

Mentoring Policy

NB: This policy should be read in conjunction with the Breckenbrough School Behaviour Policy

Context & Philosophy

This policy is informed by the Breckenbrough School Vision of “Always putting the individual needs of the student first”.

Breckenbrough School is a Non-Maintained Special School (NMSS) approved by the Secretary of State. We offer day and residential placements for boys with a range of complex needs, including Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Asperger’s Syndrome (AS), Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Tourette’s syndrome (TS) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Like our students, Breckenbrough is unique; offering a bespoke, special school approach in delivering the national curriculum. We pride ourselves in being a ‘specialist’ school, providing a nurturing, supportive and low stress environment to help our students learn to manage their behaviours and make social and academic progress.

We aim to support our students to achieve two key goals during their time here:

1. To be themselves, aspire and be successful.
2. To develop strategies and coping mechanisms to move towards a level of self-actualisation in order to thrive in the neurotypical world.

Our Quaker ethos underpins all we aspire to build in our students: respect, tolerance, equality, understanding and forgiveness. We deliberately avoid punishment and forced discipline, believing that resolution of conflict can come about through behaviour modelling and restorative justice.

In addition to this, as educators of the vulnerable young learners in our care we commit to the following core values:

1. We believe our students have the right to the same opportunities as mainstream students.
2. We close the gap by allowing all students to reach to the top.
3. We do not accept that complex educational needs are an excuse not to aspire or achieve.

Aims

The role of the Academic Mentor is to provide students with the necessary support mechanisms in order for them to feel empowered and challenged to succeed across the curriculum.

The Academic Mentor has a vital role in working alongside our students to realise the school vision of ensuring that all students can be themselves, aspire and be successful; and to guide our students to develop strategies and coping mechanisms to move towards a level of self-actualisation in order to thrive in the neurotypical world.

The Academic Mentor is central to supporting the school in realising our ethos of conflict resolution. This policy document is provided to ensure that the more focused definition of “mentor” with its newly incumbent responsibilities, is fully understood and supported. However, it is assumed that all staff will act in a professionally responsive way, responding to student need, and that this document is for explicit guidance because of the changing nature of the role.

Process

- 1) Academic Mentors are assigned to students by the Transitions Manager and the Deputy Head. Staff should expect to mentor 2 or 3 students. Academic Mentors can change at a student's request as new students settle in and establish relationships with significant members of staff.
- 2) To work alongside the Transitions Manager, who will initially lead on home contact, during student induction to help the student settle and understand the school. This will include reading the EHCP and associated paperwork and creating the Student Support Plan.
- 3) The Academic Mentor must work actively to build a good working relationship with the student; they should do this by understanding all of the relevant information held about the student and also maximising opportunities to get to know one another and build a trusting relationship.
- 4) The Academic Mentor must work actively to build and maintain a good dialogue with the student's family. This must include at least fortnightly contact by phone, text or email.
- 5) The Academic Mentor should maintain contact with parents and carers over protracted periods of time away from school, including holidays, and share any pertinent information with the rest of the School.
- 6) The Academic Mentor, in conjunction with the Keyworker, is to be the first point of contact for staff seeking information about their student.
- 7) The Academic Mentor, in conjunction with the Keyworker, is to be the first point of contact with regards to any conflict resolution process their student requires.
- 8) In conjunction with the Keyworker, to keep the Student Support Plan updated.
- 9) The Academic Mentor should, as part of a student's Core Team, make suggestions as to the deployment of the Pupil Premium Grant where appropriate.
- 10) By liaising with the student's family, Keyworker and other stakeholders, advise the Academic Team on one "EHCP Target" to work towards each term in class.
- 11) To convene Core Group meetings to create Improving Attendance Plans or Improving Engagement Plans when attendance or engagement falls below 90% over any half term.
- 12) The Academic Mentor must discuss, at least fortnightly, the student's Schoolpods, academic progress, attendance and engagement. This must be logged using the Mentoring tab on Schoolpod.
- 13) The Academic Mentor must, at least fortnightly, contact the student's family and other carers to share Schoolpods, information on academic progress, and attendance and engagement updates. This must be logged using the Home Contact tab on Schoolpod.
- 14) The Academic Mentor should contribute towards reports, either termly or Review reports, as requested.