



Leighton Park
School

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES POLICY

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This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Defining Special Educational Needs

This policy accepts the definition of SEN as set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice paragraph 1:3 (page 6)

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significant greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority

Special educational provision means, for children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in the school.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. Several members of the teaching staff have qualifications to teach E AL and the school supplements this provision with the use of withdrawal E AL teaching. A charge is made to parents for this tuition.

Responsible Persons

- The 'responsible person' for SEN is the Headteacher.
- The person co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for pupils with special educational needs is the SENCO:

1. Basic Information about the school's provision

Aims & Objectives

- The school will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and ensure that, when it is established that a pupil has special educational needs, those needs will be made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- The school is aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those pupils who have special educational needs. The school will review annually the effectiveness of its work for pupils with special educational needs.
- To ensure that Independent Education Plans (IEP's) are regularly updated and that entry and exit criteria onto the Special Needs Register are current.
- The staff will ensure that pupils with special educational needs join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with the pupil receiving the necessary special educational provision, the efficient education of other children in the school and the efficient use of resources.

- To promote the individual's self esteem in order to achieve the school's goals of independent learning.
- To create a whole school learning atmosphere in which the students can access the appropriate pastoral support.
- To fully acknowledge the importance of the parents role in supporting their children's education.
- To ensure that students requiring access arrangements in exams are identified as early as possible.
- Links have been developed with feeder primary schools to further develop good practice and ease transfer arrangements for pupils.
- To provide information and opportunities for further assessment for support in higher education.

Evaluating the Policy

The Special Needs Policy is evaluated in a number of ways:

- 1) Achievements at A2/AS, GCSE and internal examinations
- 2) Valued added information – (Midyas / Yellis)
- 3) Monitoring of reading and spelling ages in Yr. 7, 8 and 9
- 4) Monitoring the extent to which Special Needs pupils take part in school life (projects, drama productions, clubs, trips etc.)

Admission and Inclusion

All the teachers in the school are teachers of children with Special Educational Needs. As such the school adopts a 'whole school approach' to special educational needs, which involves all the staff adhering to a model of good practice. The staff of the school are committed to identifying and providing for the needs of all children in a wholly inclusive environment.

The school operates an equal opportunities policy for children with special educational needs who are afforded the same rights as other children. This includes both those children with Statements of special educational needs and those others with less significant problems.

The Admission Policy takes account of the needs of SEN pupils and the School will make reasonable adjustments as necessary to enable the pupil to participate in the admissions procedure. Pupils who meet our academic standards will not be denied a place on the grounds of their Special Educational Needs.

Co-ordinating Support

The Individual Learning Centre is a service for the whole school.

Staff are involved in SEN issues. SEN is part of a rolling Inset programme. All staff are given information on supporting pupils in their ILC file, containing the Information Sheets relating to their particular pupils.

New staff are made aware of the SEN register.
Departments are expected to use their budget allocation to provide differentiated materials for the teaching of SEN pupils in their subject. The SENCO is available to advise on materials.

The ILC department is allocated a budget which provides material for supporting pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for literacy support.

Specialist Support

The school has experience of working with pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties and has developed programmes of work to support individual pupils at a level and in a manner appropriate to their specific needs. Support lessons are delivered by suitably trained staff.

The school is, at present, not fully accessible for pupils with physical disabilities. This issue is being addressed through the school's Accessibility Plan.

Hearing impaired and visually impaired pupils attend the school: appropriate adjustments are made to ensure that they are able to access the curriculum. Support is received from the Sensory Consortium.

Access to the Curriculum

The school's curriculum will be made accessible to all pupils.

The curriculum will be differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teaching styles and flexible groups will reflect this approach.

Curriculum tasks and activities may be broken down into a series of small and achievable steps for pupils who have marked learning difficulties.

While all pupils are offered the whole breadth of the GCSE curriculum, it may be appropriate for individual pupils with Special Educational Needs to take one less GCSE. This is only offered after discussion with parents, pupil and the Director of Studies and may occur at any stage of the GCSE programme. Pupils will be supported in the self study time that arises.

Roles & Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school, including provision for children with special educational needs. These responsibilities are met through the close collaboration of the Headteacher, Senior Management Team, Admissions Department and SENCO. The early identification of pupils with a significant special educational need is a priority.

