

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY
SIMON BAINBRIDGE**

Ratified on: JUNE 2020

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Inclusion Statement

We aim to provide a stimulating learning environment, across the whole curriculum that maximises individual potential and ensures pupils of all ability levels are well equipped to meet the challenges of education, work and life.

Introduction

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provisions in the Children and Families Act 2014 were introduced on 1 September 2014.

From September 2014, children or young people who are newly referred to a local authority for assessment are considered under the new EHC plan assessment process. The legal test of when a child or young person requires an EHC plan remains the same as that for a statement under the Education Act 1996. Transferring children and young people with statements to EHC plans has been a phased process which is nearing completion.

“The governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of academy schools **must** publish information on their websites about the implementation of the governing body’s or the proprietor’s policy for pupils with SEN. The information published should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.” *Special educational needs and disability code of practice:0 to 25 years, January 2015*¹ 6.79

Definition of special educational needs (SEN)

The definition of SEN is set out in the introduction to the Department of Health’s statutory guidance document in paragraphs xiii to xvi:

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

- xiii. A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
- xiv. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions
- xv. For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
- xvi. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

Definition of disability

A disabled person is defined under the Equality Act 2010 as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities’.

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.²

Children in Care (CIC)

“Children who are being accommodated, or who have been taken into care, by a local authority ... are legally defined as being ‘looked after’ by the local authority. Around 70% of looked after children have some form of SEN, and it is likely that a significant proportion of them will have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.” *SEND code of practice 10.1*

CIC are seen as being additionally vulnerable due to the nature of their background before being taken into care. Children who are in care are one of the lowest performing groups in terms of educational outcomes. They also have poorer employment prospects and health outcomes than the general population and are over-represented in the homeless and prison populations. Poor educational progress and low achievement are known to contribute to these long-term outcomes³. CIC in Cambs

² *ibid.* Introduction, para. xviii

³ The Educational Progress of Looked After Children in England: Linking Care and Educational Data, Joint research project between the [School for Policy Studies](#) and [Graduate School of Education](#) University of Bristol

receive Pupil Premium Plus, currently £1,800 per annum, the purpose of which is to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities to reach their potential. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has produced a teaching and learning toolkit⁴ to help teachers and schools use the pupil premium effectively to support disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils who are in care have additional termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to plan for boosting their progress. All schools must appoint a Designated Teacher for LAC. The Designated Teacher at each school is the Head of School.

SEN Information

The kinds of SEN that are provided for

All pupils at Highfield Academies have an EHC plan, and are placed at Highfield due to their SEN not being able to be met at the present time within a mainstream environment. As Cambridgeshire Area Special Schools, Highfield Ely and Littleport Academies make provision for children and young people who:

- have the most severe or complex learning difficulties
- have a significant disability
- often have a significant disability and additional needs – medical, social, emotional, behavioural and sensory or physical
- require modification to the curriculum and personalised learning approaches
- have had their needs identified and assessed through the Statutory Assessment process, have an EHC plan or SSEN and placement agreed through County Resourcing Panel (CRP) /Statutory Assessment and Resources Team (SAT)

Policies for making provision for pupils with SEN

It is the teacher's responsibility to provide for pupils within his or her class, and to meet their individual needs, being aware that these needs vary from pupil to pupil. All staff are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs.

Identification and assessment of pupils with SEN

Pupils have assessments prior to entry to the school. We baseline all pupils upon entry, which gives us an assessment upon which to base initial areas for development. We also hold pre-admission meetings in addition to the statutory annual review. All EHC plans are reviewed on an annual basis in line with statutory guidance with the pupil where appropriate and parents / carers. We use their EHCP Outcomes as the basis for individual learning plans.

Evaluation of provision

Progress with SEN support needs is monitored weekly in line with school assessment procedures and advice from the Code of Practice. We use Evidence for Learning as a data base for progress information, and we measure progress for all learners against

and the Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education and [Education Department](#), University of Oxford. Funded by the [Nuffield Foundation](#).

<http://reescentre.education.ox.ac.uk/research/educational-progress-of-looked-after-children/>

⁴ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit>

their EHCP Outcomes. For pupils with High Needs, this is all we measure progress against, for pupils with SLD and MLD we also set curriculum targets and measure progress against these. We involve parents and carers in setting learning goals meaningful for their child. The effectiveness of our provision is measured in the progress that individuals and groups of students make over time.

The success of the content of the school's SEN policy and provision is also evaluated through the School Plan, which is used for planning and monitoring provision in the school; by visits from Local Authority and Trust personnel, as well as Ofsted inspections; the school also actively seeks feedback from parents and staff, both formal and informal.

