



HOMEBROOK WOODS

Independent Special School

**Ages 5–11 | Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and associated Speech,
Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)**

SEND Information Report

For Parents, Carers and Professionals

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Welcome

Welcome to Homebrook Woods.

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions a family can make. We understand that every child is unique, and that every family wants to know their child will be understood, supported and encouraged to flourish.

This SEND Information Report explains how Homebrook Woods supports children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), how we work with parents and carers, and what you can expect if your child joins our school.

It has been written in line with the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** and should be read alongside our:

- SEND Policy
- Admissions & Placement Suitability Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Behaviour Regulation and Positive Support Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Accessibility Plan.

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1. About Homebrook Woods

Homebrook Woods is an independent specialist school for children aged **5–11**.

We specialise in supporting children whose primary educational needs arise from:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Many of our pupils may also experience:

- sensory processing differences
- anxiety relating to school attendance
- difficulties with emotional regulation
- associated learning needs.

Homebrook Woods is **not** a SEMH school. Instead, we recognise that children with autism and communication differences may sometimes communicate their needs through behaviour, anxiety or distress. Our role is to understand those underlying needs and provide the specialist support that enables children to feel safe, communicate effectively and access learning successfully.

As a small specialist school with a maximum of **12 pupils**, we are able to know every child exceptionally well and tailor our provision to their individual strengths, interests and needs.

2. Our Vision

At Homebrook Woods we believe that every child deserves to feel:

- safe
- understood
- respected
- included
- successful
- proud of themselves.

Our curriculum, environment and teaching approaches have been specifically designed for children with Autism Spectrum Condition and Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

We believe that learning happens best when children feel emotionally secure and when adults understand how they communicate, learn and experience the world.

Rather than expecting children to fit the environment, we adapt the environment to meet the needs of the child.

This means providing:

- calm, predictable routines
- communication-friendly classrooms
- therapeutic and regulation-informed practice
- personalised learning
- meaningful relationships
- high aspirations for every child.

Our aim is not simply for children to make academic progress, but to develop confidence, independence, communication skills and a genuine enjoyment of learning.

3. Who do we support?

Homebrook Woods has been established specifically for children whose primary needs arise from:

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Children may experience differences in:

- communication
 - social understanding
 - sensory processing
 - flexibility of thinking
 - emotional regulation.
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Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Children may require support with:

- understanding language
 - expressing themselves
 - vocabulary development
 - conversation skills
 - social communication
 - understanding instructions.
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Associated Needs

Many children attending Homebrook Woods may also experience:

- sensory processing differences
- anxiety linked to school attendance
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- difficulties with self-regulation
- associated cognition and learning needs.

Each child is viewed as an individual.

No two children receive exactly the same provision, even when they share similar diagnoses.

4. How do we identify children's needs?

By the time most children join Homebrook Woods, they already have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or are undergoing statutory assessment for one.

Before offering a place, we carefully consider whether Homebrook Woods is the right setting for each child. This helps ensure we can meet their needs safely and effectively.

Our admissions process includes:

- reviewing professional reports
- considering the EHCP (where applicable)
- discussions with parents and carers
- consultation with the Local Authority
- consideration of therapy recommendations
- careful transition planning.

Once a child joins Homebrook Woods, we carry out a structured baseline assessment over the first few weeks. This helps us understand not only what a child can do academically, but also how they learn best.

We gather information about:

- communication skills
- sensory processing
- emotional regulation
- learning strengths
- interests and motivators
- independence skills
- social interaction
- wellbeing.

This information forms the foundation of each child's personalised programme and helps us plan the right support from the very beginning.

5. How will my child be supported?

Every child at Homebrook Woods receives personalised support based on their individual strengths, needs and aspirations.

There is no "one size fits all" approach.

Support is carefully planned around:

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes
- Individual Learning Plans
- communication profiles
- sensory needs
- emotional regulation strategies
- interests and preferred ways of learning.

Our staff work together to ensure that support is consistent across the school day.

Depending on individual needs, support may include:

- visual timetables
- structured teaching approaches
- communication aids
- sensory regulation strategies
- movement breaks
- emotional regulation support
- social communication activities
- personalised learning resources
- adapted classroom environments
- independence and life skills teaching.

Many of these strategies are embedded into everyday classroom practice rather than being delivered as separate interventions. This helps children feel included, confident and successful throughout the school day.

6. How do we adapt teaching to meet individual needs?

At Homebrook Woods, adapting teaching is simply part of everyday practice.

We recognise that children learn in different ways, so teachers carefully plan lessons that are accessible, engaging and meaningful for every pupil.

This may include:

- breaking learning into smaller steps
- providing visual supports
- adapting language and instructions
- allowing additional processing time
- reducing sensory distractions
- offering alternative ways to record learning
- providing additional adult support where appropriate
- using children's interests to motivate learning.

Children are never expected to learn in exactly the same way or at the same pace.