The Headteacher is charged with:

- Assisting in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the school's policy for special educational needs
- Establishing success criteria
- Involving all staff and governors in SEN development
- Agreeing a job description with the SENCO

The Headteacher is able to fulfil these duties via:

- Giving SEN status in the School Development Plan
- Through the school's performance management framework
- Working alongside other staff and the SENCO to formulate, develop and review the SEN policy
- Establishing and developing the role and responsibilities of the SENCO via job description and school systems
- Working to establish procedures and maintain good practice in school

Governing Body and Link Governor

The link Governor will liaise with the SENCO. As part of that liaison, he will read the annual SWOT analysis. He will report back, as necessary, to the Governing body.

The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The Core purpose of the SENCO:

“The SENCO, with the support of the headteacher and governing body, takes responsibility for the day-to-day operation of provision made by the school for pupils with SEN and provides professional guidance in the area of SEN in order to secure high quality teaching and the effective use of resources to bring about improved standards of achievement for all pupils.” (Teacher Training Agency Standards 1998)

There are four key areas of SEN co-ordination:

1. Strategic direction and development
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Leading and managing staff
4. Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), with the support of the Head and teaching staff, takes responsibility for the day-to-day running of the department and the provision for individual pupils. She provides professional guidance to inform teachers and to ensure high quality teaching and effective use of resources to bring about improved standards of achievement for all pupils. This is developed through INSET, individual teacher advice and occasionally, presence at department meetings to develop links with subject departments to promote differentiated learning policies and discuss individual pupils.

The fundamental task of the SENCO is to support the Head in ensuring all staff recognise the importance of planning lessons and using a variety of teaching styles to encourage participation and learning of all pupils.

The SENCO seeks to ensure that the learning of all pupils is given equal priority and that available resources are used efficiently in supporting, guiding and motivating

colleagues, especially in disseminating examples of effective practice in relation to pupils with Special Needs.

The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that the name of any pupil identified as being a concern, is entered on the Special Needs Register and is followed through in terms of Code of Practice suggested procedures. She works with the Head, the Admissions Department, the staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure the day-to-day operation of the Special Needs Policy. She has developed efficient working relationships with parents and external agencies and can inform the Head of the operation and effectiveness of the policy.

The SENCO will also be involved in progress reviews regarding children on Stage 2 and Stage 3 and those who have a statement within the SEN Code of Practice, Stage 4. An important part of the SENCO role will be discussing the needs of particular children with teachers and keeping close and positive contact with all parents/carers concerned.

The SENCO is charged with:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Co-ordinating provision and monitoring children with special educational needs.
- Supporting staff in the interpretation of the SEN Policy.
- Assisting in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the SEN Policy.
- Identifying and contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Maintaining a central record and overseeing the records of all children with SEN.
- Liaising with parents of children with special educational needs.
- Liaising with outside agencies.
- Heading the Individual Learning Centre.

At the time of admission, the Admission Department may have information from:

- Social Services
- Health Service and family doctors
- Previous School Records
- General Reports on pupil progress
- Educational Psychology reports

These will be passed to the SENCO for consideration as part of the admissions process, who after the pupil has been accepted, will liaise with the relevant House.

The boarding culture within the school means that there is care provision for all pupils, whether they are day boarders, weekly boarders or full boarders. Throughout their school life, from 11 to 18 years, all pupils are attached to a House and therefore their emotional, social and behavioural development and well-being can be positively promoted and monitored. There are close links between the SENCO, Head of ESL, ILC staff and staff working within the Houses, providing essential support for pupils with special educational needs. Apart from the matrons, the House staff are academic teachers or Graduate Students, who see the pupils within the classroom and therefore have a rounded picture of their performance. Communication with parents is further facilitated through the boarding houses and the tutor system linked to the houses. Tutorial staff attend Annual Reviews.

Teachers

Teachers shall be charged with:

- Identifying children causing concern
- Using information given by the SENCO
- Ensuring the right of all pupils to access to the curriculum
- Planning differentiation
- Liaising with the SENCO
- Involvement with policy development
- Being responsible for their own development via INSET

The teachers will be able to fulfil these duties via:

- Monitoring of the progress of individuals against class/national norms. This process begins as soon as the children enter school. Any children causing concern will be monitored very carefully and evidence collected will be shared with the SENCO.
- Ensuring that children with SEN receive a suitable differentiated curriculum, so that they are able to participate fully in the life and activities of the school.
- Developing her/his skills for the teaching of Special Needs children by taking the opportunity to attend appropriate INSET.

