



Hemlington Hall SEN Unit



Welcome to our school!
Hemlington Hall Academy



A message from Mrs. K Edmenson

How would my child get to Hemlington Hall Academy?

Generally, our children are collected from home by taxi if they do not live within walking distance of our school. The taxis are provided by the Local Authority and are free to parents. In most instances, children from our Provision travel in groups together, in a minibus style taxi. If your child was to be offered a place, the transport team would contact you to arrange travel. For reference, their contact number is detailed in 'useful contacts' should you have any questions. All taxis have an escort to ensure your child is safe and happy throughout their journey and our staff are ready to meet your child upon arrival.



Hemlington Hall SEN Unit

All children in our SEN Unit, regardless of their Special Educational Need, feel valued, safe and are encouraged to make the best possible progress academically, socially, communicatively and emotionally from their own individual starting point.



What is a SEN Unit?

A SEN Unit is a special provision within a mainstream school where the children with a specific type of SEN are taught mainly within separate classes. The children at Hemlington Hall Academy in the SEN Unit also have the opportunity to join mainstream classes, if appropriate, depending on the needs of the individual child. The Sen Unit at Hemlington Hall Academy is for children from Reception to Year 2 who requires an Infant Assessment Class (a SEN Unit) which will meet their individual needs.

How Can you Apply for a Place?

To get a place in Hemlington Hall's SEN Unit an application needs to be made to the Local Authority so they can establish which provider will be best and most appropriate to meet the need of the child. In all cases, the LA and Hemlington Hall Academy work together to ensure that the admission of a child is appropriate for the needs of a child. The number of places are limited each year.

SEN Unit Criteria

Children who require a SEN Unit place at Hemlington Hall Academy will meet some of the following criteria, which will have been evidenced through reports provided by their settings or other professionals.

- Developmental Delay
- Moderate Learning Difficulty
- Several Learning Difficulty
- Communication and Interaction difficulties including ASD
- Elements of SEMH
- Possible diagnosed medical conditions
- Mild/Moderate Hearing Impairment
- Be classed as 'vulnerable' due to social and emotional immaturity



What is Development Delay?

Children develop skills in five main areas of development:

Cognitive (or thinking) skills: This is the ability to think, learn and solve problems. In babies, this looks like curiosity. It's how your child explores the world around him with his eyes, ears and hands. In toddlers, it also includes things like learning to count, naming colors and learning new words.

Social and emotional skills: This is the ability to relate to other people. That includes being able to express and control emotions. In babies, it means smiling at others and making sounds to communicate. In toddlers and preschoolers, it means being able to ask for help, show and express feelings and get along with others.

Speech and language skills: This is the ability to use and understand language. For babies, this includes cooing and babbling. In older children, it includes understanding what's said and using words correctly and in ways that others can understand.

Activities of daily living: This is the ability to handle everyday tasks. For children, that includes eating, dressing and bathing themselves.

Fine and gross motor skills: This is the ability to use small muscles (fine motor), particularly in the hands, and large muscles (gross motor) in the body.

Babies use fine motor skills to grasp objects. Toddlers and preschoolers use them to do things like hold utensils, work with objects and draw. Babies use gross motor skills to sit up, roll over and begin to walk. Older children use them to do things like jump, run and climb stairs.

What is a Moderate/Severe Learning Difficulty?

Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) The general level of academic attainment of these **learners** will be significantly lower than that of their peers. Their cognitive ability and/or attainment levels will be at or below the second percentile. Generally they will have **difficulty** acquiring literacy and numeracy skills.

A **severe learning disability** will be identified at birth or in early childhood. Someone who has a **severe learning disability** will: have little or no speech.

What are Communication and Interaction difficulties?

Children with social communication and interaction difficulties have problems understanding what other people mean. Communication is not just the words we use; but how we use our body language, facial expression and tone of voice to communicate with someone else.

Children with these difficulties may find it hard to understand the messages we give to each other without speaking, such as the meaning we put into our voice, the expressions on our faces, and gestures such as waving, pointing or shrugging.

Eye contact is another important part of non-speaking communication, and most of us do this without thinking about it. Children with social communication difficulties may not know instinctively how and when to give eye contact.

Children with social communication and interaction difficulties can also have trouble in understanding what other people are thinking or feeling; finding it difficult to see things from someone else's point of view. They may do things which seem out of place; such as talking in a very loud voice to the person who is standing next to them, talking continually about things that interest them to someone they have never met before, and taking turns can be challenging. This can often make it hard to make or keep friends and join in games.

WHAT IS AN AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER? Under SPL

Autistic Spectrum Disorder describes a developmental disability which affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them. It is described as a 'spectrum' because there are a wide range of behaviours and difficulties which appear to have autistic tendencies. It can affect people across the range of intellectual ability. There is no cure for ASD, it is a life long condition and can be genetically linked. People who are diagnosed as being autistic have impairment in the three areas known as the Triad of Impairment. These are:-

1. Impairment of Language and Communication

Difficulties with language and all forms of communication, including facial expression, gesture and other body language. Some of the things that will be visible in people with ASD include:

- Facial expression being 'out of line' with speech.
- A lack of pointing to share attention.
- An inappropriate use of, or poor quality, eye-contact.
- A restricted repertoire of gestures.
- A lack of speech, or impaired use of speech eg. pedantic speech, odd intonation, use it out of social context.
- A literal interpretation of what is said.
- Difficulty understanding jokes/idioms/sarcasm.
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2. Impairment of Social Interaction

