



Priory School

SEND Information Report

May 2024

This report is based on [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities 2015 DfE, page 106 6.79

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Introduction - Kinds of SEND provided

Priory School is a special school for students with complex learning difficulties – also known as Complex Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD). This includes, but is not exclusive to, those whose first barrier to learning and needs may be described as Cognition and Learning, including moderate autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), a track record of achieving progress at a slower rate than their peers, dyspraxia, global developmental delay, and a range of many other conditions.

The school takes students from year 1 (age 5) through to year 13 (age 18). Currently there are 215 places which includes 25 Sixth Form places.

Additionally, Priory School has boarding facilities with 23 beds, Monday to Thursday evening. 40+ students access this boarding provision during the week and most stay for one or two nights.

Included in the above numbers are:

- 6 places at **Mount Road**, established in September 2016 on the Priory School site. This provision caters for students with autism and its primary aim is to achieve their successful return to mainstream schooling for their GCSE years. Admission to this provision is via the Local Authority.
- 10 places at Priory Aspire, Established January 2022. This part of Priory caters for students with co-occurring cognition and learning needs and SEMH needs.
- 11 places at Priory at Thurston, Established October 2022. This part of Priory caters for students needing Main Stream Unit placements.
- Angel Hill college, which is part of the 6th form provision at Priory. Angel Hill College currently provides education for a small group of year 11 students who just join Priory for year 11

SENDAT - Special Needs and Disabilities Academy Trust

SENDAT's purpose is to support and develop specialist provision both in the local area and more widely across the county. For more information visit <https://sendat.academy>

SENDAT supports the growth of other specialist provisions, including:

- Chalk Hill – Sudbury. Residential Pupil Referral unit for students in Key stages 2 and 3 <https://sendat.academy/chalkhill/>
- Duke of Lancaster – Opened January 2022, new special school in Fakenham for students with communication and interaction difficulties. <https://sendat.academy/dukeoflancaster>
- Priory School in Bury St Edmunds is a founder sponsor of SENDAT (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Academies Trust). Priory is a special school for students with complex MLD. It has 215 places from 5-18 (including sixth form) and 23 residential places. <https://sendat.academy/Priory/>
 - Mount Road is a specialist class for students with ASD and challenging behaviour. The class is based at Priory school.
 - Priory Aspire is additional space for students who have difficulty with groups and mixes of children. Usually with co-occurring MLD and SEMH. This unit opened in January 2022.



- Priory @ Thurston is a specialist class for Kay stage 3 students who need some intensive support before returning to mainstream or other specialist setting.
- Angel Hill College (AHC) for young people 16-18yrs with SEND.
<https://sendat.academy/angelhill/> The main purpose of AHC is to support the successful transition of its students into mainstream further education. For September 2023 all AHC students are based at the main Priory school site.
- Stone Lodge Academy in Ipswich has 181 students ages 5-16 with complex MLD.
<https://sendat.academy/stonelodge/>
- Sunrise Academy – joined SENDAT 1st April 2022. Sunrise is based in Lowestoft and works with students with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health needs.
<https://sendat.academy/sunrise/>
- Peile- Opened September 2021, working in partnership with Chantry Academy and the Active Learning Trust. Two classes for secondary age students at Chantry High School. For students who need some additional support but not a full special school place.
<https://sendat.academy/peile/>
- SENDAT Outreach providing support to mainstream schools. For further information please visit <https://sendat.academy/outreach/>