Graduate students

will be expected to:

- work in collaboration with class teachers and the SENCO
- assist in the identification of need
- help provide effective learning strategies
- develop a variety of methods appropriate to individual pupils
- assess, record and regularly evaluate

Non-Teaching Staff

These colleagues play a crucial role in the lives of our pupils. Staff contribute and participate in discussions about pupils experiencing learning difficulties, e.g. Oakview staff may be first to notice any fall-off in appetite, cleaning staff often build up close relationships and will alert House staff to potential problems.

Parents

The parents of every Special Needs child are kept fully informed about the progress and problems of their child. The concerns and wishes of both parents and child will be taken into account at every stage.

The school sets out to liaise with parents of pupils with Special Needs and encourage them to have an active role in their child's education. Parents play a key role in enabling children and young people to achieve their potential, such as:

1. Responsibility for informing school about any specific needs their child may have upon entering school.
2. Responsibility for making themselves aware of the Special Needs Policy of the school.
3. Responsibility for liaising with the SENCO.

4. Being aware of relevant outside agencies. Requesting assessment as they feel necessary.
5. Attending and contributing to review meetings.
6. Being aware of their child's progress through the schools' general and interim reports.
7. Supporting any academic work done at home.

Pupils

We aim to involve all children in their own education. All children are frequently asked to evaluate their work, both orally and in writing. The concerns and wishes of the child are given the highest priority.

Pupils are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress. Targets for progression in the individual support lessons are only set after agreement with the pupil.

2. Information about the school's policies for the identification, assessment and provision for all pupils with Special Educational Needs

Providing the graduated response at Stage 2 and Stage 3.

The feeder schools will usually have identified the majority of pupils with SEN entering Leighton Park. Close liaison with feeder schools through transfer of documents and school visits are vital in identifying those pupils with concerns and who are in need of support. The SENCO is given the information on strengths/difficulties, and on what approaches have been used with pupils from the Admissions Department.

Most pupils with Special Educational Needs will have an Educational Psychology report, giving an objective summary of the particular difficulties. Parents are involved at each stage.

Pupils are assessed through initial screening. As well as profiles provided by feeder schools, the school also uses baseline indicators:

- MIDYIS
- N.F.E.R. Group Reading Test
- The Vernon Spelling Test

*The SEN Code of Practice (paragraph 5:42) defines **adequate progress** as that which:*

- *closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers;*
- *prevents the attainment gap from growing wider;*
- *is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline but less than that of the majority of peers;*
- *matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress,*
- *ensures access to the full curriculum;*
- *demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills;*
- *demonstrates improvements in behaviour.*

Monitoring and Educational Provision for Pupils with Special Needs

The SENCO is responsible for keeping and updating the SEN register and the day to day management of provision for pupils with Special Needs.

Pupils are placed on the register at the appropriate stage after liaison with feeder schools or staff referral.

Initial Referrals from Staff/Parents

If a pupil is causing concern to a member of staff, that teacher will first take appropriate action in their preparation and teaching. If, after a period of time, they are still concerned they will inform their Head of Department who may offer advice or produce additional materials. If the concern persists the pupil may be referred to the SENCO. The SENCO will log their concern and open a file on the pupil. Parents may also make the initial move by expressing concern to the SENCO or Pastoral staff.

Stage One. (School Support)

For those pupils where a concern has been expressed by staff, parents or pupils themselves. No I.E.P. will be necessary but tutors will monitor the pupil's progress and liaise with the SENCO if they feel further support is needed. The SENCO should be notified so the pupil's name is put on the SEN register. Names will be taken off the register if the concerns are no longer applicable, following discussion with the pupil's parents.

The pupil is a concern at this time. Advice and support may be given wherever possible and suitably differentiated materials should be used. The responsibility for meeting a child's need at Stage 1 is with the subject teacher.

