

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Reviewed by Governors: May 2017

Introduction

This policy has been reviewed to offer guidance to staff and parents/carers about the identification and monitoring of SEND at our school. **At the heart of this policy are our school Aims and Values.**

Definition of Special Educational Needs

The definition of Special Educational Needs, as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice 0-25 years, May 2015:

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children fulfil this criteria if they:

- have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for children of the same age
- are under **statutory** school age and fall within the definitions above or
- have emotional or behavioural difficulties that interfere with their ability to learn

Children must not be regarded as having a SEND solely because:

- they have a disability
- the language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught;
- slow progress or low attainment or
- persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours.

Background and Legal Context

This document was written with reference to the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations, the revised Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2014, and the SEN & Disability Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

All schools are required to publish an annual 'SEND Information Report' on their website, showing the arrangements for the admission of children with SEND.

Aims and Objectives

Every school is required to identify and address the SEND of the pupils that they support. Commonswood will:

- aim to identify needs at the earliest point and make effective provision using a graduated approach of 'assess, plan, do, review'
- use our best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need – making reasonable adjustments to meet children and young people's SEND
- ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of our school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- identify the roles and responsibilities of staff including a designated teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating of SEND
- ensure that parents/carers support their child's education by contributing to the assess, plan, do, review process
- provide three meeting a year with parent/ carers to discuss provision and outcomes
- inform parents/carers when the school are making special educational provision for a child
- ensure that our children have a voice in the assess, plan, do, review process.

Improving Outcomes

At Commonswood, we believe that all children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- achieve their best
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

Equality and Inclusion

The school is committed to ensure the equality of opportunity for all of our pupils. We want children with SEND to enjoy the same levels of success, achievement, opportunity and self-esteem as other pupils. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs.

Some children have barriers to learning that require particular action by the school. These may have been identified by, or in consultation with, parent/carers, school staff and or other professionals.

The additional requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional or different provision from that given to other children of the same age. We regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support.

Reasonable adjustments are made in all classrooms, and include the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. The school also has a wider duty to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

Medical Conditions

The school will make arrangement to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual Health Care Plans and/or Education, Health and Care Plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils. Where children and young people also have SEND, their provision will be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the care plan. Schools are required to have regard to statutory guidance '*Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions*'.

Education Inclusion

In our school we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- require, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing lessons which are differentiated to address the potential areas of difficulty and remove barriers to pupil achievement
- providing support for children who need help with the four broad areas of need Communication & Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional & Mental Health difficulties and Sensory and/or Physical needs (see Appendix 1)
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and providing varied experiences
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely and
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning

Identifying SEND in schools

Many of the children who join us have been in early education. In many cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. Transition meetings are encouraged with professionals who may already be involved.

The school will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information provided by previous settings and key stages where appropriate. Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils, linked to the four broad areas of need.

For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age. However, for other children and young people difficulties become evident only as they develop and we are committed to early response. Working in partnership with parents/carers and the children themselves is an essential part of this process.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEND. The school works closely with parents/carers to identify possible causal factors, such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach may be appropriate. In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly impact on outcomes.

Professionals should also be alert to other events that can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to children having SEND but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe. The school will ensure that appropriate provision for a child's short term needs are met in order to prevent problems escalating. Where there are long lasting difficulties the school will consider whether the child might have SEND. Further guidance on dealing with bullying issues can be found on the GOV.UK website and in the school's Anti-Bullying policy.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEND. However, they may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. Equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age, means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Identifying and assessing SEND for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. The school will look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND.

SEND Provision

If a child is identified as having SEND, the school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND support will take the form of a four-part cycle - Assess, Plan, Do and Review, through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. A child that is identified as having SEND will be categorised as "SEN Support" in school.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. Our first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND is Quality First Teaching and an accurate match of learning to need. Information from a wide range of sources including early discussion with the pupil, parents/carers, teacher and/or SENCo will be gathered to determine the needs and provision for the child.

If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. The child's teacher will offer interventions that are different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The class teacher will keep parents/carers informed and draw upon them for additional information. The SENCo will support the teacher and if necessary make further assessments of the child's needs. These children's additional support is shown through Class Provision Mapping and Individual Provision Plans. Following discussion with parents/carers, advice from outside agencies may be sought, implemented and reviewed.

Special educational provision is based on the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents/carers. This should then help determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required. All stakeholders will meet regularly to review the child's progress. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to meet the teacher and/or SENCo at least three times a year.

If the child needs support from an outside agency, then a 'Single Service Referral' is completed. However, if advice is required from more than one agency then a co-ordinated approach is needed, which can sometimes mean the school will complete an 'Early Help Module' assessment. Once this is completed, professionals from the various agencies will set up 'A Team around the Family' (TAF) meeting. The parents / carers will select a Lead Professional from the team members. In most cases TAF meetings will then be held within school every 6 weeks to formulate and discuss targets towards the desired outcomes for the child.

SEN support will be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes set out in an Individual Provision Plan. Where, despite taking relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents / carers may consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (see Chapter 9 of the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years, June 2014 for further details).

Transition

SEN support will include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life (see Chapter 8 of the Code of Practice 0-25 years, May 2015, Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years). This includes within school transitions.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Governing Body

The governing body ensures that:

- it has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with Special Educational Needs
- it does its best to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having Special Educational Needs and ensures that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children;
- it consults the LA and other schools, when appropriate, and reports annually to parents/carers on the success of the school's policy for children with Special Educational Needs
- parents/carers are notified of a decision by the school that SEND provision is being made for their child
- it identifies a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs. This governor liaises with the school and reports back to the governing body.
- the SEND governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEND provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel

The role of the SENCo

The key responsibilities of the SENCo may include:

- identification of children with SEND
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEND
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- keeping up to date with Local Authority information regarding children with SEND
- provide training and updates about SEND for school staff
- liaising with parents/carers of pupils with SEND
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.

The role of the Headteacher

The Head is responsible for:

- informing and liaising with governors on special needs provision
- managing the Special Educational Needs Policy on a day to day basis. Giving and arranging for practical help and training to be given to members of staff on how to deal with special needs issues
- ensuring that complaints regarding SEND provision are dealt with in accordance to the LEA guidance for school-based complaints procedures
- ensuring all staff are trained in SEND where appropriate to provide adequate support for SEND pupils and to allow for personal and professional development

The role of the Class Teacher

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. This includes:

- identification of children with SEND.
- devising and implementing targets and support for individual children
- match learning to need in every lesson
- follow the school systems in place to 'assess, plan, do and review' provision and outcomes for pupils with SEND in liaison with parents/cares and pupils
- liaise with the SENCo to ensure the needs of individual pupils are met through the implementation of the identified strategies/interventions
- implement the school Special Educational Needs Policy
- undertake any training suggested or supplied by the school.

Definition of the Broad Areas of Need

Communication and interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils. The Department for Education publishes guidance on managing pupils' mental health and behaviour difficulties in schools – see the References section under Chapter 6 for a link.

Sensory and/or physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deaf/blind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deaf/blind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health (see the References section under Chapter 6 for a link).

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.