Difficulties with understanding and skills needed for social interaction. This is shown in a number of ways which include:

- A lack of attention to other people.
- Failing to comment on or show things to others.
- Not responding when addressed as a member of a group.
- Behaving inappropriately to the social context.
- Poor awareness of the feelings of others.
- Poor awareness or incomprehension of other people's thoughts/beliefs



3. Impairment of Flexibility of Thought

There will be evidence of rigidity and inflexibility of thought processes, and a difficulty in producing mental images of what is not present or has not taken place. This can lead to compulsive/obsessive behaviour and a resistance to change in routine. Some of the things visible will include:

- A dependence on routine.
- Being inflexible.
- Resisting change.
- Having obsessive rituals.
- Being preoccupied with a limited range of interests.
- Poor imitation skills.
- A lack of, or minimal symbolic play.
- Difficulty with generalisation.



All 3 impairments need to be evident for a diagnosis to be made, but a variation in the overall severity of the difficulties and the way in which they show themselves will be apparent in each individual.

What we will provide?

Inclusion is at the heart of our entire school. We are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for all of our children, and work hard to ensure that the needs of our pupils are met across the day.

In order to meet this challenge, our provision has:

- A dedicated class teacher and SENDCo to oversee the provision for all children with additional needs across the school.
- Experienced staff working with children with speech and language difficulties, social interaction difficulties, social, emotional and mental health and cognitive and learning delay.
- A safe, small group nurturing environment with a high staff to pupil ratio to maximise learning opportunities. As a result of high staff ratios a high focus can be given to extend attention and concentration and communication skills and to develop their skills in all areas.
- The SEN Unit is an environment with clearly defined routines and structures communicated in the most effective and personalised way.

- Personalised and small group teaching opportunities, this provides time for 1:1 intensive interactions.
- It provides children with a safe place to develop physical, gross and fine motor skills.
- Children's learning can be effectively monitored through small steps.
- Learning can be presented in small bursts to optimise short attention spans.
- Activities within the SEN Unit have a very clear beginning and end.
- Staff support with the development of communication skills and language skills.
- Activities are ongoing to incorporate therapy and education.
- Close working relationships between home and school, involving other professionals.
- Staff are in adept in adapting learning to meet the needs of the children.
- Learning can be play based and can incorporate multi-sensory approaches to all aspects of the curriculum.
- The SEN Unit works closely with a range of agencies to support all aspects of the children's individual needs and the professional recommendations are incorporated within daily routine, teaching and learning.
- A head teacher whom is fully committed to inclusion and high quality experiences for all children.
- A family ethos, where each child and their needs are understood by all of the school community.



Curriculum

At Hemlington Hall Academy we provide children with a flexible approach to a broad and balanced curriculum which enables us to accommodate individual needs and allows the children to reach their full potential. Teaching methods are diverse and within the SEN Unit they use a range of multi-sensory equipment and strategies to engage children in learning. It is expected that children will make progress towards age expected targets to the best of their ability with a modified teaching and learning environment. Where appropriate children will sit assessments in the same way as their peers. All of the staff in school are aware of the needs of the individual children and embrace and encourage individuality and progress. Children are supported by an adult when learning in mainstream classes, but when they are comfortable and confident in the supporting adult will gradually be withdraw where possible.



Learning Environment

- Quality first teaching
- A dedicated SEN Unit classroom
- Sensory room, outdoor garden/space and a quiet room
- Daily opportunities for children to be taught in smaller, distinct classes with high levels of support
- Children will be taught in a variety of ways, dependent on the activity and the needs of the child
- Resources to match the needs of the children
- A structured programme and daily routine
- Tasks broken down into small steps
- Visual support for learning
- Space and time for children to cope with and calm down as necessary
- Organisation and Independence
- Interacting and working with others



Who are the staff who work with our provision children?

The full school prospectus details all of the staff who work at Hemlington Hall Academy however, more specifically, the 'SEN Unit' is organised as follows:

Miss Sarah Lovatt—Class Teacher/SENCo Lead

Mrs Debbie Macdonald—Level 3 Teaching Assistant

Miss Tina Crosby—Level 2 Teaching Assistant

Mrs Tracey O'Brien—Level 1 Teaching Assistant

Mrs Sally Armstrong—level 2 Teaching Assistant

Parent Information



What involvement can we have as parents at Hemlington Hall Academy?

At Hemlington Hall Academy we value the contribution that parents make to their child's education. In order for parents to be fully involved in the life of the school, when they generally do not drop off or pick up their child from school, both school and home must work hard to ensure the lines of communication are kept open through:

- Home-School diaries for school and family to communicate with each other
- Regular phone contact with child's 'Key Worker/class teacher' if there are any issues
- Termly parent meetings to discuss academic and social progress
- 'Tea and talk' sessions for parents to come and chat informally with each other and staff around issues pertinent to them.
- Review Meetings.

Transition

If your child gets a place at the SEN Unit at Hemlington Hall Academy, they will be with us until the end of Year 2. At the end of their time, a decision will be made whether your child transition back to their previous school or if they need to transition to a specialist provision where their support can be continued.

Who are my main points of contact if I have any questions or worries?

Miss Sarah Lovatt—SENDCo and Provision Leader	01642 591171
Mrs Karen Edmemson- Head Teacher	01642 591171
Transport Arrangements for Middlesbrough Local Authority	01642 353447
Placements Team at Middlesbrough Local Authority	01642 201831
CAHMS	0300 013 2000



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