



Ascent Autism Specialist College

The Autism Specialists

SEND Information Report

October 2024

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Reviewer:	<i>Assistant SENCo</i>
Co-Reviewer:	<i>Head of Adult Services</i>
Updated:	<i>New Policy</i>
Next Review:	<i>October 2025</i>
Committee:	
Approved by the full Governing Body/Board of Trustees:	

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:	
1	Ascent Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy (2024)
2	Ascent Teaching & Learning Policy (2024)
3	Ascent Medication Policy (2024)
4	Ascent Admissions Policy (2024)
5	Ascent Curriculum Policy (2024)
6	Remarkable Complaints Policy (2023)
7	Remarkable Behaviour Support Policy (2024)
8	Remarkable Health & Safety Policy (2024)
9	Remarkable Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (2023)
10	Remarkable Accessibility Policy (2023)

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Introduction

Ascent College is dedicated to providing expert specialist education to students with autism and co-occurring needs, our focus is upon achieving the very best outcomes. We support young people with autism to fulfil their own unique potential.

Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to

- Explain how we support our students in all aspects of college life and remove barriers to learning and achievement.
- Explain how we work in close partnership with parents/carers and students.
- Explain how we make effective provision for all of our students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

2. Identifying Students with SEND and Assessing their Needs

- 2.1 Students require an EHC Plan in order to be considered for admission. The Admissions Team will carry out an assessment to determine suitability, where a place is deemed suitable an appropriate class group will be allocated. The first term of placement is an assessment period, during which the class teacher, Sundial Therapy Team where appropriate, and other relevant staff will carry out observations and assessments and devise a placement plan which includes risk assessment, curriculum planning and sensory and communication advice.
- 2.2 Assessments, primarily through teacher observation, are ongoing and both annual and internal reviews are held regularly to discuss and agree how to best address each student's needs. At Ascent College, we pride ourselves on our highly individualised approach and aim to tailor our plans and approaches to each student's unique strengths, interests and needs.

3. Arrangements for Consulting Parents/Carers of Young People with SEND and involving them in the Young Person's Education

- 3.1 We consider a close working partnership with parents and carers to be essential to a student's success at college. Prior to any new admission, meetings with parents and visits to college enable the identification of strengths, interests and needs and ensure that these are planned for on commencement of placement. Parents and carers attend Annual Reviews and are encouraged to provide feedback regarding their views in addition to attending the meeting in person. Throughout a student's time at Ascent College, staff communicate with parents/carers via home-college books, phone calls, emails, letters and social media. The college operates an 'open door' policy and parents/carers are always welcome to discuss any thoughts,

comments or concerns with staff and additional meetings are arranged as appropriate. There are two parent/carer consultation meetings each year where parents and carers can meet with class teachers and teaching support assistants to discuss progress and highlight any areas of concern. Additionally, information forum events and coffee mornings are facilitated by the Admissions and Family Liaison Officers. The purpose of these informal meetings are to support communication, to educate parents/carers about topics pertinent to students' education and development needs, to share good practice (e.g. Internal Therapy workshops, workshops facilitated by external professionals and agencies). A full progress report is shared with parents/carers as part of the annual review process and progress data is shared twice yearly in addition to this.

4. Arrangements for Consulting Young People with SEND and involving them in their Education

- 4.1 All students are enabled to make meaningful choices within their daily routines, and in consultation with their families, they are enabled to take an active part in key decision making regarding for example, their immediate and long term future placement and activities. Students are often involved in planning activities such as educational visits, at all stages of the process. Student are encouraged and supported to contribute to the setting and review of personal learning targets.
- 4.2 All student are supported to contribute to their annual review, by attending the meeting and/or compiling a written contribution (based on the 'Preparing for Adulthood' agenda). This process is differentiated according to the need of the individual student and supported by SaLT interventions where required, following a total communication approach.

5. Arrangements for Assessing and Reviewing Student Progress towards Outcomes

- 5.1 Planning is personalised for each student informed by areas of need based on the outcomes detailed in their EHC plan and ongoing assessment. Individual learning outcomes and targets are evaluated each half term by teaching staff and at annual review. Students are enabled to review their progress towards qualifications, awards and personal targets on a daily basis.

6. Arrangements for Supporting Students Moving Between Phases of Education and Preparing for Adulthood

- 6.1 Students who attend Ascent College will undergo a number of transitions during their time with us. Ascent College transition planning is student centred and needs focused, with both student and parents/carers identifying their aspirations and goals for the future. We encourage student involvement in decision making about their future (as advocated in the SEND Code of Practice). Each student will participate in the 'Preparation for Adulthood' process through curriculum based activities and when preparing their personal contributions to their annual review. We recognise the importance of a coherent, planned transition process and welcome the opportunity to involve all parties in a collaborative and proactive way. The Transition Plan will be developed during the Annual Review Transition Meeting with parents/carers, social worker and any other professional e.g. Speech and Language Therapist or other medical professional. Transitions within Ascent College e.g. between classes/departments is individually planned and may involve visits to the new class, personalised transition books with photographs

7. The Approach to Teaching Students with SEND.

- 7.1 At Ascent College our specialist staff work closely with each student to understand their unique needs and create a bespoke package of support to engage with their learning on multiple levels. Our offer of a Blended Learning curriculum ensures we engage and enable students by identifying what motivates them, what they're interested in, their strengths, and aspirations and then applying this to determine bespoke educational pathways. Our students have high levels of individual support, meaning that learning opportunities are experiential, purposeful, and specific.

