



Special Educational Needs Information Report

Date: 1st October 2017

Review date: 1st October 2018

Special Educational Needs Information Report

The Acorn Free School

Date of Issue: September 2017

1) Aims of our provision in regards to pupils with special educational needs and/or disability

The aims of our policy and practice in relation to special educational need and disability in this school are:

- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability by taking action to increase access to the curriculum, the environment and to printed information for all.
- To ensure that all children and young people engage in the activities of the school.
- To reduce barriers to progress by embedding the principles in the National Curriculum Inclusion statement <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>
- To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for pupils for whom this is required, that is “additional to and different from” that provided within the differentiated curriculum, to better respond to the four broad areas of need:
 1. Communication and interaction,
 2. Cognition and learning,
 3. Social, mental and emotional health,
 4. Sensory/physical.all 4 areas being clearly highlighted in our IEPs.
- To request, monitor and respond to parent/carers’ and pupils’ views in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership.
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need, through well-targeted continuing professional development.
- To support pupils with medical conditions to achieve full inclusion in all school activities by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals in order to meet the medical needs of pupils.
- To work in cooperative and productive partnership with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.

2) What are special educational needs (SEN) or a disability?

At our school we use the definition for SEN and for disability from the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This states:

- **Special Educational Needs:** *A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.*
 - ❖ *A learning difficulty or disability is a **significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.***
 - ❖ *Special educational provision means **educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England***

- **Disability:** *Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.*

3) The kinds of special educational needs (SEN) for which provision is made at the school

- All of our children and young people have additional needs. They are all SEN Support on the SEN register due to Social, Mental and Emotional Health. All children with SEN but without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are welcome at our school, in line with the school admissions policy. If a place is available, we will undertake to use our best endeavours, in partnership with parents and the young person’s mainstream school, to make the provision required to meet the SEN of pupils at this school.
- For children with an EHCP, parents and the child’s mainstream school need to decide whether Acorn is an appropriate setting to meet the child’s needs.
- Before taking up a place at Acorn, the child’s mainstream school will send Acorn a copy of the EHCP. And then consider Acorn’s comments very carefully before a final decision on placement is made.
- Whilst at Acorn, parents of a child with an EHCP also have the right to seek a place at a special school if it they consider that their child’s needs can be better met in specialist provision. Acorn will support parents with this application, together with the child’s mainstream school.
- Likewise, for young people without an EHCP, Acorn can support parents and the mainstream school in applying for an EHCP and finding a suitable provision.

4) How does our school know if children need extra help?

We know when a pupil needs help if:

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, the child’s mainstream school, external agencies, teachers, the pupil’s previous school or the pupil themselves, regarding concerns relating to inadequate levels of progress or inclusion.
- Screening, which is completed on entry for all pupils, indicates gaps in knowledge and/or skills.
- Whole school tracking of attainment outcomes indicates lack of expected rate of progress.
- Observation of the pupil indicates that they have additional needs.
- Weekly Key Stage meetings will highlight any areas of need for individual children and discuss appropriate intervention.

5) What should a parent do if it thinks their child may have special educational needs?

- If parents have concerns relating to their child’s learning or inclusion then please initially discuss these with your child’s teacher. This then may result in a referral to the school SENCo whose name is Sofia Allen and whose contact details are:

Telephone: 01522 822428

Email: sofiaallen@theacornschoo.co.uk

- Parents may also contact the SENCo or the Headteacher directly if they feel this is more appropriate.
- All parents will be listened to. Their views and their aspirations for their child will be central to the assessment and provision that is provided by the school.

6) How will the school support a child with SEND?

