

9 December 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

### SEND department 2026

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) at Stocksbridge High School, starting in January 2026.

I bring with me over 30 years of teaching experience and 25 years as a SENDCO, having worked with students from Junior age through to 18 years old. My career has taken me through a variety of educational settings, including mainstream secondary schools, middle schools, an independent school in Australia, and a Student Referral Unit.



These diverse experiences have shaped my understanding of how to meet the needs of every learner in creative and supportive ways.

Supporting children and families with SEND is not just my role—it is my passion. I have always been an advocate for ensuring that every child's voice is heard and that they have access to the same opportunities as their peers. I firmly believe that every child can succeed, regardless of their starting point, when we set high expectations and provide the right support.

Throughout my career, I have worked to bring about positive changes within schools, ensuring that needs are met through adaptations and targeted interventions that complement quality first teaching. At Stocksbridge High School, my goal is to enable SEND students to thrive in mainstream lessons while receiving the support they need to succeed.

Collaboration is key. I look forward to working respectfully and openly with parents and carers to find the best provision for each child within the resources available. Equally important is empowering students to take responsibility for their own educational journey and ensuring their voice is central to every decision.

I am also excited to share that we are launching a new Learning Hub. This will be located in the old school library. This space will provide targeted support and a welcoming environment for our students. It has been carefully chosen to cater for the increased number of SEND students needing varied support and interventions. The new provision is placed in the heart of the school and will continue to be accessible, with access to a lift if needed and a fully accessible toilet close by. This means that all students, regardless of their mobility needs, will be able to enjoy the full benefits of the SEND provision without any barriers.

We understand that any change can feel daunting, but please rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure a smooth transition. Our aim is to make sure your child continues to feel secure and supported as they adjust to the new arrangements.

The new larger location will enable us to provide a more integrated approach to supporting our students with SEND. Our dedicated SEND team will be there every step of the way, and we will continue to work to ensure our student's needs are met with the utmost care and attention.

Please look out for an invitation in the near future to visit the Hub and meet me in person—I would love the opportunity to connect with you. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to ensure that every child at Stocksbridge High School has the opportunity to succeed.

Yours faithfully

Miss Samantha Burns  
SENDCO  
Stocksbridge High School