Parents may be invited to meet with the SENCO and appropriate staff. If the child has shown no progress the pupil may move to Stage 2 (School Action.) If the pupil is no longer causing concern their name will be removed from the register but a file will remain open.

Stage 2. (School Action)

For those pupils moved on from Stage 1 and those identified by the screening tests who may need further diagnostic assessment by an Educational Psychologist **and are receiving specialist teaching.** The specialist teacher will devise an I.E.P. Advice will be given to subject teachers.

The school offers a differentiated curriculum. When a pupil fails to make progress and shows signs of difficulty in some of the following areas: acquiring literacy and numeracy; presenting persistent BESD difficulties; has sensory or physical problems; or communication or interaction difficulties, the school will place the pupil at Stage 2 (School Action) and support that is additional to and different from the differentiated curriculum will be provided in a range of ways including:

- Classroom organisation and management
- Withdrawal for individual/small group work

- Alternative teaching strategies

Parents will be consulted at this stage and the funding of additional, specialist teaching will be their responsibility.

If a pupil does not make progress despite the school taking the action outlined, advice will be sought from outside agencies, such as an Educational Psychologist who will carry out a detailed assessment of the pupil's cognitive skills and learning strengths and weaknesses. Again, the cost of this will be met by parents.

Stage 3. (School Action Plus)

For those pupils who have a report from an outside specialist, who may be an Educational Psychologist, recommending special arrangements for examinations or other specialist involvement. **They may or may not have specialist teaching.** Those who have specialist teaching will have an IEP that will include an Information Sheet for staff and a Target Sheet for the pupil.

The curriculum may have to be modified to meet the needs of the pupil and, where appropriate, concessions for external examinations will be sought and the pupil will be advised of the most effective way to use these.

Parents have the right under s 329(1) of the Education Act 1996 to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The School also has the right (under s 329A) to ask the Local Authority to arrange an assessment. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right. If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the School) have a right of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Stage 4. Statement

Where a prospective pupil has a Statement of Educational Needs, the School will consult the parents and, where appropriate, the Local Authority to ensure that the provision specified in the Statement can be delivered by the School. The School will co-operate with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant reviews of Statements are carried out as required.

Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are on Stage Four. An IEP will be completed as for Stages Two and Three and a formal Annual Review will be held to which the Local Authority, parents and relevant specialists are invited. The SENCO, specialist teacher and tutor attend this meeting.

If the pupil has a statement of Special Educational Need, this must be taken into consideration when setting Targets. It is the SENCO's responsibility to arrange Annual Review meetings with parents and relevant outside agencies.

Outside agencies may make a contribution to the educational provision for the pupil.

Staff are made aware of the existence of a Statement information through the SEN register and should have ready access to the Statement together with all its appendices.

Resources

The school allocates resources to each department to develop differentiated materials to allow all pupils access to the curriculum in all subjects.

The SENCO is available to advise on appropriate text books etc.

Transition Arrangements

As with all pupils who transfer to another school, all relevant documents are transferred to the new school and if necessary the SENCO will contact the school with additional information and advice.

The SENCO responds to queries from Universities concerning the provision of Access Arrangements.

Access to the Curriculum

The school aims to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and reasonable adjustments will be made as necessary. In Key Stage 3 pupils are often taught in mixed-ability groups. Where appropriate to the subject, some departments operate a policy of setting groups.

All departments have differentiated Schemes of Work and materials. They use a variety of teaching styles and strategies. Heads of Department and senior staff monitor these. Subject teachers are made aware of individual difficulties through the SEN register, through the distribution of information and through informal meetings and use of email.

Special care is taken with the identification of special educational needs in those pupils whose first language is not English. Where there is a concern, the SENCO will liaise with the ESL department to determine whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the language or arise from special educational needs. After discussion with pupil and parents, an Educational Psychologist will be consulted. The cost of this is met by parents.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints about Special Needs provision in the school should be made to the SENCO. She will arrange a meeting to discuss the issue. Should the matter be unresolved, she will involve Senior Management and the School's formal complaints procedure will be invoked. Please see the School's Complaints Procedure for further details.

3. Information about the school's staffing policies and partnership with bodies beyond the school

Professional Development

1. The SENCO attends courses on a regular basis and subscribes to 'SENCO Update'.
2. SEN is part of a rolling Inset programme.