- All pupils will be provided with high quality teaching that is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. At Acorn, class sizes are small and individualised learning is essential. The quality of classroom teaching provided to pupils with SEND is monitored through a number of processes that include:
 1. classroom observation by the senior leadership team, the SENCo, external verifiers,
 2. ongoing assessment of progress for all pupils, but especially those with SEND,
 3. work sampling and scrutiny of planning to ensure effective matching of work to pupil need,
 4. teacher meetings with the SENCo to provide advice and guidance on meeting the needs of pupils with SEND,
 5. pupil and parent feedback on the quality and effectiveness of interventions provided,
 6. attendance and behaviour records.
- Pupils with a disability will be provided with reasonable adjustments (such as auxiliary aids and services) to overcome any disadvantage experienced in schools and increase their access to the taught curriculum.
- All pupils have individual national curriculum targets set in line with national outcomes to ensure ambition. Parents are informed of these via meetings with mainstream school and Acorn. There are regular telephone calls to parents to discuss the child's behaviour and their progress.
- Pupils' attainments are tracked using the whole school tracking system and those failing to make expected levels of progress are identified very quickly. These pupils are then discussed in weekly Key Stage progress meetings that are undertaken between the class teacher and other members of staff in the school. The meetings are then discussed with pupils and parents, as necessary.
- Additional action to increase the rate of progress will be then identified and recorded that will include a review of the impact of the differentiated teaching being provided to the child, and if required, provision to the teacher of additional strategies to further support the success of the pupil.
- Where it is decided during this early discussion that extra support increased rates of progress, parents will be informed that the school considers their child may require additional support and their partnership sought in order to improve attainments.
- Action relating to SEN support will follow an assess, plan, do and review model, also known as the graduated approach (see diagram on the following page):
 1. **Assess:** Data on the pupil held by the school will be collated by the class teacher/SENCo in order to make an accurate assessment of the pupil's needs. Mandatory assessments are carried out when a child joins Acorn. Initial in-class assessments are carried out within the classroom, to be able to give us greater indication of ability. The child's mainstream school provides Acorn with valuable data on the child's progress and any intervention that they have been receiving. Parents will always be invited to this early discussion to support the identification of action to improve outcomes.

2. **Plan:** If review of the action taken indicates that “additional to and different from” support will be required, then the views of all involved including the parents and the pupil will be obtained and appropriate evidence-based interventions identified, recorded and implemented by the teacher with advice from the SENCo. If at this stage it is felt
3. **Do:** SEN support will be recorded on a plan that will identify a clear set of expected outcomes, which will include stretching and relevant academic and developmental targets (this may including for young people, targets around preparing for adulthood) that take into account parents’ aspirations for their child. Parents and the pupil will also be consulted on the action they can take to support attainment of the desired outcomes. This will be recorded and a date made for reviewing attainment.
4. **Review:** Progress towards these outcomes will be tracked and reviewed termly and discussed with the pupil together with the class teacher, teaching assistant and SENCo, if necessary parents will be contacted.

Many pupils arrive at Acorn already receiving support from external agencies, this support will continue. Once at Acorn it will also be possible to seek support from external agencies if this is felt the best way to meet the specific needs of the pupil. This will only be undertaken after parent permission has been obtained and may include referral to:

1. Local Authority Support Services
2. Specialists in other schools e.g. teaching schools, special schools.
3. Social Services including Social Workers and Early Help Workers.
4. Health partners such as School Nurse and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service.
5. The Working Together Team (Autism Services)

This will always take place after consultation with the child’s mainstream and with parents.

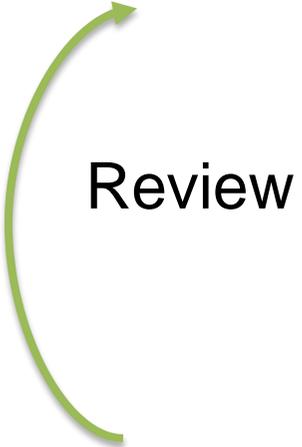
N.B. For a very small percentage of pupils, whose needs are significant and complex and the SEN Support required to meet their needs cannot reasonably be provided from within the school’s own resources, a request will be made to the local authority to conduct an assessment of education, health and care needs. This may result in an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan being provided. Acorn, as an alternative provision, cannot be named on an EHC Plan, consequently we will endeavour to support the pupil and parents in looking for a suitable placement that will best meet the needs of the pupil.

Growing understanding of what approaches secure better outcomes

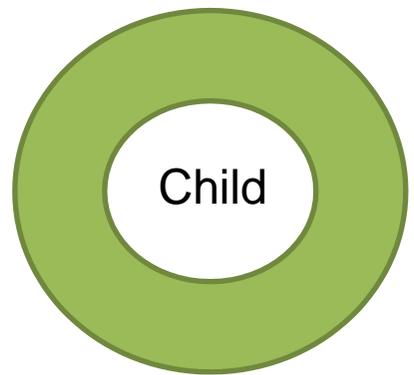
Growing understanding of pupil's needs

Assess

More frequent reviews



Review



Plan

More detailed and specialist approaches



Growing understanding of effective support

Do

Growing understanding of what teaching approaches work

7) How will pupils be involved in decisions regarding provision that can better meet their needs?

