

# Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

Autumn 2017



Sandhills Community Primary School

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## **Ethos and Vision**

Our vision and ethos are what guide our work and the developments we embark on. They are regularly reviewed by staff, governors and children. The statements confirm the continuing commitment that Sandhills Primary School has to its children and staff.

### **Vision**

We aspire for all our children to become confident, secure, caring individuals who achieve personal success and develop a love of learning.

### **Ethos**

- To provide a warm welcoming secure environment for all children
- To encourage, value and extend every child's contribution to the school
- To recognise and celebrate success in everyone
- To provide a stimulating, challenging curriculum that interests all children
- To build strong collaborative partnerships with families and the local community
- To encourage and enable the continuous professional development of all staff.

## **Aim**

At Sandhills we aim to ensure that the children in our school are provided with high quality, inspirational and purposeful learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil progress and achievement.

### **The aim of this policy is to:**

1. Ensure the school use their best endeavours to support every child with SEN and/or disabilities
2. Ensure that the child's welfare remains paramount, and that the best interests of the whole child are central to all joint work
3. Ensure that the child has a voice in this process to enable their wishes and feelings to be taken into account, in the light of his/her understanding
4. Ensure early identification of children's needs and early intervention to support them
5. Ensure high quality provision to meet the needs of children with SEND
6. Focus on inclusive practice by removing barriers to learning
7. Ensure that children with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside children who do not have SEND
8. Make clear the expectations of all stakeholders in the process

9. Work in partnership with children, parents and carers to enable and encourage them to participate as fully as possible in decisions, and provide them with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
10. Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs and disabilities.

## Definition

1. A child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
2. A child of compulsory school age 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 educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in school.
3. A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he or she is, or will be, taught. (Section 312, 1996 Education Act).
4. In defining 'learning difficulty' the school includes those arising from emotional and behavioural difficulties.
5. This policy does not include those children with additional needs who may be able or gifted. However, many of the approaches that are used, for example individual programme planning or differentiation of the curriculum, may apply.
6. A child with a physical disability will not necessarily have special educational needs, but may need a school environment that has physical adaptations or specialised equipment in order to ensure their access both to the building and to the curriculum.
7. Children have a right to receive and impart information, to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them from the early years. Their views should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability (Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy has been written in line with the expectations and guidelines of the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
- 1.2. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised and accurate assessment lie at the heart of effective learning and makes a significant difference to the lives of the children in our school.
- 1.3. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to the diverse learning needs of the children. Some children have barriers to learning which mean that they have special needs and require particular action by the school.
- 1.4. Teachers take account of the special educational needs presented by the children they teach and make provision to support individuals or groups of children through rigorous assessment and planning. This will ensure that all children are able to access and participate fully in the curriculum.
- 1.5. Children may have special educational needs at any point during their school career. These may last throughout the time a child is in school, or may present for a given period of time, after which, often as a result of intervention strategies employed to support the child, no particular action is required.

## **2. Inclusion**

- 2.1. All early years' providers have duties under the Equality Act 2010. In particular, they must not discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children, and they must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at substantial disadvantage.
- 2.2. All children are equally valued whether or not they have special educational needs. Children present a rich and diverse range of strengths and needs. Inclusion is most likely to be achieved where this diversity is recognised and regarded positively.
- 2.3. The education of children is a shared professional responsibility. The inclusion of children with special educational needs is also a shared professional responsibility, shared by all staff within early years, at school and Local Authority levels.

## **3. Medical Conditions**

- 3.1. The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support children with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such children. Where children and young people also have special educational needs, their provision should be planned and

delivered in a coordinated way with the healthcare plan. Schools are required to have regard to statutory guidance supporting children at school with medical conditions (DfE, 2014).

## 4. Identification and Assessment

- 4.1. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised - the School is committed to early identification of special educational need and adopts a graduated response to meeting these needs in line with the Code of Practice 2014.
- 4.2. A range of evidence is collected through the usual assessment and monitoring arrangements. If this suggests that a child is not making expected progress, the class teacher will consult with the SENCO in order to decide whether additional and/or different provision is necessary.
- 4.3. There is no need for children to be registered or identified as having special educational needs unless the school is taking additional or different action. Children who have disabilities but no special needs will be recorded on the school's medical register.
- 4.4. Regular assessments of progress for all children should seek to identify children making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:
  - is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
  - fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
  - fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
  - widens the attainment gap.
- 4.5. The first response to such progress should be high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. Where progress continues to be less than expected the class teacher, working with the SENCO, should assess whether the child has SEN. While informally gathering evidence (including the views of the child and their parents) school should not delay in putting in place extra teaching or other rigorous interventions designed to secure better progress, where required. The child's response to such support can help identify their particular needs.
- 4.6. For some children, SEN can be identified at an early age. However, for other children difficulties become evident only as they develop. All those who work with children should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children themselves.
- 4.7. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. Where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine

whether there are any 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.

