrangements where appropriate – At Penrice Academy we use the Lucid Exact screening to inform us of any support that needs to be put in place for your child. This screening test provides us with enough information to apply for exam access arrangements, should it be necessary.
- Literacy Skills Support Club: Specialist support for students identified with dyslexic/literacy needs - Informal and fun sessions after school for 45 minutes to improve a range of literacy skills. E.g. spelling tips, organisation skills, mind-mapping
- Additional exam preparation and revision support
- Additional Post-16 guidance and support: Key Workers assist Form Tutors to differentiate and provide activities that support Post-16 transition, from supporting with taught sessions, to individual research, visits and applications. We liaise closely with Post-16 providers (mainly colleges) to ensure they are fully aware of potential applicants and their needs. This is provided right through the process from researching options, to starting at the new provider in the months after leaving Penrice.
- 1:1 interventions as and where necessary and support with organisation.
- Socially Thinking, a targeted intervention to promote social interaction and thinking
- Social Skills, a targeted intervention to foster social skills
- 1:1 support sessions for students experiencing well-being or emotional difficulties.
- Parent drop-in sessions to discuss concerns/progress
- Dyscalculia Support: We are fortunate to have a highly skilled SEN teacher of Maths who is also Dyscalculic trained. Support is offered in small groups or on a one to one basis
- Support with Duke of Edinburgh Award (DoE) or Penrice+ activities: Students in Yr. 9 and 10 are able to enrol on the Duke Of Edinburgh Bronze Award scheme. Where students need additional support to access this opportunity it is provided by the SEN team. For some that is support to organise their records, for others it is more support to learn the basic map reading skills.

- A named Key Worker for every student identified as requiring additional support - this member of staff is a key contact for families as well as the student.

EAL Support (English as an Additional Language)

Support is provided to help students at Penrice whose first language is not English. Mrs Hunter Craig works with classroom teachers to help develop English language skills, and learning strategies, as well as providing translated resources and access to translators for meetings and interventions. After school on a Tuesday and Thursday we run specific EAL interventions that target specific areas of work to support your child with their studies.

General SEND Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What should I do if I am concerned about my child in relation to their SEN?

A: Contact your child's Key Worker via email or alternatively you may wish to email Mrs Macdonald (Operational SENDCo) amacdonald@penrice.org.uk or Mrs Gurd (Assistant Principal and SENDCo) cgurd@penrice.org.uk

Q: My child needs 1:1 support, does Penrice offer this?

A: Penrice strives to ensure that students develop independence and resilient learning skills, all students who require additional support will have a named Key Worker and support is offered in the form of small group interventions and strategies are developed so the student can access all aspects of the curriculum with confidence and independence. Where a child has an EHCP the support is discussed with the primary school and families as outlined in their individual plan.

Q: My child struggles with crowds, how do you support with this?

A: Penrice offer a '5 minute' lunch pass, this enables students to leave the end of a lesson 5 minutes before the rest to allow them to reach their next lesson, to the canteen queue or social area outside of the crowds.

We also have a 'Lunch Club'; this is located in the Art Exhibition Space and is staffed by the SEND team. Giving students the opportunity to share a game, eat their packed lunch with friends, support with social interactions and mediate where necessary with a member of staff. Outside we have our Sensory Gym equipment, a safe area to enjoy some outside play; this is also overseen by a member of the SEND Team.

The canteen has a table for those students who wish to enjoy a cooked meal, SEND staff are available to support with carrying trays, food choices and encouraging relationships.

Q: My child has Dyslexia, how does Penrice support with their learning?

A: We have a Literacy Specialist Team, all of whom specialise in Specific Literacy Difficulties. As a team they facilitate interventions to improve the gap of those students who have a literacy deficit, dyslexia clubs, reading interventions and spelling workshops. For those students on the Record of Need they will be assigned as a Key Worker, to liaise with home and school staff and advocate should a problem arise.

Every teacher at Penrice is a teacher of SEND, classroom fonts are dyslexic friendly and where extra time is required this will be considered in the classroom to ensure your child practises their usual way of working.

Exam Dispensation – Mr Carter will screen in Year 9 and following JCQ guidelines, dispensation is may be offered for the exam period.

Frequently Asked Questions: Autism

Q: Does my child need to have an official diagnosis to receive support?

A: No. As every child's needs can vary considerably, (and a diagnosis is often a very lengthy process) each student will be supported through their individual challenges as they arise.

Q: Will my child receive additional support if we have an official diagnosis?

A: No. As our support is tailored to each child's specific needs, this is unlikely to change with a diagnosis.

Q: We do not have an EHCP, however my child currently receives one to one support in primary. Will this continue at Penrice?

A: We do liaise extensively with your child's Primary school prior to transition, ensuring that we have a comprehensive picture of where support is most needed. We also encourage an additional meeting with parents prior to transition to ensure we have the clearest picture in order to develop the most effective support package for your child. We want to promote independence during your child's time at the school and support is offered to small groups of learners within mainstream classrooms as well as through the bespoke curriculum provision if your child is supported by this.

Q: Will my child receive additional support during exams?

A: As your child progresses through Penrice Academy they will be automatically assessed for exam dispensation. Each child is individually considered and where a need is identified, support can range from; a prompt, reader or scribe, or your child may qualify for extra time and if needed an alternative venue. These support options will be discussed fully from Year 9 onwards.

Frequently Asked Questions: Literacy

Q: What support will my child get in lessons? Will my child have a Teaching Assistant in every lesson?

A: Where teaching staff and SEND staff have identified a need with your child they will be supported in lesson where necessary by an additional member of staff.

Q: How do I get my child to read?

A: We would encourage your child to read anything that they enjoy reading (comics, recipe books, subtitles on their favourite film, online articles, writing and reading a shopping list). We would also encourage you as parents to still read with your child and ask questions about what they have read (or vice versa.) You could suggest they read to younger siblings or grandparents. Most importantly make it fun!

Q: Do I need to get a private Dyslexia diagnosis?

A: At Penrice we use NGRT and Lucid Exact screening to inform us of any support that needs to be put in place to support your child. This screening provides us with enough information to apply for exam dispensation, should it be necessary. A private diagnosis is therefore not required.

Q: Who do I contact if I have any concerns or queries?

A: You will be notified of a named member of staff who you will be able to contact. In most cases this will be your child's designated Key Worker.

Q: Who should my child contact if they have any concerns or queries?

A: We would encourage students and their parents to have regular communication with their named member of staff. This can be face to face or via email.

Q: I'm worried about my child at break and lunchtime. How will they be supported?

A: During break times, Lunch Club in the Art Exhibition Space offers a small supportive environment for KS3 students which is supervised by SEND staff. We offer games and the students have access to our outdoor gym equipment.

We as staff are there to support in times of need, we also love to hear about a student's successes in and out of school. Our aim is to provide a positive and supportive point of contact throughout your child's time at Penrice.