Acorn uses Pupil Profiles. These are completed by the pupils themselves and identify their abilities and strengths, their personal aims and the action they require to be taken by the school to reduce barriers to learning and social success. Each term, this information will be reviewed and the pupil's views gained on the effectiveness of the action taken so far to meet their needs. Teachers can also add to the Profile after discussions with the pupil.

8) How will the curriculum be matched to each child's needs?

- Teachers plan using pupils' achievement levels, differentiating tasks to ensure progress for every pupil in the classroom.
- When a pupil has been identified as having additional special educational needs, the curriculum and the learning environment will be further adapted by the class teacher to reduce barriers to learning and enable them to access the curriculum more easily.
- These adaptations may include strategies suggested by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and/or external specialists.
- In addition if it is considered appropriate, pupils may be provided with specialised equipment or resources such as ICT and/or additional adult help. Each class has two qualified members of staff to support pupils and monitor their progress. All actions taken by the class teacher will be recorded and shared with other staff, Senior Leadership Team, the child's mainstream school and parents.

9) How will parents know how their child is doing?

- Attainments towards the identified outcomes will be shared with parents on an ongoing basis. Due to the nature of the children at Acorn, regular meetings take place for every pupil, and consequently their SEN progress will be discussed at these meetings.
- Some of our parents have also found a home-school diary a useful tool to use to communicate with school staff on a more regular basis, though parents can request a daily phone call home or an email.
- Parents are encouraged to arrange an appointment to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher, the SENCo, and/or a member of the senior leadership team at any time when they feel concerned or have information they feel they would like to share that could impact on their child's success. Please contact the school office who will arrange this appointment for you. The contact number is 01522 822428

10) How will parents be helped to support their child's learning?

- The class teacher or SENCo may also suggest additional ways of supporting your child's learning. Please contact the school office who will arrange this appointment for you.
- At your child's induction there will be a discussion about what strategies have worked at school and also what strategies that parents use at home that would benefit the child at school.
- If you have ideas on support that you would like to have access to in order to further support your child's learning, please contact the SENCo who will locate information and guidance for you in this area.

11) How will the school evaluate the effectiveness of the SEN provision made for pupils?

The effectiveness of SEN provision will be measured using both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data will gather the views of parents and pupils on how successful the provision has been in enabling them to attain their outcomes. Quantitative data will examine both progress and attainment levels compared to those achieved nationally for pupils with the same level prior learning level. This data will be shared termly with governors and be judged by external moderators such as Ofsted.

12) What support will there be for children overall well-being?

The school offers a wide variety of pastoral support for pupils. This includes:

- An evaluated Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum that aims to provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to enhance their emotional and social knowledge and well-being.
- Behaviour Modification is taught discretely across the curriculum. All pupils have access to 1:1 Behaviour Modification, this intense work will focus on the areas that they need the most support in.
- Small group evidence-led interventions to support pupil's well-being are delivered to targeted pupils and groups. These are closely linked to needs highlighted in Pupil Profiles and IEPs.
- Pupils who find outside class times difficult are provided with alternative small group opportunities within the school and action is taken to develop their social interaction skills.
- The school has completed the Anti-bullying Pledge. Activities are undertaken during Anti-bullying Week in November that provide the school with visual aids. This also helps to embed the values that are important for the children to take on board.

13) Pupils with medical needs

- Pupils with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Individual Health and Care Plan, compiled in partnership with the school nurse and parents and if appropriate, the pupil themselves.
- Staff who volunteer to administer and supervise medications, will complete formal training and be verified as being competent.
- All medicine administration procedures adhere to the LA policy and Department of Education (DfE) guidelines included within *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions* (DfE) 2014 and identified in the School Medicine Administration Policy.

14) What specialist services are available at the school?

The school has access to a range of specialist support that are identified in (6) above. There are also other services available. If you feel your child would benefit from a specific kind of support.

