

# SEND policy



## INTRODUCTION

This policy and information report sets out our approach to supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It includes information on the ways that we support and monitor students with SEND. This policy reflects our whole school practice and ethos.

The policy shows how the school aims to comply with the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) and the Equalities Act (2010). It has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015)
- Equalities Act (2010): advice for schools DfE (2013)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014)

The school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is responsible for implementing the policy. It has been approved by the school governors.

Our SENCO is Alexandra Foster. She is a member of the Senior Management Team and has numerous years' experience of working in Special Needs Schools.

Alex heads a team made up of:

Catherine Cross – KS4 SENCO

Lucinda Allison – KS2 SENCO

Alex De Jong – KS3 SENCO

Kate Lowe – SEN Admin Support

The policy is divided into sections:

1. Definition and aims
2. Leadership and management of SEN
3. The kinds of special educational needs that are provided for in our school
4. Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
5. Co-ordinating and managing provision
6. Working in partnership with parents/carers
7. Involving children and young people
8. Arrangements for complaints
9. Transition
10. Monitoring arrangements

## **1. DEFINITION AND AIMS**

### **Definition**

A child or young person is considered to 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; or

‘a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools’.

(Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 2015)

### **Aims**

It is our aim:

- to enable every pupil to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes and become confident, independent individuals who can transition effectively to later phases in their education and into adulthood
- to involve the pupil and their parents/carers so they participate as fully as possible in decisions, and are provided with the information and support necessary to participate in those decisions
- to give all pupils equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the school's provision, and to ensure that no child is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religious beliefs
- to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated and personalised, and delivered through high quality teaching
- to respect and celebrate the efforts and achievements of all members of the school, and to build a strong sense of self-esteem and a positive attitude
- to use a graduated approach to regularly assess and evaluate pupils' needs and keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them
- to have high ambitions for pupils and regularly review their progress towards these goals
- to work collaboratively with other professionals and support services
- to ensure that the responsibility held by all staff and governors for SEND is implemented and maintained.

## **2. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF SEN**

### **The Governors**

Our Governing Body fulfils its statutory duty towards children and young people with SEN or disabilities in accordance with the guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs

and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015). The governor with responsibility for SEN at the school is David Ward. David can be contacted via the school's office. In particular, the governing body ensures that:

- arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions
- there is a qualified teacher designated as a SENCO for the school
- they work with the SENCO and Headteacher in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision, including establishing a clear picture of the resources available in the school
- the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to admissions, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- all pupils join in school activities alongside other pupils, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of other pupils
- they are fully informed about SEND issues, so that they can play a major part in school self-review
- they set up appropriate staffing arrangements
- the quality of SEND provision is regularly monitored.

## **The Headteacher**

Our Headteacher has responsibility for:

- working closely with the SENCO and Governing Body in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision for all pupils in the school
- monitoring and reporting to the governors about the implementation of the school's SEND policy
- ensuring that the Record of annual review meeting of an Education Health for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is completed and sent to the Local Authority within two weeks of the Annual Review

## **The SENCO**

Our SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN or disabilities, including those who have EHCPs. Our SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, parents and other agencies.

The SENCO has responsibility for:

- working with the Headteacher and Governing Body in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school
- the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy, and co-ordination of specific provision by specialist teachers and therapists for pupils with SEN or disabilities
- supporting class and one-to-one teachers in drawing up Individual Learning Profiles (LPs), and Education Plans (IEPs) and liaising closely with parents/carers, so that they are fully involved in the process of setting targets and are aware of the strategies that are being used to support progress
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals
- managing the Annual Review process for those pupils with an EHCP, liaising closely with the Local Authority (LA) and outside agencies throughout the process, arranging meetings and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers, one-to-one teachers and parents/carers
- supporting parents/carers through the process of applying for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment, liaising closely with the LA and outside agencies throughout the process, arranging meetings and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers, specialist teachers, either 1:1 or study skills, therapists and parents/carers
- maintaining the school's SEND records with details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies, the involvement of specialists and evidence of pupil progress, so that they are readily accessible to staff, whilst following guidelines on data protection
- assisting the Headteacher in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils through the use of existing school assessment information
- working with the Headteacher and Examinations Officer to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- working with teaching staff to identify potential areas of development and contributing to in-service training and training offered to colleagues in other schools
- liaising with previous and potential next providers of education to ensure a smooth transition is planned when pupils start and leave the school.
- Line managing Teaching Assistants with the Higher-Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) to ensure they are trained and supported to be effective in supporting the children with their SEND needs.