Approach to teaching

We believe that each pupil has individual and unique needs but that some pupils require more support than others in order to achieve to their full potential. In particular, we aim to:

- Enable every pupil to experience success.
- Promote individual confidence and a positive attitude.
- Ensure that all pupils, whatever their special educational needs, receive appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant and differentiated, and that demonstrates coherence and progression in learning.
- Give pupils with SEN equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the school's provision, as far as is appropriate.
- Ensure that children with SEN have opportunities to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them.
- Identify, assess, record and regularly review pupils' progress and needs.
- Involve parents/carers in planning and supporting at all stages of their children's development.
- Work collaboratively with parents, other professionals and support services.
- Ensure that the responsibility held by all staff and governors for SEN is implemented and maintained.

Adapting the curriculum and learning environment

We aim to make each child's curriculum appropriate for their individual needs. We have an increasing range of interventions from which to draw for pupils. We have arranged our curriculum into three curriculum 'pathways. The Yellow Pathway is a formal style curriculum for those with MLD, Green is for pupils with SLD and the Blue pathway is for learners with PMLD.

We seek to make reasonable adjustments linked to assessment advice and discussion with parents and carers, when possible, to help children access the curriculum. We are happy to discuss suggestions from parents and carers adaptations they would like to see reflected.

We use Pupil Premium effectively to provide group interventions as well as individual resources, approaches and subsidies.

Individual teachers are responsible for making lessons accessible to all children. Progress is reported using agreed standards criteria, as well as progress in individual social, emotional or behavioural targets.

Additional support for learning

We have specialist roles based at either school, including an Autism Level 4 TA who provides individual and group interventions as well as supporting class teachers to develop practice within their classes. We use TEACCH and have had key staff trained in this approach. Our Autism TA works with pupils 1-1, and sets the structured approach up for pupils within their class base. We also have a senior leader to lead and develop provision for pupils with communication needs as well as a Communication TA to support pupils with their communication needs. All staff complete training to support communication and interaction, for example, via PECs.⁵

We have a Makaton tutor who provides in-house training for staff and parents,⁶ and Eye Gaze technology and have trained staff to access this with their pupils.

Support for improving the emotional, mental and social development of pupils with SEN.

The school has an anti-bullying policy, and has bought in specialist roles to support pupils with emerging or actual mental health issues, i.e. a Play Therapist, Music Therapist, Family Liaison Worker, and Blue Smile / Centre 33 Worker. In addition to these school based roles we can refer to external support such as Education Psychologist and CAMH.

Expertise and training of staff, and securing specialist expertise

We consult our staff and take into account outcomes from appraisals. We ensure that all staff complete training to support the medical needs of our children.

All staff complete an induction training programme to ensure competency to fulfil the job description and role. This includes introductory sessions with key senior staff on Safeguarding, Team Teach, Assessment and Curriculum, Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD), ASC, Health and Safety and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

In addition to the expertise detailed in the section, 'Additional support for learning' above, we have two staff trainers who train staff in school in moving and handling techniques.⁷ All staff receive two days of training in Team-Teach de-escalation and positive handling techniques to support challenging behaviours.⁸ We are currently exploring options with including STEPs alongside Team Teach as well.

We train staff to implement phonics teaching but also train staff to support children with precision teaching to support a whole word method for some children. We keep under review advice from:

www.literacytrust.org.uk

www.makaton.org

⁵ www.pecs.unitedkingdom.com/

⁶ www.makaton.org/

⁷ <http://www.edgetraining.org.uk/>

⁸ <http://www.teamteach.co.uk/>

www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com
www.communicaitonmatters.org.uk

For pupils with hearing impairment, staff receive specialist advice and training from the Hearing Support Service.⁹

For pupils with visual impairment, we receive advice, support and training from the Visual Impairment Service. These professionals input into the annual review process for relevant pupils.¹⁰

Access is provided to a School Nurse, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, CAMH team, Paediatrician, Educational Psychologist and Music Therapist as necessary, according to individual pupil needs.

Equipment and facilities

We have a range of furniture to support children with SEND, however, we will respond to requests for furniture resulting from assessment recommendations from Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists. Some pupils have specialist physiotherapy equipment such as walkers and standing frames. The school has a store of furniture and equipment, as well as access to the central store held by the health service. We also purchase additional equipment as necessary according to pupil need.

Working together with parents / carers of children

We take a flexible approach and use the home-school diary as the primary means of communication. Some parents have individual needs, e.g. prefer a 'phone call if they can't read. Where parents are not living together we can send two copies of paperwork home so that both parents are equally involved.

Currently examples of working with parents include:

- Class Dojo¹¹
- Access to Evidence for Learning, our online assessment of progress framework
- Reports from other professionals as part of the annual review (e.g. music therapists, SaLT, Physio, etc.)
- Athletics¹² and Bug Club¹³ online records
- Family Worker input
- Learning journeys
- Twice yearly parents' evenings
- Annual parental survey

⁹ hearingsupport@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

www.ndcs.org.uk

www.actionforhearingloss.org.uk

¹⁰ visual.impairment@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

www.rnib.org.uk

¹¹ <https://www.classdojo.com/>

¹² <http://uk.mathletics.com/>

¹³

<http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/Primary/Literacy/AllLiteracyresources/BugClub/BugClubOverview.aspx>

All parental views are taken into account and listened to by staff. We do all that we can to make adjustments in provision, taking into account factors such as resources, best interests of the child and so on. Parents are encouraged to become involved as governors or as members of the Highfield Friends and Parents Association at Ely or SOHLA at Littleport. We involve parents and carers in setting learning goals meaningful for their child.

