



ACORN FREE SCHOOL

Special Education Needs Policy

Date of Issue: March 2019

The Acorn School strives to be an inclusive school, engendering a sense of community and belonging through its:

- inclusive ethos
- broad and balanced curriculum for all students
- small classroom sizes and high staff ratio
- systems for early identification of barriers to learning and participation
- high expectations and suitable targets for all students

At The Acorn School we have adopted a whole school approach to SEND policy and practice. All our students are identified as having Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and are, as far as practical, fully integrated into the School classroom. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the National Curriculum and are integrated into all aspects of the School. Recognising the issues as outlined in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2014), the admission policy of The Acorn School reflects the desire to include students, wherever possible, irrespective of any disability.

In line with 'Every Child Matters', every child, regardless of background of circumstances, will be offered the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Objective

- The objective of our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy is to improve the learning and raise the achievements of students with special educational needs that exceed the needs of other pupils in the same class.
- All students in our School study the National Curriculum. Teachers use the National Curriculum programmes of study to teach knowledge, understanding and skills, using a variety of methods that are appropriate to the abilities of individual students. For some students it will be necessary to choose work from earlier key stages so they are able to progress and demonstrate attainment. Our School seeks to develop an inclusive curriculum and thereby reduce the need for aspects of the National Curriculum to be dis-applied for a student, by applying the following three principles, as set out in the 1999 DfEE National Curriculum for England document:
 - i) setting suitable learning challenges;
 - ii) responding to students' diverse learning needs;
 - iii) overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

- We regard every student as having individual needs. Each student will have an equal opportunity to work to their full potential so that they will learn to appreciate and value their own strengths. We aim to ensure that each student feels equally valued within the School community.

Definitions

A pupil has SEND 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. Acorn is a Special educational provision, consequently our pupils are already receiving targeted support just by being at the School. All our pupils have SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) difficulties which hinder them accessing a mainstream school. All our pupils access a school environment which supports their SEMH needs. However, some pupils will also have additional Cognition and Learning (CL) and/or Communication and Interaction (CI). These pupils will receive targeted/individual support for these needs.

Roles and responsibilities

The SENCO

They will:

- Work with the Headteacher and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Advise on the deployment of monies and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be one of the point of contacts for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned

- Work with the Headteacher and governing board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils in the School up to date and GDPR compliant

The SEND governor

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the Headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with more specific SEND and/or a disability

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy

General Provision

- Provision for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is a matter for the whole School and requires a whole School response. All teachers are teachers of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- We believe there are considerable benefits for all students in catering for special educational needs and disabilities within the classroom. Where in-class support is provided, teachers are better able to focus on the differing levels of ability within the group.
- Some students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, however, may at times require more specialised teaching which can better be provided within a small group or an individual situation away from the main classroom.
- All teachers must know why the students they teach are on the SEN register. The SEND register is updated as necessary. The SENCO will advise staff of all additions.

- Each student on the SEND Register is allocated a named Teaching Assistant, who monitors their progress through in class support and liaison with staff.

To raise student achievement and encourage a sense of commitment to the School and their education, our School provides:

- i) a warm, welcoming, positive and supportive atmosphere;
- ii) support for access to the whole School environment for all students;
- iii) opportunities across and beyond the curriculum for students to develop the skills of participation within the School and in their communities. Pastoral support;
- iv) robust anti-bullying strategies;
- v) clear expectations of student academic achievement and behaviour, which are known to everyone;
- vi) a commitment to support those students who have difficulty meeting those expectations;
- vii) common strategies and responses across the secondary curriculum.