

Moon Hall School

2025 ISA Award Winner Outstanding Engagement in the Community



History of the school

Moon Hall School is a specialist school dedicated to supporting children with dyslexia and associated learning needs. Its work is shaped by a clear and deeply embedded ethos centred on belief, belonging and personal growth, with a strong focus on enabling every individual to recognise their strengths and achieve success.

This commitment extends far beyond the pupils within the school. In response to increasing national challenges surrounding access to Special Educational Needs support, Moon Hall has developed a wide-reaching outreach model that positions the school as a trusted centre of expertise for its wider community.

At the heart of this work is the Moon Hall Assessment Centre and Outreach Programme, which reflects a deliberate and values driven decision to share the school's specialist knowledge, resources, and experience with others.

Rather than operating as a standalone provision, Moon Hall has established itself as a hub for families, professionals and schools seeking clarity, guidance, and confidence in supporting children with additional needs.



Case Study

May 2026

Moon Hall School

Aims

Moon Hall's approach to community engagement is guided by a clear sense of purpose. It seeks to:

- Increase access to high quality specialist assessment and support
- Empower families through understanding, reassurance and practical guidance
- Strengthen the ability of schools and professionals to support learners with additional needs

Underpinning these aims is a consistent belief that every individual should feel understood and valued, and that difference should be recognised as a strength rather than a barrier.

A coordinated approach to community support: accessible and high-quality assessment

At the heart of this work is the Moon Hall Assessment Centre. It was created in direct response to long waiting times and the difficulty many families face in securing appropriate diagnosis and support.

The Centre offers assessments across a broad spectrum of needs, including dyslexia, attention differences, communication needs, and motor coordination difficulties. However, the defining feature is the way those assessments are conducted. The process is designed to be:

- Thorough, ensuring that each child's profile is fully understood
- Balanced, recognising strengths alongside challenges
- Practical, providing clear next steps rather than abstract conclusions

Every family leaves with guidance that can be applied

immediately, helping to bridge the gap between diagnosis and action. A commitment to accessibility runs throughout:

- Services are open to the wider public, not limited to current pupils
- A bursary scheme supports families who may otherwise be unable to afford assessment

This ensures that support is not confined to those already within the independent sector.

Collaborating with families

Moon Hall's work recognises that families often need support, not just information. Its programme of free information events has been designed to meet this need in a practical and approachable way. Sessions focus on areas that parents consistently identify as challenging:

- Understanding different learning profiles
- Supporting wellbeing as well as academic progress
- Making sense of processes such as EHCP applications
- Using strategies that work in everyday contexts

These events also create a shared space. Families can exchange experiences and develop a sense of reassurance that they are not navigating these challenges alone.

Supporting schools and professionals

Moon Hall has placed equal emphasis on strengthening expertise across the education sector. Its SENCo workshops are now a regular feature for professionals seeking practical, experience-based guidance.



Michelle Catterson, Headteacher

Each workshop is structured to encourage both learning and collaboration:

- Contributions from specialist staff with direct classroom experience
- Opportunities for discussion and shared problem solving
- Resources designed for immediate use within schools
- This work has reached a large and varied group of settings, helping to extend impact well beyond a single institution.

Adapting to emerging needs

A notable strength of the programme is its responsiveness. The introduction of adult assessments reflects the school's ability to listen and adapt.

Many parents, through supporting their children, begin to recognise their own learning differences. This additional provision responds directly to that experience, offering:

- Insight into personal learning profiles
- Greater confidence in professional and everyday contexts
- A new perspective on past educational experiences

In this way, the programme extends its impact across generations.

Looking beyond the immediate community

Moon Hall's work is evolving beyond its local area. Plans to establish an international learning centre signal a longer-term ambition to share expertise more widely. This development reflects:

- Recognition of global demand for specialist knowledge
- Confidence in a model that has proven effective
- A commitment to building partnerships that extend impact

Ethos in Action

The strength of Moon Hall's outreach lies in its consistency. The same principles that shape classroom practice are evident in its community work.

There is a clear emphasis on:

- Understanding the individual
- Building confidence over time
- Creating environments where people feel comfortable asking for help

Rather than presenting expertise at a distance, the school engages with families and professionals in a way that feels collaborative and supportive.

Impact

The reach of the programme is substantial. Within a relatively brief period, it has:

- Completed more than 500 assessments
- Supported over 150 schools
- Engaged more than 100 families through events
- Provided over 20000 pounds in bursary support

These figures demonstrate both scale and sustainability. More importantly, they point to changes that are less easily measured:

- Children gaining the confidence that comes with understanding
- Parents moving from uncertainty to clarity
- Teachers developing practical strategies that improve day to day outcomes

Future Development

Moon Hall continues to develop this work with care and intention. Areas of focus include:

- Broadening access to services for a wider range of families
- Deepening partnerships with schools and organisations
- Continuing to refine and expand specialist provision
- Building an international presence in a sustainable way
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These priorities reflect a balance between ambition and responsibility.



Conclusion

Moon Hall School offers a powerful example of how specialist expertise can be shared in a way that is both practical and impactful. Its outreach work addresses real challenges faced by families and schools, providing solutions that are accessible, thoughtful, and effective.

By extending its knowledge beyond its own pupils, the school has created a model of engagement that is rooted in understanding and shaped by purpose. At its core is a straightforward but important idea: that when people are given the knowledge, support, and confidence they need, they are far better placed to move forward with clarity and belief.



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