### **3. THE KINDS OF SPECIAL NEEDS THAT ARE PROVIDED FOR IN OUR SCHOOL**

The Unicorn School supports pupils who have specific learning difficulties: dyslexia, developmental coordination disorder (dyspraxia) and dyscalculia, attention deficit conditions, autistic spectrum and associated anxieties, and speech, language and communication needs as secondary needs.

We welcome pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, providing we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional needs, and that our site can accommodate them. These needs may be in the areas of:

- Communication and interaction needs; this includes children who have speech language and communication difficulties, including autistic spectrum conditions.
- Cognition and learning needs; this includes children who have learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties like dyslexia, developmental coordination disorder (dyspraxia) and dyscalculia
- Social, emotional and mental health needs
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Most children wishing to attend The Unicorn School will already be receiving support for their specific learning difficulties and may have had a range of interventions at their previous school. Some pupils will have an EHCP. The School will discuss thoroughly with parents the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

The Unicorn School's admissions policy requires a specialist assessment of the pupil's difficulties to ensure we are an appropriate setting to support their specific learning difficulty. Prospective pupils will be invited to spend two consecutive trial days at The Unicorn School. Parents will only be offered a two-day assessment for their child if the school believes that it can meet the needs of the pupil. The entry procedure is fully outlined in our Admissions Policy.

### **4. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act (2010). Our arrangements are outlined in the school's policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

## **5. CO-ORDINATING AND MANAGING PROVISION**

### **Roles and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs, and for following the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision to meet these needs.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- being fully aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for assessing and making provision for pupils
- providing an appropriately differentiated curriculum for pupils with specific learning difficulties through setting suitable learning challenges and differentiated resources, responding to pupil's individual needs, and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment
- for ensuring that the materials and approaches they use are based on the latest research
- drawing up a Learning Profile (LP) and Individual Education Plan (IEP) in conjunction with all Teachers and in discussion with pupils, parents/carers, and setting targets appropriate to the individual needs of the pupils
- maintaining detailed profiles of individual pupil's work
- giving feedback to pupils, parents/carers and specialist teachers about pupils' performance and progress
- contributing to the application process for an EHCP needs assessment and to Annual Review meetings for those pupils with an EHCP by writing reports and attending Annual Review meetings.
- developing their expertise as teachers and sharing this with teaching staff.

Specialist teachers are responsible for:

- being fully aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for assessing and making provision for pupils
- ensuring that the materials and approaches they use are based on the latest research
- working collaboratively with class teachers to draw up LPs and IEPs, implementing these and monitoring progress
- ensuring that the children they teach understand and actively work towards their targets
- maintaining individual one to one files on pupil's progress up to Year 8 and contributing to School Reports in Years 9,10 and 11
- giving feedback to pupils, parents/carers and class teachers about pupils' performance and progress at Parents Evenings
- contributing to the application process for an EHCP needs assessment and to Annual Review meetings for those pupils with an EHCP by attending internal meetings, writing reports and attending Annual Review meetings when required
- Those with an APC or similar qualification will assess internal students for Access Arrangements and fill in the appropriate section of the Form 8
- In Key Stage 4, working closely with subject staff to support delivering qualifications at GCSE level and to maintain a good understanding of assessment requirements for those qualifications
- developing their expertise as specialist teachers and sharing this with teaching staff.

### **Adapting the curriculum**

We set high expectations for all pupils whatever their prior attainment. We use assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. We ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is differentiated and personalised, and delivered through high-quality teaching in ways which support the individual learning needs of our pupils. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. We do what is necessary to enable pupils to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes.

### **Staff expertise and development**

The school is committed to increasing expertise in SEN in the following ways:



- all teaching staff are trained, or are undertaking training, to meet the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties
- all staff receive regular training from the Speech and Language Therapist in how to support pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs. The Unicorn School has ELKLAN's 'communication friendly' status.
- whole staff in-service training sessions are arranged as appropriate, in response to needs within the school
- additional training for teachers to meet the specific needs of an individual pupil is made available when necessary and appropriate
- staff are encouraged to develop expertise in certain areas, to attend training, to evaluate resources and to share their knowledge with the rest of the teaching staff
- reading and discussion of documentation is considered to be part of staff development.