Instead, we focus on helping every child make meaningful progress from their own starting point.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum has been designed specifically for children with Autism Spectrum Condition and Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Learning is built around six curriculum themes:

- **Myself and My World**
- **My Community**
- **The Natural World**
- **People and Relationships**
- **Independence and Life Skills**
- **Preparing for the Future**

These themes help children make meaningful connections between their learning and the world around them.

Our curriculum also places a strong emphasis on developing:

- communication
- independence
- confidence
- emotional wellbeing
- relationships
- preparation for everyday life.

7. How do we measure progress?

We know that progress looks different for every child.

While academic learning is important, we also recognise and celebrate progress in many other areas.

For example, progress might include a child:

- communicating a need independently for the first time
- joining a group activity
- managing a change in routine
- developing friendships
- becoming more confident
- improving emotional regulation
- becoming more independent

- increasing their attendance
- trying something new.

Teachers assess progress every day through observation, discussion and ongoing assessment.

Where appropriate, Homebrook Woods uses an assessment framework based on **MAPP (Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress)** alongside teacher assessment and professional judgement.

This allows us to celebrate the small but significant steps that are so important for many children with SEND.

Parents and carers are kept informed of progress through:

- regular communication
- review meetings
- written reports
- Annual Reviews (where children have an EHCP).

Our aim is for every child to leave Homebrook Woods more confident, more independent and better prepared for the next stage of their education and life.

8. How do we support communication?

Communication is at the heart of everything we do.

Many of our pupils experience differences in how they understand language, express themselves or communicate with others. We believe that every child has the right to be heard and understood, whatever their preferred method of communication.

Our classrooms are designed to be communication-friendly environments where children are given the time, support and encouragement they need to communicate successfully.

We use a **Total Communication** approach, which means we draw upon a range of communication methods according to each child's individual needs.

This may include:

- spoken language
- visual timetables
- symbols and picture supports
- objects of reference
- communication boards
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Makaton or other signing systems where appropriate
- photographs
- social stories
- written language.

Staff adapt their communication by:

- using clear, concise language
- giving children additional processing time
- breaking information into manageable steps
- checking understanding
- reducing unnecessary language
- supporting spoken language with visual information wherever appropriate.

Every child has a Communication Profile which helps staff understand how they communicate most effectively and ensures that strategies are used consistently across the school day.

9. How do we support emotional wellbeing?

Children learn best when they feel emotionally safe.

Many children attending Homebrook Woods experience anxiety, sensory differences or challenges with emotional regulation. We therefore place wellbeing at the centre of everything we do.

Our approach is based on understanding the reasons behind behaviour rather than simply responding to the behaviour itself.

We recognise that behaviour often communicates:

- anxiety
- confusion
- sensory overload
- frustration

- communication difficulties
- unmet needs.

Rather than asking "What's wrong with this child?", we ask, "What is this child trying to tell us?"

Our staff work proactively to help children develop confidence, resilience and self-regulation through:

- calm, predictable routines
- trusted relationships
- sensory regulation strategies
- personalised support plans
- movement breaks
- quiet spaces
- visual supports
- emotional literacy activities
- co-regulation with familiar adults.

Children are supported to recognise and understand their emotions, develop strategies to manage challenges and celebrate their achievements.

Behaviour Support

Our Behaviour Regulation and Positive Support Policy reflects our belief that positive relationships are the foundation of successful behaviour support.

We do not rely on punitive approaches.

Instead, we focus on:

- understanding the child's individual needs
- teaching appropriate skills
- adapting the environment
- recognising triggers
- celebrating success
- promoting independence.

Where behaviour places a child or others at risk, staff will always respond in ways that are safe, proportionate and consistent with the school's Positive Behaviour Support approaches.

10. How do we work with parents and carers?

Parents and carers know their children better than anyone else.

We believe that the best outcomes are achieved when families and school work together in genuine partnership.

From the very beginning, we encourage parents and carers to share information about:

- their child's strengths
- interests
- communication
- routines
- anxieties
- successful strategies used at home
- hopes for the future.

This information helps us develop a personalised programme that reflects each child's individual needs.

Throughout the year we keep families informed through:

- regular day-to-day communication
- review meetings
- written reports
- Annual Reviews (where appropriate)
- telephone or face-to-face discussions whenever needed.

We value open, honest communication and encourage parents to contact us whenever they have questions or concerns.

At Homebrook Woods, parents are recognised as equal partners in their child's education.

11. How do we work with other professionals?

Supporting children with SEND is a collaborative process.

Where appropriate, Homebrook Woods works closely with a range of professionals to ensure that children receive joined-up support.

This may include:

- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and Language Therapists (SaLT)
- Occupational Therapists (OT)
- Local Authority SEND Teams
- Health professionals
- Social Care professionals
- Early Help services.

Recommendations from professionals are not viewed as separate pieces of advice.

Instead, they are incorporated into everyday classroom practice so that children benefit from consistent support throughout the school day.