- 4.8. 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 SEN but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe.
- 4.9. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and should not automatically lead to a child being recorded as having SEN. 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.
- 4.10. Identifying and assessing SEN for children whose first language is not English requires particular care. School looks carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different areas of learning and development to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from a SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.
- 4.11. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. In practice, individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have needs across all areas. A detailed assessment of need should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual should always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs and seek to address them all using well-evidenced interventions targeted at their areas of difficulty and where necessary specialist equipment or software.

## **5. Broad Areas of Need**

### **Communication and interaction**

- 5.1. Children 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.

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

### **Cognition and learning**

- 5.3. Support for learning difficulties may be required when children 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.
- 5.4. 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**

- 5.5. Children 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.
- 5.6. 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.

### **Sensory and/or physical needs**

- 5.7. Some children require special educational provision because they have a 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. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties, which makes it even more difficult for them to access the curriculum than for those with a single sensory impairment.

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

## 6. Provision

- 6.1. Teachers should know precisely where the children with SEN are in their learning development, and should:
  - ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of the children themselves
  - have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them
  - track their progress towards these aspirational goals
  - keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them
  - promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development
  - ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.
- 6.2. Special educational provision should be matched to a child's identified SEN. Teachers take account of the type and extent of the difficulties experienced by individual children with SEN in their short term planning and provide resources, supports for learning and detailed plans for teaching assistants (TAs).
- 6.3. TAs will record assessment outcomes and the progress of individual or small group interventions on a record sheet(s). These will be kept in individual children's SEND Provision Folders.
- 6.4. SEND Provision Folders contain the following:
  - The child's current Pupil Profile and Individual SEND Plan (ISP)
  - A weekly timetable of support if appropriate
  - Assessment records
  - Evidence of progress
  - Outside agency reports e.g: the Educational Psychologist, SENSS reports, e.g. Speech and Language, Autism Service etc
- 6.5. All confidential records are stored securely.

## **7. Individual SEND Plans (ISP) and Pupil Profiles**

- 7.1. Provision that is in addition to or different from that available to all children will be recorded in an ISP. This will often be written by the class teacher but always in consultation with the SENCO, teaching assistant(s), child (when appropriate) and parents/carers. It may also involve consultation and advice from external agencies.
- 7.2. The ISP will set outcomes and aspirations for the child set by both the class teacher and outside professionals, in agreement with the parents. It will also record outcomes set by outside agencies.
- 7.3. The ISP will set out the small step SMART Targets (Specific, Measurable, Action-orientated, Realistic & Timely) that will support the child to achieve the outcomes on their ISP. Smart targets must be SMART in-order to support the child appropriately and enable them to achieve.
- 7.4. Parents are invited to ISP review meetings at least 6 times a year, generally each short term. Children will be encouraged to participate fully in the review process according to their age and abilities.
- 7.5. The ISP will be updated as and when required by the allocation of new ISP targets or new provision provided by outside professionals.
- 7.6. If the school has evidence that a child is making insufficient progress despite significant support and intervention, we may seek further advice and support from outside professionals. These professionals will be invited to contribute to the monitoring and review of progress. Children and parents will be fully involved and kept informed about the involvement of external agencies and proposed interventions.
- 7.7. All children with SEND who receive outside agency support have a Pupil Profile which provides staff and specialists with key information regarding the needs of the child, assessment results from school and specialists, as well as strengths and barriers to learning.
- 7.8. Pupil Profiles are updated at least 3 times a year or when there are any significant changes to a child's welfare or provision.

## **8. Involving Specialists**

- 8.1. Where, despite purposeful action by the school, a child continues to make little or no progress over a sustained period, the SENCO will consider involving appropriate specialists, for example, health visitor, speech and language therapist, educational psychologist or specialist teacher. The decision to involve specialists will be taken with the child's parents.

## 9. Statements of Special Educational Need

- 9.1. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) will be undertaking a phased transition from Statements of Special Educational Need to Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plans. Following consultation with parents, schools, colleges, Social Care and Health, and with regard to national guidance, the focus each year will be on children at key points of transition e.g. final year of primary school (Year 6).
- 9.2. By April 2018, all existing statements will have been converted to EHC Plans in line with statutory regulations.
- 9.3. If a child has a statement of Special Educational Need, following a Transfer Review, the statement will be converted to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), unless all agree that this is no longer required.

## 10. Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans

- 10.1. The majority of children with special educational needs will have their needs identified and met through the school.
- 10.2. A small number of children will require an Education, Health and Care needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary to set out the support that will help them achieve the best outcomes. This is usually where needs are complex or severe and progress is not being made despite individually tailored support. The written record of the special provision that must be put in place for the child or young person is called an EHC Plan.
- 10.3. Additional top-up funding may be applied for from the local authority, without the need for an EHC Plan, where support can be provided by the school working with specialist education support services. Additional funding is intended for children who have complex educational needs but do not have social care and/or health needs and therefore would not need an EHC plan.
- 10.4. The difference between SEN Support and an EHC plan reflects the increasing complexity of multi-agency involvement. This is in terms of:
  - the number of professionals involved and the frequency and longevity of the involvement
  - the time required by staff across education, health and/or care for liaison/meetings/planning/reviews/training
  - the complexity of integrating the recommendations from a range of professionals into a coherent outcomes focused plan across education, health and/or care
  - the frequency/duration and longevity of a child requiring a specialist support/intervention.