SENDAT provision supports students and families across Suffolk and Norfolk

For more information visit <https://sendat.academy>

Statement of Intent

- Our vision is to develop well-rounded individuals who can go forward into their adult lives prepared for the work environment and capable of being independent and productive citizens.
- We believe that high quality education is best achieved when the needs of each individual pupil – social, emotional, spiritual and educational – are considered to be paramount. Through focusing on pupils as individuals, we will aim to tailor challenging and enjoyable educational programmes to directly meet their needs and to truly personalise learning.
- We will work with each pupil, their parents / carers and other professionals to understand, and work to overcome, each pupil's particular barriers to learning, so they can achieve their full potential within a secure and caring environment.
- We will develop our capacity as a special academy school to enhance the range of experiences available to our pupils and offer them increasing opportunities for personal, social, intellectual and physical development through both our day and residential provision. Linked to this, we will continue to work with the wider community to ensure Priory School has central place within it.
- We believe that improving the quality of education will be an ongoing process which involves monitoring, reflection and evaluation, leading to enhancement of best practice. We embrace the use of new technology to provide new opportunities for learning and teaching.
- We intend to ensure that SENDAT will continue to play a significant role in promoting the development of special needs locally, regionally and nationally
- We promote politeness and mutual respect towards all members of our community and are fully committed to promoting disability equality.

Policies for young people with SEND and assessing their needs

Our policies are available for download from the Trust website <https://sendat.academy>. Links are available from the school website.

Consulting parents of children with SEND and involving them in their child's education

We recognise that most parents live too far away from school to bring their child to and from school. This can mean that parents can feel more disconnected from school. The Home-School diary is a key form of communication. This is further supported with:

- Newsletters are available from our Arbor parent portal and printed copies can be sent home on request
- Website <https://sendat.academy/priory/>
- Priory School Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Priory-School/1404918293071789
- Arbor parent portal and email is our main method of communication with all parents

All students and their families will receive a termly report on progress which contains information about effort and progress in all subjects as well as progress towards achievement as outlined in the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). This is followed up by a consultation evening with staff which also provides opportunities to meet with college provision, a range of services and other providers of support for children and families.

There are 4 formal points of consultation:

- Parent and Carer Consultation evenings - 3 times a year
- Annual review of Education Health Care (EHC) plan

We welcome consultation and discussion outside these times. Parents and carers are welcome to contact the school office. Staff may not be able to take phone calls immediately, but they will get back to you or you will be able to make an appointment to speak with staff.

School phone number: 01284 761934

Supporting parents and families

We understand that having a child with additional needs can often be challenging. We arrange sessions for parents to meet other parents in an informal manner. Sometimes these sessions have a presentation or discussion led by school or invited agencies and, at other times, there is a more open forum. The Family Support Team organise these sessions, usually once a term.

Arrangements for consulting young people with SEND and involving them in their education

Students are consulted and involved in their education through:

- The students are supported and encouraged to take an active part in their annual review meeting. Occasionally, it is not appropriate due to the nature of their needs.
- All students complete a one-page profile that supports their views at the review meeting.
- The School Council meets regularly and is represented by every class. The class representatives are voted annually and a School Council Leader is voted in by students following the establishment of the council.
- The School Council meet with the Catering Team manager. They discuss menu options and new ideas brought forward by the students.
- Older students have opportunities to make options about which courses to study and Moving into Adulthood plan is integral to the learning and part of the annual review.
- Activities during breaks are led by the Playleader Team and there are after school activities which students have the choice to take part in.
- There is also a Residential Council which meets regularly. All students accessing boarding take part in the feedback meetings and discussions on a regular basis.

Arrangements for assessing and reviewing student progress towards outcomes

Students are formally assessed three times a year and presented to families as a developmental report. The progress is discussed with parents and carers at consultation evenings and annual reviews based on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Class teachers, subject teachers and Key Stage leads all monitor the progress of students. If they are concerned about progress, they will discuss this with other members of staff and interventions will be agreed.

Individual Learning Plans (ILP) set small steps of aspirational progress termly for students. These are reviewed regularly and discussed at the Annual Review meeting and parents and carers are able to contribute ideas and targets to this document. The targets are described for the year, but are flexible to respond in any changes in progress or circumstances. These can be discussed at consultation evenings or by appointment.

Arrangements for supporting transition between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood

As young people prepare for adulthood, outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society.

