

Cygnets Hospital Schools

SEND Information Report

Review Cycle: Annual
Last Reviewed: September 2026
Next Review: September 2027

What types of SEND do we provide for?

Cygnets Hospital Schools are **independent special schools** providing highly specialised education for students aged **12–18**. Students are admitted as inpatients to our **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** hospital provisions, either voluntarily or under detention via the **Mental Health Act**.

All of our students present with significant and primary Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. The majority of our learners present with co-occurring, complex additional needs including, but not restricted to:

- **Neurodivergence & Communication:** Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and acute social communication and speech and language needs.
- **Cognitive & Learning:** Dyslexia, visual stress, and moderate-to-severe learning difficulties.
- **Trauma & Mental Health Co-morbidities:** Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), complex trauma, and acute anxiety disorders, disordered eating.
- **Sensory & Physical:** Sensory processing sensitivities and associated physical or visual needs.

We deliver education across two specialised hospital school sites:

- **Phoenix School of Therapeutic Education**, Cygnets Hospital Sheffield
- **Forestwood School**, Cygnets Hospital Bury

How do we identify and assess students with SEND?

To ensure a robust, holistic understanding of each student's needs, we initiate a thorough multi-disciplinary assessment immediately upon admission. This forms the foundation of our Graduated Approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review). We identify and assess needs through:

- **Multi-Agency Liaison:** Immediate consultation with the student's home school, community educational provision, and placing Local Authority, including an immediate review of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or active requests for statutory assessment.
- **Academic & Diagnostic Baseline Assessments:** Evaluation of immediate learning gaps, including standardised word recognition, reading comprehension, dyslexia screenings, and visual stress assessments.
- **Specialist & Clinical Evaluations:** Cognitive assessments alongside direct inputs from our on-site Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) team, Occupational Therapists (OT), and specialist psychiatric clinical teams.

Who is our SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)?

Our Strategic SEND Case Coordinator is **Rachel Rix**.

She oversees SEND provision, needs identification, training and compliance.

Rachel can be contacted directly via the individual hospital schools or through the following professional channels:

- **Email (Cygnets):** rachelrix@cygnethealth.co.uk
- **Email (NHS Secure):** rachel.rix@nhs.net

Our Operational SEND Case Coordinator is **Kirsty Massey**.

She oversees EHCP routines, local authority liaison, the assess, plan, do review (APDR) cycle, needs identification, and student Individual Education Plans (IEPS).

Kirsty can be contacted directly via the individual hospital schools or through the following professional channels:

- **Email (Cygnet):** kirstymassey@cygnethealth.co.uk

- **Email (NHS Secure):** Kirsty.massey@nhs.net

What is our approach to teaching students with SEND?

We utilise a person-centred, therapeutic approach to education, ensuring that teaching is highly adaptive, differentiated, and responsive to fluctuating mental health presentations.

Ratios and Groupings

Students are taught in exceptionally small classes with a high ratio of specialist adults, including qualified teachers, Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), Teaching Assistants (TAs), therapists, and Healthcare Support Workers (HCSWs).

Ward-Based Education

Where a student's acute clinical presentation or risk profile temporarily restricts them from accessing the physical school buildings, education is delivered on a 1:1 basis directly on the ward, maintaining continuity of learning until they can safely transition back to the classroom.

Targeted Interventions

Alongside the core curriculum, we deliver evidence-based, time-limited interventions tailored to specific profiles, including:

- **Social communication skills** and Social Stories™
- **Targeted reading** and literacy catch-up support
- **LEGO®-based therapy** to support emotional regulation and collaborative communication

How do we adapt the curriculum and learning environment?

Our primary objective is to maintain academic continuity, safeguard current educational pathways, and support local or national accreditation streams. We operate a highly personalised three-tiered curriculum delivery model tailored to the student's current stage of clinical recovery:

1. The Maintenance and Reintegration Pathway

Designed for students able to sustain academic working standards. The curriculum is shaped collaboratively with the student's community education provider. This minimises disruption to their learning, aligns with the National Curriculum where appropriate, and maximises the success of their eventual reintegration. If a young person enters working below Grade 4 in GCSE English and Mathematics, targeted intervention is automatically embedded to accelerate improvement.

2. The Engagement and Functional Skills Pathway

Tailored for students who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) or disengaged prior to admission due to their mental health or behavioural mindset. We build a personalised timetable rooted in the learner's specific interests, skills, and future goals. This pathway utilises flexible, empowering accreditations such as AQA Unit Award Schemes and Arts Awards, with literacy and numeracy skills explicitly woven into every practical session.