## **Continued identification of SEN**

In most cases, our pupils come to the school with well-documented needs. In addition, our specialist assessor will make an assessment during the pupil's visit prior to admission. Once at the school, we continue to monitor and assess - we are alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. Our Speech and Language Therapist is able to conduct an initial screening with regard to and speech, language and communication difficulties. Should concerns be raised, parents will be informed, and therapy offered. Teaching staff are well aware of signs of other learning difficulties, e.g. DCD (dyspraxia) and have the expertise in school of the Occupational Therapist on site for advice or further screening.

The school has access to a wide range of education, health and social services professionals available in Oxfordshire and nearby counties, including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. We are committed to using the expertise and advice provided by other professionals.

## **Sharing information**

Teaching staff work collaboratively to share information concerning the assessment of pupils' SEN, determine outcomes and develop teaching strategies to support pupils' needs. All information concerning pupils is stored securely. Each child has an electronic folder containing assessments, advice received from parents, specialists such as an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist, and an EHCP if appropriate. Key information from these documents is summarised in the Learning Profile, this is used to develop an Individual Education Plan that is used to inform the termly targets, the information is readily accessible to all staff, whilst following guidelines on data protection.

These documents are updated regularly by both class teachers and specialist teachers and is used to help plan provision for the child. When a pupil leaves the school, the SENCO sends the documentation to the receiving school securely with parent approval. All staff are kept well informed about the strategies needed to manage pupils' needs effectively through regular staff meetings.

## **Setting and reviewing targets**

The Learning Profile provides a full picture of the individual's needs this is generated by the class teacher, specialist teacher, therapists and teaching assistants that work with them under the headings of Communication & Interaction, Cognitive & Learning, Social Emotional & Mental Health and Sensory & Physical. Reports received from Educational Psychologists and other external specialists in combination with internal reports including the Literacy Assessment at entry will be used to inform the Learning Profile. Where a child has an EHCP this will also feed into the Learning Profile.

The Learning Profile is used to create an Individual Education Plan, this will determine outcomes for pupils in the long term, such as the end of the key stage and for the next year. The plan will include information on interventions and will be reviewed periodically throughout the year. The IEP will break down the outcomes into targets for each term. IEPs will provide targets that may include academic, speech, language and communication, social, emotional and mental health, sensory and physical issues.

Learning Profiles and IEP will be sent to all parents prior to the parents evening in the Autumn Term. They will be updated and reviewed throughout the year by class teachers, specialist teachers and therapists. Termly IEPs will be shared with parents at the beginning of each term and reviewed at the end of that term. At the end of each academic year the IEP will be fully reviewed, and the Learning Profile updated if required ready to be shared with teachers for the year ahead at internal transition meetings.

The Individual Education Plan will outline

- long term and termly targets
- teaching strategies
- review

Parents/Carers and children are invited to add their comments for Reviews and be fully involved in the discussion of future targets at the parents' evenings.

All documentation will be stored electronically in the pupils' individual folder.

### **Evaluating pupil progress**

We will assess each pupil's current skills and level of attainment on entry to the school and will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. Class, and specialist teachers will make regular assessments of progress, using a range of informal and formal

assessments, which may include progress in other areas, e.g. social needs.

Support for our pupils takes the form of a four-part cycle: assess, plan, do and review. 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.

Pupil's individual progress towards their goals is reviewed each term in their IEP and the parent, pupil and teaching staff will be clear about how they will help the pupil reach the future expected outcomes.

We record evidence of pupil progress, with a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided. This forms part of regular discussions with parents about the pupil's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps.

### **Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of our SEN provision**

We maintain an overview of the strategies and resources used with different groups of pupils to provide a basis for monitoring their effectiveness and impact. We use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. This helps us to develop the use of approaches and materials that are effective and to remove those that are less so.

The quality of teaching for all our pupils with SEND and the progress made by pupils, is a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

Provision Maps - All students have a provision map that records interventions that go beyond our usual offer. It includes Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy, Extra 1:1 support, ELSA and Mental Health interventions at school. This will record the reason and outcome of the intervention along with time and duration of support. The provision maps are kept electronically in the pupils' individual folder.

### **Emotional and social development and well-being**

We support the emotional, mental and social development of our pupils by providing extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to their views. All children have the opportunity to share their views through the school council representatives or their class teacher. We make provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils can be supported by an Emotional Learning Support Assistant if they wish. There is also a qualified Creative Arts & Play Therapist available for children if required. Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues will be recorded as part of the Learning Profile and where necessary will be included in Outcomes Planning and IEPs.