8. How Adaptations Are Made to the Curriculum and the Learning Environment of Student with SEND.

- 8.1 Ascent College operates a highly inclusive curriculum which ensures equality of opportunity, enabling access to all aspects of the learning irrespective of gender, race, disadvantage or disability.
- 8.2 The emphasis from entry is preparation for adulthood and the curriculum at Ascent College aims to meet the needs and aspirations of our students through meaningful, purposeful and relevant blended learning curriculum delivered in an autism-specific way, which enables each young person to reach their full

potential as successful students, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

- 8.3 At Ascent College we recognise the impact that both the physical and social environment has on the wellbeing of our young people. Great consideration is given to the suitability of the environment, taking account of the students' communication, social, sensory and physical needs. The quality of the environment aims to promote student independence and safety at all times.

9. The expertise and Training of Staff to Support Student with SEND including how Specialist Expertise will be secured.

- 9.1 We recognise that what separates our organisation from others is the quality and expertise of our staff, their commitment and focus. We see staff as our most valuable resource and therefore have a commitment to staff development, providing opportunities and support for training and development to enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding. It is through this ongoing development that we can continue to improve the overall quality and standard of teaching, learning and care. All staff, regardless of role, are trained in supporting the needs of autistic young adults and participate in annual updates and training as a common workforce. Through training and experience, we strive for all our staff to become specialists in their knowledge and understanding of autism.
- 9.2 We are active members of representative bodies, National Autistic Society and NATSPEC which ensures that Ascent College is consistently informed about the developments and progress of the SEND sector. We continue to be an accredited service through the National Autistic Society (NAS) and Ascent College has been recognised nationally and locally by the Educate Awards, TES School Awards, Northern Cultural Education Awards and Education Today School and Supplier Awards.

10. Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Provision

- 10.1 At Ascent College we recognise the need to monitor and evaluate all aspects of our work. In this way we aim to constantly improve the quality of our provision within the context of our mission statement, aims and ethos.

Evaluation at Ascent College includes the following:

- Internal and Annual Reviews for students; regular evaluation and update of individual learner plans, risk assessments, behaviour support etc.
- Evaluation and review of the College Improvement Plan.
- Staff performance management measures including appraisals.

- External Monitoring visits such as Ofsted and Autism Accreditation.

12. Support for Improving Emotional and Social Development

- 12.1 All staff acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual student and work to ensure their emotional well-being is at the forefront of their thinking and practice to open a pathway to learning.
- 12.2 The college curriculum promotes wellbeing and personal safety of all students and staff are alert to any changes in student presentation or concerns raised by students themselves and follow the adult safeguarding policy accordingly.

13. How the College Involves Other Bodies, Including Health and Social Care Bodies, Local Authority Support Services and Voluntary Sector Organisations, in Meeting Student SEND and Supporting Their Families.

- 13.1 Ascent College promotes a collaborative approach to working with our young people. All agencies involved in supporting a young person are invited to contribute to student review meetings and are encouraged to submit reports to the annual review, in addition to attending the meeting in person.

14. Arrangements for Handling Complaints from Parents of Students with SEND About The Provision Made at Ascent College.

- 14.1 We aim to ensure that:
- Complaints are managed in an honest, constructive, open and timely way.
 - We remain sensitive to individual needs in the process.
 - Confidentiality is maintained where possible and appropriate.
 - People who use our services, other interested parties and the public know how to complain, compliment or make suggestions to us and can do so easily, with support if they need it, and without fear of any reprisal or victimisation.
 - Complainants are kept informed about timescales and progress.
 - Complaints and compliments are recorded appropriately and records made available to Regulators as required.
- 14.2 Feedback, complaints and compliments are used to identify, share and then implement service improvements.
- 14.3 Complaints are managed in line with the Remarkable Complaints Policy 2023.

15. Named Contacts within the School for When Young People or Parents Have Concerns

Chief Executive Officer:	Robin Bush
Head of Adult Services:	Julliet Doherty
Deputy Head of Adult Services:	Phil Adams
Head of Therapy Services:	Susie Grubert
Senior Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead:	Julliet Doherty
Deputy Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Leads:	Phil Adams
	Natalie Molyneux

16. The College's Contribution to the Local Offer and Where the LAs Local Offer is Published

- 16.1 Ascent College is a non-maintained College providing post 16 and post 18 education pathways and has Department for Education approval for admitting young people who have an EHC Plan. The College is rated as Good by Ofsted 2019.
- 16.2 For information about The Local Offer students and parents are directed to their local authorities' website for information and guidance.

Policy Impact

We have a rolling programme for reviewing our Company policies. We regularly review the impact of our policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for students, service users, staff and parents.