3. The Acute Clinical Stabilization Pathway

Reserved for young people who are acutely unwell. The overriding focus is on stabilisation, sensory grounding, and basic engagement. Any educational or therapeutic activity that involves the young person in meaningful routines is utilised. The primary aim is to rebuild personal skills, social confidence, and Mental Health Functioning in Education (MHFE), gradually stepping up to formal learning at a pace aligned with their clinical recovery plan.

Universal Curriculum Elements

- **PSHCE & SMSC:** All students access a comprehensive, needs-led Personal Social, Health and Economic (PSHCE) education programme that fulfills all statutory requirements and Ofsted expectations while embedding wide-ranging Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) opportunities. This whole-school approach provides young people with the essential knowledge, qualities, and confidence to improve their wellbeing while in hospital and following discharge. Modules are carefully vetted and dynamically adapted to remain trauma-informed and mindful of the students' immediate personal context.
- **CIAG:** Every student receives age-appropriate, impartial Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) delivered by specialised school staff and external independent advisors.

How do we support pupils with SEN to improve their emotional and social development?

- **Clinical Group Work:** All students have access to a weekly timetable of structured therapeutic sessions delivered directly by the hospital's internal psychology, occupational therapy, and clinical teams.
- **Needs-Led PSHCE:** Social and emotional resilience is explicitly taught through our PSHCE framework, equipping students with the tools to manage their mental health, build positive relationships, and thrive as active members of society.

What expertise and training do our staff have to support pupils with SEN?

Our schools are staffed by a highly skilled workforce of teachers, HLTAs, TAs, therapists, and instructors.

- **Quality First Teaching:** An intensive in-house training programme ensures all staff are proficient in delivering Quality First Teaching and highly specific differentiation across a wide spectrum of SEND needs.
- **Multi-Disciplinary Guidance:** Educators work side-by-side with on-site clinical professionals, such as Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) and Occupational Therapists (OT), who provide ongoing case-by-step guidance and strategies for the classroom.
- **Cross-Site Development:** Skills, knowledge, and best practices are systematically shared across Cygnet's school sites. A rigorous annual appraisal and training schedule ensures all staff continuously develop their specialist competencies.
- **Safeguarding:** Every site features fully trained, dedicated safeguarding officers who ensure robust duty of care and protect all pupils from harm.

How do we secure specialist expertise, equipment, and facilities?

- **Specialist Referrals:** We work in close partnership with the student's placing Local Authority to make targeted referrals. This includes requesting or supporting requests for statutory EHCP assessments or securing external specialist assessments (e.g., ASD or complex communication profiles). These external services visit students on-site and participate in CPA meetings and annual reviews.
- **Resource Allocation & Funding:** The school allocates its core budget to secure the vast majority of day-to-day facilities, learning aids, and resources required. For highly specialized or bespoke equipment, the school coordinates requests through relevant external agencies, local authority bodies, or via EHCP Higher Needs Funding.

How do we enable students with SEND to engage in activities with other students who do not have SEND?

As a highly specialised hospital provision, all young people on-site have complex SEND requirements. However, we prevent institutional isolation by bridging the gap with the wider community:

- **Mainstream Continuity:** We maintain regular contact with each student's mainstream or community home school, encouraging them to participate remotely or collaboratively in school events, projects, or shared assignments as their recovery allows.
- **National Initiatives:** Students are supported to enter national competitions, initiatives, and educational events alongside their mainstream peers, ensuring they retain their identity as active, capable learners.

How do we consult parents and students with SEND and involve them in education?

Parental Consultation

- **Weekly Ward Rounds:** Parents are invited to participate in weekly multi-disciplinary ward rounds, where a dedicated educational progress report is explicitly shared and reviewed alongside clinical updates.
- **Six-Weekly CPA Meetings:** Every six to eight weeks, a formal Care Programme Approach (CPA) review brings together the multi-agency network—including clinicians, education staff, social care, local authorities, parents/carers, and the student—to evaluate holistic progress and map out onward educational and health outcomes.
- **Ongoing Guidance:** We actively support parents and carers in discussing education with their child during therapeutic leave or scheduled calls, helping them maintain a positive connection to their home school environment.
- **Feedback Frameworks:** Parents are encouraged to shape our provisions via annual surveys, questionnaires, and direct evaluation forms.