Where appropriate, staff work alongside therapists to ensure strategies become part of daily learning rather than isolated interventions.

We also contribute fully to statutory processes including:

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews
- Annual Reviews
- multi-agency meetings
- transition planning
- consultation processes.

12. Accessibility and Inclusion

Homebrook Woods is committed to ensuring that every child can fully participate in school life.

We recognise that inclusion means removing barriers to learning rather than expecting children to fit a particular way of working.

Reasonable adjustments are made according to each child's individual needs.

These may include:

- adapted teaching approaches

- visual supports
- communication aids
- sensory adjustments
- flexible seating
- personalised resources
- adapted routines
- environmental changes
- additional adult support where appropriate.

Our school environment has been carefully designed to provide calm, predictable and communication-friendly learning spaces.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We warmly welcome children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL).

We recognise that learning English as an additional language is **not** a Special Educational Need in itself.

Where a child has both SEND and EAL needs, we work closely with families, previous settings and professionals to understand the child's language profile and ensure that support reflects both their language development and their identified SEND.

Support may include:

- visual communication
- simplified language
- translated information where appropriate
- close partnership with families
- additional communication support.

Our aim is for every child to feel welcomed, included and able to participate fully in school life regardless of the language they speak at home.

13. How do we support children during transitions?

We understand that changes and transitions can be exciting for some children but challenging for others.

At Homebrook Woods, we plan transitions carefully to help children feel safe, confident and prepared.

Transition planning begins well before any change takes place and is tailored to each child's individual needs.

Starting at Homebrook Woods

Before a child joins us, we may:

- meet with parents and carers
- review professional reports
- liaise with the current school or setting
- arrange visits to Homebrook Woods
- provide photographs of key adults and learning spaces
- prepare visual information or social stories
- agree a personalised transition plan.

Our aim is to make each child's first experience of Homebrook Woods as positive and reassuring as possible.

Moving Through the School

As children move through the school, we continue to prepare them for change by:

- sharing information with new staff
 - updating Individual Learning Plans and Pupil Passports
 - introducing new routines gradually
 - providing additional visits where appropriate
 - using visual supports and social stories
 - increasing regulation support during periods of change.
-

Transition to the Next Setting

When children move on from Homebrook Woods, we work closely with families and receiving schools to ensure a smooth transition.

This may include:

- transition meetings
- sharing key information with the new setting
- contributing to EHCP reviews
- providing photographs and transition resources
- additional visits where appropriate
- preparing the child through discussion, stories and visual supports.

Our aim is for every child to move confidently to the next stage of their education with the knowledge, skills and independence they have developed during their time with us.

14. Safeguarding

Keeping children safe is our highest priority.

All staff at Homebrook Woods receive safeguarding training and understand that children with SEND may sometimes be more vulnerable because of communication differences, sensory needs or their reliance on trusted adults.

We recognise that some children may communicate worries or concerns differently, and staff are trained to recognise changes in behaviour, communication or presentation that may indicate a child needs additional support.

Our safeguarding arrangements are underpinned by:

- a strong safeguarding culture
- clear reporting procedures
- close partnership with families
- ongoing staff training
- robust safer recruitment practices
- regular review of safeguarding procedures.

All concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory guidance.

15. What if I have concerns?

We believe that open communication is the best way to resolve concerns quickly and positively.

If you have any questions about your child's education or support, we encourage you to speak with us as soon as possible.

Usually, concerns can be resolved through discussion with:

1. Your child's class teacher.
2. The SENDCo.
3. The Headteacher.

If concerns remain unresolved, parents and carers may follow the school's Complaints Policy.

Families also have the right to seek independent advice through their Local Authority's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

Homebrook Woods will always aim to work collaboratively with families and professionals to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child.

SEND Information, Advice and Support

Every Local Authority provides a **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)**. These services offer free, impartial and confidential advice to children, young people and parents or carers on matters relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Families can also access information through their own Local Authority's **Local Offer**, which provides details of education, health, social care and support services available in their area.

As Homebrook Woods welcomes referrals from a range of Local Authorities, including **Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire**, we will signpost families to the appropriate SENDIASS service and Local Offer for their home authority and work collaboratively with Local Authority teams throughout a child's placement.

Further Information

If you would like to find out more about Homebrook Woods or discuss whether our school may be the right setting for your child, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Homebrook Woods

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Ages 5–11

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and associated Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

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 www.homebrookwoods.co.uk

Our Commitment

At Homebrook Woods, we believe that every child deserves to feel safe, valued and understood.

We celebrate individuality, recognise that every child learns differently and understand that meaningful progress looks different for every learner.

By working in close partnership with families, listening carefully to children and creating a calm, communication-centred environment, we aim to help every pupil develop the confidence, independence and skills they need to thrive—both in school and beyond.

We look forward to working alongside you as your child grows, learns and flourishes as part of the Homebrook Woods community.



Small Setting, Big Potential