

Special Educational Needs, Disability, Inclusion and Mental Health Policy



Approved by: Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) **Date:** 1st September 2025

Last reviewed on: 1st September 2024

Next review due by: 1st September 2026

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

1. Guidance and legislation

This policy is written with regard to:

- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010

2. Aims

Our SEND Policy and Information Report aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with a range of special educational needs (SEN)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEN.

3. About the school

This independent special school admits young people with a range of special educational needs and those with an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). The school aims to restore and develop young people's self-confidence, self-esteem, self-control and self-motivation through a flexible, personalised, needs-led education with unconditional care, nurture and support. We provide a broad and balanced, personalised and differentiated curriculum appropriate to each pupil's needs and abilities. Pupils at this school work 1:1 or in small groups with high staffing ratios.

4. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

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.

Special Educational Needs fall into the following areas:

- Communication and interaction (e.g. Autism)
- Cognition and learning (e.g. SpLD such as dyslexia, MLD, SLD)
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (e.g. ADD, ADHD, attachment disorder)
- Sensory and/or physical needs (e.g. visual/hearing impairment, physical impairment)

5. Inclusion

Our school is committed to valuing the individuality of all our pupils and giving them equality of educational opportunity. We promote the individuality of our pupils and we ensure that discrimination and prejudice is eradicated. Our school engenders a culture of tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect.

6. Mental Health

Our school is committed to promoting positive mental health, recognising how important this is to our lives, in just the same way as our physical health. It is our school's role to ensure that our pupils learn what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support. We recognise that mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time, is fluid and that there are no absolutes.

7. Responsibilities

a. School Leader and SENCO will;

- have responsibility for the day to day operation of the SEN policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN including those with EHC plans
- have responsibility to promote positive mental health across the school
- remain aware of the content and requirements of the most recent SEND Code of Practice
- work to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- provide professional guidance to colleagues and works with staff, parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching
- are the point of contact for external agencies including the local authority and support staff
- liaise with outside agencies to gain advice and support for children with SEN or medical needs
- liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- design and review Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) to ensure identified special educational needs are met
- ensure that reviews of EHC plans are carried out within the statutory time frame and requirements
- ensure that pupils are involved in the planning around their education and support and the development of targets
- ensure that parents/carers are fully informed and involved in the planning and development of their child's education
- ensure that school staff are trained to meet the needs of pupils with SEN
- ensure that school staff are trained to look out for warning signs of mental health problems
- ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date
- ensure that all disclosures are held confidentially and next steps are recorded

b. Teaching Staff will;

- use a variety of teaching styles, and cater for different learning styles to allow pupils with SEN to access a broad and balanced curriculum and ensure high quality teaching

- focus on differentiation to ensure all pupils are able to access the learning; match task to ability, 1:1 support, consider processing times, key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, planned sequencing of tasks and materials, pace of presentation and the readability of books and worksheets.
- prepare and use a variety of resources and recommended aids; laptops, coloured overlays and paper, larger font
- be aware of, and regularly review, the progress and development of all their pupils, keeping accurate records
- set suitable and aspirational learning targets

c. All school staff will;

- make reasonable and anticipatory adjustments to prevent the disadvantage of any pupil
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development for each pupil
- have high expectations and ambitions for every pupil
- have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all pupils
- encourage active involvement by the pupils themselves in meeting their needs
- understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, positive communication, developing problem-solving skills, a sense of work and emotional literacy
- remain calm, supportive and non-judgemental to pupils who disclose a mental health concern about themselves or someone else
- share all concerns confidentially with the safeguarding team

d. Directors will;

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school
- Determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school

8. Identification and Assessment

The school assesses all pupils after admission to identify specific learning needs and set targets. Most pupils have already had SEN identified in previous placements. We monitor and track the progress of all pupils through an on-going process of planning, teaching and assessment. Pupils with additional SEN may be identified at any stage of this process during their school life. We will regularly review the effectiveness of support and interventions and their impact on each pupil's progress.