External Agencies

The school will continue to maintain links with all external advisory agencies and Educational Psychologists.

Links with other schools

The SENCO will liaise with feeder schools.

SENCO: Jane Ireland

- **Policy for the educational and welfare provision for pupils with statements and pupils for whom English is an additional language**

Pupils with statements of special educational need

The admissions procedure for pupils with statements of special educational need, and indeed for pupils with learning difficulties generally, is the same as for all pupils. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator may be consulted by the head for an opinion on a pupil's suitability for possible admission if there is any indication that they have learning difficulties or if they have a statement. Parents are asked for an Educational Psychologist's report and reports from specialist teachers who have been involved with support for the pupil at their present school. They are also asked to provide a copy of the most recent statement of special need. Extra time, or other allowances, may be given to these pupils for some of the entrance exams, as appropriate or as required by the statement.

The Local Authority is responsible for deciding whether to make a statement or not and the decision has to be made within two weeks of completing the statutory assessment. The Local Authority is then responsible for arranging the provision which is specified in the statement to be in a cost-effective manner, but must be consistent with the child's assessment needs.

The efficient use of resources has to be taken into account once the parents have had an opportunity to make representations. The parents have to be kept informed at all times. The parents have to be told how to appeal if they wish to, and to have their rights explained.

The statement must follow the format set out by the Regulations. The objectives must be clearly written and the placement stated along with the non-educational needs and also the non-educational provision.

The appropriate facilities and equipment also have to be included, along with staffing arrangements and any modifications to the application of the National Curriculum. If residential accommodation is appropriate it must be stated.

All the advice obtained for the assessment must be attached as appendices to the statement.

The school will make an informed decision, based on all the information and advice available, regarding the offer of a place to a pupil with a statement, taking into account the degree to which it can reasonably meet the requirements of the statement.

Annual Review: The Local Authority writes to the Head no less than two weeks before the start of each term in which the review takes place. The Head initiates the review process and circulates all those to be invited to the meeting at least two weeks before the date of the meeting. The Head or a suitable person (e.g. SENCO) chairs the meeting which considers if the statement is still appropriate, needs any amendments, or whether the statement should continue to be maintained.

Provision for pupils. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is the Head of the Individual Learning Centre, supported by **one full-time member of staff who is a Maths specialist and three part-time staff**. The Centre is situated in the heart of the school, adjacent to the Library and the ICT Suite. Pupils receive additional specialist tuition, depending on particular need. Teaching may be delivered individually or in a small group. A learning support assistant for visually impaired pupils adapts work, and staff receive additional training for such pupils.

Outside agencies. The Individual Learning Centre is in contact with the Special Educational Needs manager and an Educational Psychologist from the Local Authorities for Reading and for Oxfordshire. Yearly contact with Local Authorities will occur for the annual reviews of pupils with statements.

Pupils with English as an additional language

Details of special arrangements for applications by pupils with English as an additional language are contained in the admissions policy. Such pupils, on admission to the school, have all opportunities open to them that are open to other pupils, with in addition the provision of specialist E AL tuition on an individual or a group basis.

EAL tuition is provided in a discrete department within the school, staffed by a full-time specialist teacher supported by at least one or two part-time members of staff. The department aims to develop pupils' ability to use English effectively for the purposes of academic study and practical communication within the school and the wider world, by providing language support to enable each pupil to realise his or her potential.

A programme of study is provided with the flexibility to respond to specific requests for support from other teachers, tutors, pupils, parents or guardians, in an atmosphere of openness and care for the individual. Pupils are entered as appropriate for one or more of a range of E AL qualifications during their time at the school and in preparation for entry to university.

A variety of strategies is employed to enable all pupils to participate actively in lessons, and to encourage independent study as well as the ability to work as part of a team. Study skills such as the use of dictionaries, research materials, etc are developed, as is the careful organisation of work. Cultural influences brought by international pupils are welcomed as part of the community of the school. At least once a year, a visit to another part of the UK is organised by the Department specifically for E AL pupils, in order to broaden their understanding of the country and their experience of life in it.

The school aims to enable each pupil with English as an additional language to feel fully part of the community, able to communicate and to seek advice at any time, and welcomed in the spirit of equality that supports relationships across the school.

September 2011