We take bullying very seriously. We help prevent bullying by ensuring that all pupils are aware of our anti-bullying policy, through assemblies, class time, PSHE lessons and promoting anti-bullying week. We also have Anti Bullying Ambassadors who support all the children in school. They have received training from the Diana Award and have led assemblies on who they are and what to do if a child feels that they are being bullied.

### **Co-ordinating the provision for pupils with an EHCP**

EHCPs are used to actively monitor a pupil's progress towards their outcomes and longer term aspirations. An EHCP will be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it. An EHCP will not be disclosed without the consent of the pupil's parents, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the young person.

They must be reviewed as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews will be undertaken in partnership with the child/young person and their parents, and will take account of their views, wishes and feelings. The review will focus on the child/young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHCP. The review will also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. Parents, those who support the pupil in school, and a Local Authority SEN officer will be invited to the review meeting.

Before the meeting we will:

- give notice to all parties at least four weeks before the meeting and seek advice and information about the child
- send out any advice or information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks before the meeting

- prepare and send out a report of the meeting and any amendments suggested to the EHCP to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting.

## **6. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS**

All staff encourage parents/carers to be full partners in the education process. We recognise that parents know their children best and listen and understand when parents' express concerns about their child's development. Parents/carers' evenings are three times a year, but parents are welcome to visit the school or arrange meetings at other times to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher, Headteacher or SENCO. Parents/carers will receive accurate information when they meet with teachers, so that they have a full picture of their child's skills and abilities, as well as their child's behaviour at school, and will be able to participate fully in decision-making about their child. We aim to ensure that everyone participates in agreeing outcomes for a child, and everyone is clear what the next steps are.

Parents receive written reports concerning their child's progress twice a year. Parents/carers are encouraged to take part in the process of reviewing and monitoring provision and progress by contributing to the Outcomes and IEP Review.

Parents/carers have the right to access any records of their child's progress and are encouraged to contribute to these records. They are consulted before outside agencies are involved.

## **7. INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

All pupils should be involved in making decisions where possible right from the start of their education and understand that their views matter. Confident young pupils, who know that their opinions will be valued and who can practise making choices, will be more secure and effective pupils during the school years. The ways in which pupils are encouraged to participate should reflect the pupil's evolving maturity.

At The Unicorn School, we encourage pupils to participate in their learning by:

- contributing to setting appropriate targets, and to the regular review of these targets
- talking to class tutors and named SEN specialist about their learning
- participating in class and individual reward systems
- attending Annual Reviews for those pupils with an EHCP.

All our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before-and-after-school clubs. All pupils are encouraged to go on our residential trips, and are encouraged to take part in sports days and school plays etc. No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their special educational need or disability.

## **8. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPLAINTS**

Should pupils or parents/carers be unhappy with any aspect of provision, they should discuss the problem with the class teacher in the first instance. Anyone who feels unable to talk to the teacher, or is not satisfied with the teacher's comments, should ask to speak to the SENCO. In the event of a formal complaint parents are advised to contact the Headteacher or the governors, if they prefer. (For further details, refer to the school's Complaints Policy.)

## **9. TRANSITION**

When pupils transfer to other schools:

- we offer opportunities for pupils to visit their prospective primary, secondary school or post 16 College.
- the SENCO liaises with the SENCO at receiving schools and colleges to arrange for transfer of information, with parents/carers' consent
- for pupils with an EHCP, the Plan is amended by 15th February of the year of transfer. It must be amended in the light of the recommendations of the Annual Review in the previous year, the parents/carers' views and preferences and the response to consultation by the LA with the schools concerned

- where possible, the SENCO of the receiving school attends the final Annual Review of pupils with Statements for whom the particular school has been named.

When pupils transfer to the Unicorn from another school:

- The SENCO or Head of Outreach will liaise with the previous school and visit if felt appropriate.
- All documentation received from the previous school will be added to the child's individual folder.

## **10. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy and information report will be monitored by the Governors and reviewed by the staff as part of the school's monitoring cycle. The success of the school's SEN policy and provision is evaluated through:

- monitoring of classroom practice by the senior management team
- analysis of pupil tracking data and test results for individual pupils and cohorts
- monitoring of procedures and practice by the governors
- the School Development Plan and School Self-Evaluation Form
- visits from ISA, CRESTED and inter-county inspections.

Date of writing – September 2021

Date of review – September 2023

Person responsible for policy: Alexandra Foster (SENCO)

Next Review – September 2024

Policy approved by Governors .....D.Ward.....