The analysis of pupils' needs will draw on:

- Needs identified within EHCP
- Teachers' assessment and experiences of each pupil
- Their previous progress, attainment and behaviours
- Their progress in comparison to their peers and national data
- The views and experience of their parents/carers
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external agencies

9. Further Intervention

We recognise that there is a wide range of SEN amongst our pupil population and match the level of intervention to each pupil's needs. We have adopted a graduated approach where the level of intervention increases whenever adequate progress is not being made; a four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

10. Personal Learning Plan (PLP)

A PLP is put in place for all pupils. This sets out the EHCP and academic targets the pupil is working towards and the provision in place to support this. The document is developed in consultation with the pupil, and is shared with parents/carers and relevant professionals. The school reviews each pupil's PLP on a termly basis. Parents are invited to discuss their child's progress.

11. Request for Statutory Assessment

If the pupil does not already have an Education, Health and Care Plan and is not making adequate progress, the school will request a statutory assessment by the local authority.

12. Education, Health and Care Plans

An EHC Plan is a legally binding document which sets out a pupil's special educational needs and the additional support required to meet those needs. The EHCP must be reviewed at least annually to ensure that targets, outcomes and provision remain appropriate. Annual reviews take into account the views, wishes and feelings of pupils and parents.

EHC Plans must be reviewed and amended in sufficient time to allow pupils moving between key stages of education to be supported by robust planning. Reviews and amendments must be completed by 15th February of the calendar year of the transfer from Primary to Secondary, 31st March from Secondary to Post 16.

For pupils with EHC Plans, the involvement of outside agencies may be specified and include:

- a specialist support in the identified area of need
- a medical service such as a Speech Therapist, Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist
- an Educational Psychologist

All reviews taking place from Year nine, at the latest, must include a focus on preparing for adult life, including employment, independent living and participation in society. This transition planning must be built into the EHCP and should include effective planning for young people moving from children's to adult care and health services.

As the pupil reaches the end of their compulsory schooling at 16, some rights to participate in decision making about EHC Plans transfer from the parent to the young person, subject to their capacity to do so. Young people are entitled to the same quality and level of information, advice and support as their parents/carers. They may need support in exercising choice and control over the support they receive and advocacy should be provided when necessary.

13. Mental Health Needs

We aim to identify pupils with mental health needs as early as possible and provide a prompt response. We do this in different ways including:

- Identifying individuals that might need support
- Working as a school team around each child, including administrative staff, the SENCO, the Family Liaison Officer, Keyworkers, teachers, tutors and the Safeguarding team
- Home visits
- 1:1 keyworking sessions
- 1:1 Thrive sessions
- Tutor group time
- Concern form reporting
- Analysing behaviour forms
- Pupil voice and feedback
- Weekly staff briefings

Signs of mental health needs might include:

- Non-verbal behaviour
- Social withdrawal
- Changes in mood, activity, eating or sleeping habits
- Lowering of achievement
- Reduced engagement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's child protection procedures are followed.

Verbal and non-verbal disclosures will be recorded and held in the pupil's confidential file, along with the next steps. Each pupil is assessed on level of need, in order to get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. In school, support might include:

- Additional 1:1 Thrive programme
- Intervention day with a trusted school staff member
- Small or group focused work
- Art, drama, music, play and talking therapies

We make links with a range of specialist services and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider the next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' provision. External support might include:

- CAMHS
- Educational Psychology service

14. Considering complaints

We encourage parents to be fully involved in the decision making process in relation to their child's education. Complaints about provision in our school should be made to the school leader in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy, if the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily.

15. Monitoring, Evaluation and review

Evidence of the effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, including regular informal and formal classroom observations, learning walks and scrutiny of planning and assessment paperwork and data
- Continuous monitoring of each pupil's progress in all areas of the curriculum
- Continuous monitoring of each pupils social, emotional and behavioural progress
- Pupil, parent, staff and outside agency feedback including questionnaires
- Robust monitoring by the directorial body
- School staff appraisal process
- Benchmarking attainment against national norms
- Local authority audit processes
- Ofsted inspection process

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant, if you have any comments please email directors@ontrackededucation.com