Student Consultation

- **Active Meeting Participation:** Students are fully supported to attend and contribute directly to their weekly ward rounds and six-weekly CPA reviews.
- **Student Voice & School Councils:** Regular feedback loop mechanisms, student council forums, and on-ward consultation activities give students a direct say in how the school environment operates.
- **Individual Education Plans (IEPs):** Some of our schools utilise formal termly 'Review Days'. Universally, all students collaborate 1:1 with their educators to co-produce, evaluate, and update their personal targets within their IEP every six weeks. Curriculums are customised around their direct wishes, feelings, and future career aspirations.

What support services are available to parents?

Parents and carers are backed by a comprehensive hospital multi-agency team. We provide:

- **Local Offer Signposting:** Direct guidance and signposting to relevant universal services and support frameworks within their specific home locality.
- **Statutory Guidance:** Active assistance through the statutory EHCP application process, transition planning, and annual review cycles.
- **Mainstream Reintegration Prep:** Where an EHCP is not in place, we collaborate directly with parents and the home school to outline clear SEN support plans prior to discharge, guaranteeing a smooth and stable return to community education.

How do we support students preparing for adulthood?

Independent Living & Practical Skills

In close collaboration with our Occupational Therapy (OT) colleagues, students learn and apply critical independent living skills within a safe environment. This includes nutritional planning, cooking healthy meals, budgeting, organising personal routines, maintaining physical fitness, and managing personal hygiene and domestic spaces (such as laundry and bedroom maintenance).

Systemic and Civic Awareness

Through our structured PSHCE curriculum, students develop a functional understanding of adult societal systems, exploring: the legal system, parliament, healthcare structures, personal wellbeing, financial literacy, healthy relationships, parenting, rights, consent, and contraception.

Transition and Discharge Planning

All students benefit from robust, age-appropriate CIAG to map out clear post-16 or post-18 pathways. Crucially, students are active partners in their own discharge planning. We coordinate meticulously with incoming community teams, colleges, apprenticeships, or alternative provisions to ensure a seamless transition, allowing the young person to maintain complete agency, control, and ownership over their next steps into adulthood.

How do we involve other organisations in meeting needs and supporting families?

We operate a child-centred model alongside a multi-disciplinary, hospital-wide team to establish an integrated community and educational support package prior to discharge.

- **Information Sharing:** Comprehensive transition packs—including the student's active SEN Plan/EHCP, proven classroom strategies, IEP records, academic reports, and specialist clinical assessments—are shared securely with incoming provisions.
- **Post-Discharge Signposting:** We actively link families with external organisations to ensure continuity of care, covering community engagement activities, specialized transport links, and housing/residential support if required.
- **Post-16 Support:** Our staff directly liaise with colleges and post-16 providers, guiding the young person through applications, interview preparation, and familiarization visits.

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our SEN provision?

Our commitment to clinical and educational excellence is maintained through rigorous, multi-tiered monitoring:

- **Governance & Independent Oversight:** Headteachers report comprehensively to Local and National Governing Boards (locally 3 times a year; nationally twice a year). Board members independently audit and verify this data on-site.
- **Peer Review & External Audits:** We conduct cross-site and external monitoring reviews at each facility twice a year to provide an independent appraisal of performance. Headteachers also cross-examine sister sites during the year, serving as 'critical friends' to drive continuous improvement.
- **Quality Assurance (QA):** Teaching and learning undergo strict QA processes every half term. This includes twice-yearly deep dives with a specific focus, led by our Headteachers, Head of Education and local experts.
- **Regulatory Inspections:** Our sites are subject to independent inspections via Ofsted (Independent School Standards) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) hospital inspection framework.

How do we handle complaints and concerns from parents and students?

Student Concerns

Students can voice concerns to any trusted staff member, including Healthcare Assistants, TAs, HLTAs, or teachers. They also have a direct line of communication to the Headteacher at any time.

Parental Concerns & Formal Complaints

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise immediate queries through the regular multi-agency ward rounds. If an issue requires escalation, parents can contact the class teacher or Headteacher directly. Unresolved matters are escalated to the Head of Education and the Local Governing Board. If the concern remains unresolved or requires a formal

investigation, parents are directed to the formal Cygnet Corporate Complaints Procedure, which is publicly accessible via the school website.

Where can the Local Authority's Local Offer be found?

- **Cygnet Sheffield Host LA:** Sheffield Directory - Local Offer (<https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/localoffer>)
- **Cygnet Bury Host LA:** Bury Council - Local Offer (<https://www.bury.gov.uk/send-local-offer>)