Consulting and involving young people with SEN

Each school has a thriving school council with class representation and active involvement in day to day decision making, allowing children and young people to give views about the recruitment of staff, fundraising and a range of other subjects. The School Council regularly asks questions and collates feedback from other pupils, including learning walks around the school on a termly basis. Members are voted on by their classmates. Students are always encouraged to participate in meetings when possible so that their voice can be heard and not assumed.

Complaints

Our complaints procedure is available on each school's website or via the main school office.

Involvement of other agencies

EHC plan annual review meetings are multi-agency meetings, where all involved professionals are invited to attend and/or send a report. In addition, some pupils are defined as 'Children in Need' under the Children Act 1989. Child in Need meetings are held regularly at school. Help and support is available for the family through our Family Worker.

Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

Due to the changing nature of contact details, if there are any support services, please contact the main school office on 01353 662085 for Ely, and 01353 223301 for Littleport. Our Family Liaison Worker is available to talk through concerns, and signpost any available support.

Supporting pupils with SEN moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood

At each Highfield Academy, we operate a curriculum offer that is based on 3 pathways. Please see our curriculum policy for further information.

Early years and Foundation stage

All parents are offered support in completing our school admission forms so that we can have key information about the pupil. We hold pre-admission meetings so that we are well prepared for each child starting with us. Many EYFS children will come with a Family Support Plan or have a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to link the family to services in the locality. We plan with parents whether to start with whole days or half days initially. We begin a learning journey document in partnership with parents so that aims can be shared and all steps of achievement celebrated. We hold a move up morning in the summer term for all new pupils to join their new class.

Primary – Key Stage 1 and 2

If the child is new to Highfield we will hold a pre-admission meeting to review the EHC plan to check provision is being delivered and parents are happy with the arrangements. We hold a move up morning in the summer term for all new pupils to join their new class.

Key Stage 3

Children who transfer to special school at KS3 often have experienced a high level of frustration with a previous placement because it has not met their needs, or the transfer to secondary school is deemed to be too problematic due to the size and scope of the mainstream school. We fully understand parents are often anxious, and encourage parents and carers to visit the school prior to a placement decision. We hold a move up morning in the summer term for all new pupils to join their new class.

Key Stage 4

Young people who transfer to special school at KS4 often move from other local authorities or have decided with their parents that special school can offer a wider curriculum to support their social and emotional development or autism. We offer opportunities for students with a placement decision to visit the school with taster days and listen to their views.

Sixth Form

Young people who transfer to special school at Post 16 often choose the special school offer because it prepares students with functional skills for vocational educational opportunities linked to colleges and voluntary sector settings. We plan with the student and parents how long they will likely stay on roll and what they will access whilst with us.

Follow up beyond school

We follow up the destinations of our students, and staff undertaking link courses are able to know the progress of previous students and their success with access to work and care support.

Responsibilities

The Local Governing Bodies, in co-operation with the Executive Headteacher, has a legal responsibility for determining the policy and provision for all pupils.

The Heads of School and Executive Headteacher have responsibility for:

- The management of all aspects of the school's work.
- Keeping the Local Governing Bodies informed about relevant issues.
- Working closely with personnel within the school.
- Ensuring that school provision meets the needs of individual pupils, and that pupils make the best possible progress given their starting points.
- Ensuring that the implementation of this policy and the effects of inclusion policies on the school as a whole are monitored and reported to governors.

The Local Governing Body will ensure that:

- Pupil progress is at the heart of the school development plan.
- Pupils are not barred from joining any activity due to their SEN.
- They report to parents on related SEN issues.
- They have regard to the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice (2015).
- They are fully informed about SEN issues, so that they can play a major part in school self-review.
- They ensure, with the Leadership Team that appropriate staffing and funding arrangements are in place to meet the needs of all learners.
- The quality of provision is regularly monitored.
- They, and the school as a whole, are involved in the development and monitoring of this policy.

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy.
- Liaising with and advising other staff as necessary.
- Liaising closely with parents of pupils with SEN, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process.
- Liaising with the school office in attending meetings as necessary linked to areas of responsibility and pupils in their class/es.
- Ensuring that midday supervisors are given any necessary information relating to the supervision of pupils at lunchtime and supporting them in relation to behaviour management and other issues where necessary.

Teaching Assistants should:

- Be fully aware of this policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for all pupils.
- Provide feedback to teachers about pupils' responses to learning tasks and strategies, and contribute to assessment of pupil progress.

Cambridgeshire's Local Offer

All local authorities working with their partners must publish information about how children and young people 0 - 25 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported in their area. This is known as the local offer. Cambridgeshire's Local Offer can be found at

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/>