15) What training do the staff supporting children and young people with SEND undertake?

In the last two years school staff have received a range of training at three levels; awareness, enhanced and specialist. Awareness training has been provided to all staff on:

- How to support pupils with dyslexia and literacy difficulties.

- How to support pupils on the autistic spectrum
- How to support pupils with behavioural difficulties
- How to support pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties

Enhanced training has been provided to Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) and the SENCo on:

- Leading a Nurture Group
- Talking Partners
- Attendance at the termly SENCo Update

Specialist training has been provided to the SENCo on:

- The SEN Coordination award.
- The school has regular visits from SEN specialist teachers and the Behaviour Support Team who provide advice to staff support the success and progress of individual pupils.
- The NHS Speech Language Therapist visits termly to assess and plan support for targeted pupils. These programmes are then delivered by a trained Teaching Assistant.
- The Governor with specific responsibility for SEN has completed the SEN Governor training.

16) How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

- Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable all children to participate in all school activities.
- The school ensures it has sufficient staff expertise to ensure that no child with SEND is excluded from any school provided activity.

17) How accessible is the school environment?

Since the school opened, the following adaptations have been made to the school environment:

- Disabled parking spot marked and located next to the school reception.
- All steps edged with yellow to ensure they are easier for those with visual impairments to negotiate
- Access in and out of school does not have steps.
- One toilet has been adapted to ensure accessibility for visitors with a disability.
- A medical room has been provided in order to enable a safe place for taking medication, insulin testing/injections etc.
- A Break Out Room has been developed to improve inclusion in the mainstream classrooms for vulnerable pupils.

Our Accessibility Plan (statutory requirement) describes the actions the school has taken to increase access to the environment, the curriculum and to printed information is available via the school website.

18) How will the school prepare/support my child when joining or transferring to a new school? A number of strategies are in place to enable effective pupils' transition. These include:

On entry:

- A planned introduction meeting is organized between Acorn, the child's mainstream school and parents. This takes place shortly after the decision has been made that Acorn may be a suitable place for your child.
- Parent/carers are invited to a meeting at the school and are provided with a range of information to support them in enabling their child to settle into the school routine.
- The SENCo will get in touch with all new parents of pupils who are known to have SEND to allow concerns to be raised and solutions to any perceived challenges on entry.
- When pupils transfer from their mainstream setting, the previous school records will be requested immediately and a meeting set up with parents to identify and reduce any concerns.

Transition to the next school or college, preparation for adulthood and independent living

Secondary to college:

- The transitional steps in place for pupils provides a number of opportunities for pupils and parents to meet the new teachers. These opportunities are further enhanced for pupils with SEND. Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time.
- The annual review in Y10 for pupils with an EHCP begins the process where parents are supported to make decisions regarding college or apprenticeship choice, the review will take place at the child's mainstream school.
- Parents will be encouraged to consider options for the next phase of education and the school will involve outside agencies, as appropriate, to ensure information provided is comprehensive but accessible.
- Accompanied visits to other providers may be arranged as appropriate, either at the pupils or parents request.
- For pupils transferring to local schools, the necessary staff of both schools will discuss the needs of pupils with SEN in order to ensure a smooth transition.
- The records of pupils who leave the school mid-phase will be transferred within five working days of the parents notifying their child has been enrolled at another school.

After school:

- The school adheres to the guidance in *Careers guidance and inspiration in schools: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff* April 2014 <http://preview.tinyurl.com/mn5muuo> This places a duty on schools to secure independent careers guidance for all Y8-13 pupils. This guidance includes information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and other vocational pathways.
- Parents may like to use the website of the National Careers Service that offers information and professional advice about education, training and work to people of all ages. <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> or examine options identified in the local offer published by the local authority which sets out details of SEN provision - including the full range of post-16 options – and support available to children and young people with SEN and disabilities to help them prepare for adulthood, including getting a job.
- Where a student has an EHCP, all reviews of that Plan from Year 9 at the latest, and onwards, will include a focus on preparing for adulthood, including employment, independent living and participation in society.