We understand that students moving class, key stage or to other provision can feel anxious and are apprehensive about changes. For all new students to the school, we offer transition arrangements that include our staff visiting new students in their present school, visits to Priory School with parents and often with staff from the school and also taster sessions. *In exceptional circumstances, like the recent pandemic, we may not be able to accommodate visits to other provisions or on-site visits but have added a range of videos to the school website to help support developing an awareness of the school environment.*

Students moving between key stages experience a transition package including taster lessons with new teachers and tours of the learning areas. The last week of the summer term is our Transition Week when all students move to their new classes in preparation for September.

From Year 9 (age 14) the annual review meeting includes the development of a transition plan known as Moving into Adulthood Plan. This is drafted in consultation with the student and their parents or carers. The school offers work experience placements in KS4 (Year 10 and 11) and in the Sixth Form. These placements give students opportunities to try working in grown-up environments tackling real job tasks. These are organised on an individual basis and support is organised as appropriate.



Priory works closely with post 16 providers and especially with West Suffolk College with whom we are also closest to geographically. In recognition that our catchment area is very large, we also encourage students and their families to look at other colleges including Suffolk New College, Suffolk Rural at Otley, Easton College, Cambridge Regional College and other provisions as appropriate.

We work closely with the various organisations who are able to provide impartial advice to students and families.

Occasionally teachers and other professionals may feel that Priory School is not best at meeting the needs of an individual student. This will be discussed with parents and carers at an early stage. If there is agreement the school may work with the Local Authority to plan more suitable provision. This is managed through the annual review processes and always takes into account the views of parents or carers. Where a student moves from Priory School to another provision, we will work closely with the new provision to provide opportunities for safe and supported transition.

Approach to teaching children and young people with SEND

There are many approaches that staff use and the school continuously explores the latest research and innovative ways of engaging with and teaching students. There are some basic elements which characterise teaching and learning at Priory School and these include:

- Small classes, usually between 8-12 students
- High ratio of staff to students, usually 1 teacher and 1 support assistant per class
- Differentiation of the lesson content, resources and teaching so that those more able are stretched and those who need more time to consolidate are equally catered for
- Small steps in learning are planned so that students can quickly recognise their achievements and confidence that they can be successful in learning

- Consolidation/repetition of learning, usually in different contexts or situations that gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt, or indicate that they require more support
- Assessment, which is ongoing, consistent and provides constructive feedback to inform the next steps in learning
- Equality of access to the curriculum and activities. We have a 'can do' attitude and work to support students engaging with everything the school provides. This includes performing arts, a variety of school-based extra-curricular activities and trips and visits (including residential trips and trips abroad)
- The school has gained the Trauma Informed School award (March 2022) which recognises the approaches and support given to students and their families by staff

Adaptations made to curriculum and learning environment of students with SEND

Staff constantly review the curriculum to check it is appropriate for the cohort of students' needs. The philosophy is one of "stage, not age" where we aim to deliver the curriculum that is most appropriate for the current learning needs.

The curriculum has a strong emphasis on developing life skills:

- Reading and writing, functional literacy
- Maths skills, functional numeracy - especially telling the time and use of money
- Independence, developing ways to do more for themselves and keep themselves safe

The school was purpose built as a Special School in the 1973 but the profile of students has changed significantly. It is built into the side of a hill and has many steps. A few of the teaching spaces are wheelchair accessible, but the majority are not.

All classrooms have interactive screens or whiteboards and some have active sound systems to aid listening and concentration.

Specialist facilities and equipment:

- Science Lab
- Art/DT room
- 3 Computing rooms
- Food studies room
- Gym
- Sensory room
- Outside play areas – hard surface and grass
- Greenhouse and polytunnel
- Library
- Skills Centre and Conference room

Some staff are able to sign using Makaton and BSL. We make use of software packages such as Communicate in Print and Clicker which use symbols or images to support as well as having speech feedback.



Residential Provision

Priory School is one of the few special schools in Suffolk with its own residential provision. The boarding provision is inspected every year by OFSTED and has been judged as at least good for more than 10 years. There are 23 beds, with occupation from Monday to Thursday night. Very few students board all week but most access 1 or 2 nights residential provision. This means that between 40-50 students from across the school can benefit from one or more nights boarding across the week.