## **11. Involving Children**

11.1. We recognise that all children have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice. We endeavour to fully involve children wherever possible by including children in:

- Identifying their own needs and developing an understanding about their own learning (self-assessment).
- The self-review of their own progress and in setting new targets.

## **12. The Role of the SEND Co-ordinator**

12.1. The people responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy are: Miss C. Stanley & Mrs J. Newman.

12.2. The special needs co-ordinators are responsible for:

- ensuring all practitioners in school understand their responsibilities regarding SEND and the school's approach to identifying and meeting the needs of children with SEND
- advising and assisting colleagues
- maintaining the Special Needs Register
- co-ordinating the efficient administration of the systems for identifying, assessing, monitoring and record keeping for children with SEND
- contributing to in-service training for staff
- assisting class teachers to draw up ISPs and Pupil Profiles in consultation with other staff members and parents, where appropriate
- assisting class teachers to draw up SMART targets for the children's ISPs
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the school
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond school
- co-ordinating and submitting requests for Education Health and Care Plans
- co-ordinating Annual Reviews for children with EHC Plans or Statements.

## **13. Transition**

13.1. When children are due to transfer to secondary school, planning for this will be started in the year prior to transfer.

- 13.2. Advanced planning for children in Year 6 will allow appropriate options to be considered. The SENCO will liaise with the SENCO of the secondary school to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to support children at the time of transfer.
- 13.3. When children move to another school their records will be transferred to the next school within 15 days of the child ceasing to be registered, as required under the Education (Pupil Information) Regulations 2000.

## **14. Raising Complaints**

- 14.1. The school's complaints policy is available on the school website. The child's class teacher will work closely with parents at all stages in his/her education and should be the first port of call in case of any difficulty.
- 14.2. We aim for a close working partnership with parents and, if parents are anxious about any aspect of their child's education, they can approach the school.
- 14.3. Informal complaints can be discussed with the class teacher.
- 14.4. Formal complaints can be discussed with the Headteacher in the hope that a satisfactory resolution can be found.
- 14.5. The Governor with responsibility for Special Educational Needs may be consulted.

## **15. Governors' Role**

- 15.1. The Governor who is responsible for overseeing SEND provision is Mrs M. Palmer.
- 15.2. The Governing Body supports OCCs admissions criteria which does not discriminate against children with special educational needs or disabilities, and its admissions policy has due regard for the guidance in the Code of Practice.
- 15.3. Parents or carers seeking the admission of a child with mobility difficulties are advised to approach the school well in advance so that consultations can take place. The school works in partnership with OCC on an Accessibility Plan.

## **16. Partnership with Parents**

- 16.1. The school believes that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn.
- 16.2. Parents are involved at every stage of the SEND profiling system. We believe it is essential to have a good dialogue with parents of children with special educational needs and the school values the information and insight parents can provide us with. By allowing parents and carers opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the school can help their child, we can focus on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need.

- 16.3. We aim to ensure parents and carers feel welcome. We encourage them to inform school of any difficulties or needs they perceive their child may have, by instilling confidence that the school will listen and act promptly and appropriately.
- 16.4. We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing the school's policies. We would like parents to:
- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
  - Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
  - Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect their child's performance or behaviour at school
  - Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
  - Support and be involved in the school's work for children with SEND
  - Agree to and support the school's Homework and Online Safety Policies
  - Support extra-curricular activities, such as concerts, educational visits etc
  - Encourage and support the school's ethos and values.

## **17. Monitoring and Review**

- 17.1. This policy is a working document. Therefore, it is open to change and restructure as and when appropriate.
- 17.2. This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Senior Management Team.
- 17.3. The SEND Governor visits the school to monitor progress and provides feedback to the Governing Body.
- 17.4. Monitoring will consider the following:
- Is there effective communication between staff, parents and SEND coordinator?
  - Are the ISPs addressing the needs of children?
  - Do children know their own targets?
  - Are children making good progress and achieving their goals?
  - Are we identifying children's difficulties early and quickly?
  - Do we make full use of our SEND resources?
  - Are parents happy with the provisions for SEND pupils?
  - Are links with other agencies effective?
  - Is advice from other agencies being used effectively to support individual children?

## **18.Relevant Policies and Documentation**

This policy should be read in conjunction with these documents:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

This policy was written by Ms C. Stanley, Co-ordinator for Inclusion and SEND, in consultation with Mrs J. Settle, Headteacher, based on the Local Authority Model Policy for SEND and reflecting the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014.

This policy was formally adopted by the Governing Body at their Autumn Term Meeting 2017.

Latest Review: Autumn Term 2017

Future Review: Autumn Term 2018