19) How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

- The school receives funding to respond to the needs of pupils with SEND from a number of sources that includes:
 1. A proportion of the funds allocated per pupil to the school to provide for their education called the Age Weighted Pupil Unit.
 2. The Notional SEN budget. This is a fund devolved to schools to support them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
 3. For those pupils with the most complex needs, the school may be allocated additional educational needs funding from the Local Authorities High Needs SEN Funding allocation.
- This funding is then used to provide the equipment and facilities to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities through support that might include:
 1. Targeted differentiation to increase access to text (desk copies of information, work buddy, accessible text, IT e.g. read aloud software, different recording strategies, additional time etc.)
 2. In class, adult or peer support aimed at increasing skills in specific area of weakness (learning behaviours, organisation, etc)
 3. Out of class support (relationship building, social, emotional skill development,)
 4. Small group tuition to enable catch up (subject or targeted at additional need)
 5. Specific support, advice and guidance is provided to parents and families to improve pupil's readiness for learning (relating to pupil's difficulties in attendance, behaviour, physiological and emotional needs etc)
 6. Provision of specialist resources or equipment (use of ICT, sloping board, electronic versions of text etc)
 7. Partnership working with other settings (shared resources e.g. Parent Liaison Worker; shared expertise: support from local special school on action to improve inclusion: shared alternative environments etc.)
 8. Access to targeted before/after school clubs (breakfast, homework, clubs targeted at increasing resilience)
 9. Access to the school nurse and wider health professional support (responding to mental and physical health issues, speech, language and communication needs, motor control and mobility needs)
 10. Access to support from in-school sources e.g. learning mentors (peer or adult) or from charities (e.g. Barnardos, Relate) and community sources (e.g. Youth and Church groups, local businesses)
 11. Implementation of strategies from support agencies e.g. Behaviour Support/Educational Welfare Support

In addition:

- The Pupil Premium funding provides additional funding for pupils who are claiming Free School Meals, who are in the care of the local authority or whose parents are in the Armed Services. The deployment of this funding is published on the school website.
- If parents wish to discuss the options available for their child, they are welcome to make an appointment to see the class/subject teacher, SENCo or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

20) How is the decision made about how much support each child will receive?

- For pupils with SEN but without a statement of educational need/EHCP, the decision regarding the support provided will be taken at joint meetings with the SENCo, classteacher and parent who will follow guidance provided by the Governing Body regarding SEN

Funding deployment.

- For pupils with a statement of educational need/EHCP, this decision will be reached in agreement with parents when the EHCP is being produced or at an annual review.

21) How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

This will be through:

- discussions with the class teacher, SENCo or senior leadership team member, and the child's mainstream school,
- during meetings,
- meetings with support and external agencies.

In addition, our school has a forum for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All are invited to attend these termly meetings to raise issues of concern and to ensure the school provision is responsive to pupil and family needs. Minutes of these meetings can be viewed on our website.

22) Who can I contact for further information or if I have any concerns?

If you wish to discuss your child's special educational needs or are unhappy about any issues regarding the school's response to meeting these needs please contact the following:

- Your child's class teacher,
- The SENCo,
- The Headteacher,
- For complaints, please contact the School Governor with responsibility for SEN. Their name is They can be contacted via.....

23) Support services for parents of pupils with SEN include:

- Information, Advice and Support Agency Network offers independent advice and support to parents and carers of all children and young people with SEND and will direct visitors to their nearest IAS service <http://www.iassnetwork.org.uk/>
- For parents who are unhappy with the Local Authority or school responses to their child's SEND, parents may seek mediation from the regional mediation services. Information on this free service is located here <http://preview.tinyurl.com/qx5a8vq>
- Parents and carers can also appeal to the Government's SEND tribunal if you disagree with the Local Authorities decisions about your child's special educational needs. You can also appeal to the tribunal if the school or council has discriminated against your disabled child. Information on this process is available here <http://preview.tinyurl.com/ovq4so3>

24) Information on where the Local Authority's Local Offer can be found.

The Local Offer can be found on the school website and on Lincolnshire County Council Family Services Directory.

References

Schedule 1 of The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

The **SEND Code of Practice** (January 2015) The Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations <http://preview.tinyurl.com/nenth62>

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions Sept 2014. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/nrv8wxy>

SE7 Local Offer: Framework and Guidance. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/otma4qj>

Glossary (A glossary of SEND terms is included in the appendices of the SEND Code of Practice <http://preview.tinyurl.com/nenth62>