The boarding provision does not appear in EHC plans. It is negotiated with the school and parents and with the local authority. Boarding is identified for specific reasons. These are many and various but include:

- Work on independence and life skills
- Supporting personal hygiene and care
- Supporting the engagement in after school activities – cycling, canoeing, Scouts, etc.
- Supporting attendance
- Children in the care of the Local Authority and in need of some additional support
- Some students link after school where they stay for an activity and a meal before going home. This arrangement supports social integration and may also support transition to staying a night in residence

Further information about the residential provision and the offer can be found on the school website <https://sendat.academy/priory>

Expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEND including how specialist expertise will be secured.

Priory School caters for a broad range of learning needs. As such, staff have a broad range of skills to work with students. Teachers are qualified and most have considerable experience of teaching. All staff receive a structured programme of training which is part of the ongoing training through the professional development training days and through the appraisal system they can access other relevant areas of training. The School Development Plan sets out the main themes of training for staff. Where a new condition or need arises, training is delivered to staff as appropriate.

Training may be:

- In-house as part of ongoing work
- During staff meetings
- During Professional Development Days
- Locally sourced within the county
- National training
- International training, where we have been able to secure additional funding, training has on occasion taken place in Europe.

Additional and specialist expertise links include access to trained therapists:

- Occupational therapy (OT)
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Physiotherapy (Physio)
- Educational Psychology (EP)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

- Social Care
- Disability Nursing Team and the Behaviour Support Nursing Team
- Local Authority specialist advice

Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEND

As all students at Priory School have an EHC plan, the effectiveness of the whole school reflects the quality of SEND effectiveness.

Priory has robust systems at all levels to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. This runs through from teachers to senior leadership and governance.

We are proudly part of SENDAT, a multi academy trust. Governance teams are well trained and informed. Directors are responsible for the whole SENDAT Trust. The Priory School Local Advisory Board (LAB) is delegated responsibility for the curriculum and standards. Full details of Governance teams are available on our websites <https://sendat.academy> and <https://sendat.academy/priory>

Member of governance receive regular reports including half-termly detailed reports, School Self Evaluation and the Trust Development Plan which includes each separate provision of the Trust.

The SENDAT Trust engages consultants as appropriate to provide impartial advice.

How are students enabled to engage in activities?

There is a broad range of activities available and careful consideration is given to ensure that there are engaging physical activities for students who do not normally enjoy physical activity. The curriculum is supported with many educational visits. These are local, national and European-wide opportunities. *In exceptional circumstance, like the recent pandemic, not all activities have been able to go ahead.*

Where activities and visits are directly associated with the curriculum they are provided at no charge.

Where activities are enrichment, additional to the curriculum provision, parents and carers may be asked for a contribution. Please see our Charging and Remissions Policy for more information.

We have a strong belief in offering residential experiences.

Examples of activities and visits include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS2 overnight camp • KS3 residential camp • KS5 visit to Germany • KS3-5 Wales trip (including students from other special schools in the locality) • Sixth Form transition residential • Lunch time and afterschool clubs • Cycle training and Cycle 100 Challenge • Work experience • Independent travel training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museums • Parks • Sporting competitions (football, athletics, swimming, boccia, etc) • Local businesses • Canoeing • Sailing • Horse riding • Swimming • Orienteering |
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Sixth Form

Priory School has 25 places in the Sixth Form. Red Pathway is catered for on the school site and the Green Pathway at Angel Hill College which is run a short distance from Priory School. Students usually stay one year but there is provision for two years for some who may need additional time before accessing college or other provision. The curriculum is focused on:

- Functional Skills in literacy, numeracy and computing
- Art, media and culture
- Independence programmes
- Work Experience
- Duke of Edinburgh Award

A detailed prospectus is available on the Priory School website: <https://sendat.academy/priory/>

Pupil Premium

Priory School makes good and innovative use of Pupil Premium funding. It supports many trips, additional resources and training. It also covers the cost of free school meals. There is a detailed report available on the website.

