

Autism Webpage

At The Howard, students with Autism bring unique strengths, perspectives, and ways of understanding the world, and we aim to develop these strengths whilst supporting them to engage successfully within a secondary school environment. Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition that can influence how students experience communication, social interaction, sensory processing, and flexibility in thinking. We recognise that this can present challenges within an academic setting. These may include differences in interpreting social cues, managing changes to routine, responding to sensory experiences, or processing information, alongside challenges such as perfectionism.

What does support look like at The Howard?

At The Howard, we are committed to continually reflecting on and improving our practice. We regularly seek advice and external validation through partnership work with Autism Outreach (Limpsfield Grange), The National Autistic Society and the Schools Autism Friendly Review (SAFR). We are particularly mindful of supporting areas such as anxiety, and EBSNA (Emotional Based Not School Attendance), which can be a presentation for some students.

On a day-to-day basis, we provide structured and predictable learning environments to support autistic students, including clear routines, visual supports, explicit instructions, and opportunities for overlearning and repetition. Adjustments may include adapted communication strategies to support understanding and engagement, calm and low-stimulus spaces, preparation for change, and support with transitions between tasks or environments. Staff use consistent expectations and language to reduce uncertainty and promote clarity.

We work closely with families and primary schools to ensure appropriate provision is in place from the outset and adapt support where needs are identified later. Progress is carefully monitored, with adjustments made to support communication, independence, emotional regulation, and wellbeing, ensuring students are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Is an assessment essential for support? How can I access an assessment for my child?

A formal Autism diagnosis is not required for support to be implemented at school but may support a young person to understand themselves better. If you are considering an assessment, we advise that you ask for NHS Right to Choose pathway, which families can access through their GP. Our aim is to help families make informed decisions about the most appropriate support for their child.

Further Information

Further information on Autism can be found on the following websites:

National Autistic Society – <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism>

MINDWORKS – <https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/our-services/neurodevelopmental-services>

Autism Outreach Surrey:

[Autism Outreach for Schools - Surrey Parent Training Programmes](#)

[Autism Outreach for Schools - Family Resources](#)