Post 16 Bursary

Where students are eligible for the Post 16 Bursary, the school uses this to support activities and equipment within the Sixth Form, including providing use of a laptop, school meals, residential trip, Duke of Edinburgh Award and activities.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Priory School offers the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme to all students in key stage 4 and Sixth Form. At key stage 4 students do have to opt in and pay the registration fee. The expeditions are usually carried out by canoe on rivers in Suffolk. The school offers Bronze, Silver and Gold awards to students.

Scouts

Priory School runs its own Cub pack and Explorer Scout unit - Atlantis. This is open to any young person aged 8-10 years for cubs and 14-18 years for explorers and runs on a Thursday evening straight after school. The cub pack and Atlantis Unit is fully included and supported by the Bury District Scouts.

Transport to school

Transport may be provided by the Local Authority. Vertas organises taxi routes and provides all our home to school transport. The LA policy also details the arrangements for students with SEND and includes post 16 travel. Please see their policy. <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/home-to-school-transport/>

Support for improving emotional and social development.

This includes extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEND and includes measures to prevent bullying.

All students receive PSHE (Personal Social Health Education) and, in addition, they have weekly tutorial time. The smaller class sizes means that all staff have time to get to know students well and support them appropriately.

Staff training is updated regularly and includes safeguarding issues. There is a clear system for referring students for further support. Initially, in-house support (also known as early help) which may include additional mentoring time with the tutor, time with nurture staff, emotionally-available or Trusted Adults and support from the Head of Care and Safeguarding Leads along with the Family Support Team. All staff receive training for Trauma Informed practices. The staff daily briefing offers opportunities for sharing concerns and highlighting students who may need additional support or care.

All staff are vigilant for any signs of bullying and this is taken very seriously at all levels. For example, break times are led by Play Leaders who deliver a structured programme for those students who require additional support to socialise appropriately. Activities are planned weekly and include physical and thinking play.

Priory School embeds trauma and attachment informed approaches within the culture of the school. All staff have received Trauma and Mental Health informed training which enables them to respond to the needs of the students and families without judgment and with empathy. All staff understand that children and young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences may display behaviours which can be a barrier to learning. Staff are aware that secure relationships are essential for healing the children's minds, brains and bodies, they use key conversational skills to help the children and young people make sense of what has happened to them and help them to move forward. Priory School currently has 4 Trauma and Mental Health informed Practitioners (Level 5 Diploma) who have completed the 11-day Trauma Informed Schools UK course, equipping them with greater depth knowledge and skills to support the children and young people they work with.

Priory School achieved the Trauma Informed Schools Award in March 2022, Priory School was the first special school in Suffolk to receive this award.

How the school involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations.

Priory School works very closely with a range of other professionals. Safeguarding is of the highest priority. All the Senior Leadership team take active roles to ensure robust safeguarding measures and procedures are applied consistently. The Safeguarding leads take the lead role in working with social care alongside the Family Support/Medical Lead.

The Executive Headteacher is the designated teacher responsible for Looked After/Children in Care and ensures that these students are not disadvantaged and that regular reporting to the Virtual Head takes place.

Arrangements for handling complaints

Priory School and the SENDAT Trust wish to resolve issues at the earliest possible point and senior staff are available for appointments if you wish to discuss anything.

In the unlikely event that issues cannot be resolved the school has a complaints policy that can be downloaded from the website.

Key Contacts –

Admissions -

Admissions for all SENDAT schools are through the Local Authority. We have a SEND services team to manage admissions and annual reviews.

Please see <https://sendat.academy/admissions/> for further information

Email sendservices@sendat.academy

Senior Leadership Team

Mr Lawrence Chapman	SENDAT CEO
Ms Sharron White	Head of School
Mrs Georgina Lewis	Head of Safeguarding
Graham Alcock	Executive Headteacher

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Email: office@priory.sendat.academy