

Policy and Procedure: Special Educational Needs

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Introduction

All children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to achieve their full potential. Atlas Community Primary School provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children that is designed to inspire, motivate and provide opportunities that give every pupil a voice and the confidence to make a difference.

The Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's individual and diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they require particular action by the school that is 'additional to and different from' that provided within the whole school curriculum. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional help or different help from that given to other children of the same age and the teacher and SENCO work closely together to ensure children's needs are met and they can thrive.

"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.... Health care provision or social care provision which educates or trains a child or young person is to be treated as special educational provision". (Code of Practice January 2015.)

Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child. There are four areas of need identified in the Code of Practice (January 2015):

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Mental and Emotional Health
- Sensory/Physical

The Disability Discrimination Act identifies that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005. The school assesses each child as required, and makes the appropriate provision, based on the child's identified need/s.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child in order that they can achieve their learning potential and engage in activities alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- to ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs
- to ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupils' needs
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum
- to ensure that parents/carers are able to play their part in supporting their child's education and to ensure a strong partnership between school and parents/carers
- to ensure that all children have a voice in this process
- to promote disability by integrating positive images of people with disabilities throughout our school

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At Atlas Community Primary School we have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning

Identification

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives.

Children have a learning difficulty if:

- they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for other children of the same age

All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. The governing board, headteacher, SENCo and all other members of staff, including both teachers and teaching and learning partners have important responsibilities.

Assessment and Progress

Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents/carers at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.

The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

Throughout their time in school our system for observing and assessing the progress of individual children will provide information about areas where a child is not making satisfactory progress. When any concern is initially noticed it is the responsibility of the class teacher to take steps to address the issue. If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. The teacher will start off using quality first teaching strategies and if this does not work and little/ no improvements are being made the teachers will need to complete a concerns form and discuss this with the SENCo. The SENCo will then look in to this and this might lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the particular class or subject, depending on the child's specific need/s.

A child may be added to the SEND register if they:

- make little or no progress, even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills which result in poor progress and attainment in some curriculum areas
- present persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not improved by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and / or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress.

The child's class teacher will plan interventions that are 'additional to or different from' those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The class teacher will keep parents/carers informed and draw upon them for additional information. Communication is key to ensure the child is able to thrive.

At Atlas Community Primary School, we monitor pupils progress through a graduated approach. Parents/carers are invited to regular meetings with teachers where decisions can be made collaboratively. Children are given half termly targets and provision map targets termly to support their learning.

For pupils with higher levels of need these meetings may include the SENCo, and for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) there will always be a formal interim/annual review meeting where the effectiveness of the provision provided for the pupil is judged and reported on.

All children with SEND are placed on the SEND register and will be given a provision map which will have specific targets on to address the child's individual needs. These will be written for all children who are working below age related expectations. The provision map will show the short-term target set for the child, and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. The provision map will be reviewed termly and shared with parents who will be required to sign the document. If the review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents/carers prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in school by external support services. This may lead to additional strategies. External support services will provide information for the child's new targets. The new strategies will, wherever possible, be implemented within the child's normal classroom setting.

Provision map targets will include:

- the short term targets set for the child
- the provision to be put in place
- how the targets will help the child in their learning
- what they are responsible for
- the review date
- the child's views will be sought and taken into account, as will those of the parents/carers; whose support is vital if progress is to be achieved and maintained.

If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be made to the Local Authority. In this instance a range of written evidence about the child will support the request. The parents of any child who is referred for an EHCP will be kept fully informed of the progress of the referral. Children with an EHCP will be reviewed annually in addition to more regular informal reviews. When this coincides with transfer to secondary school, the SENCo from the secondary school will be informed of the outcome of the review.

Pupil participation

In our school, we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets and in their review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their targets. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

Partnership with parents/carers

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling all children and young people to achieve their potential, particularly those children with additional needs. Parents/carers hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs. All parents/carers of children with special educational needs will be treated as partners and will be given support to play an active and valued role in their child's education. At all stages of the special needs process, we will keep parents/carers fully informed and involved. We take account of the wishes, feelings and knowledge of parents/carers at all stages. We encourage parents/carers to make an active contribution to their child's education. We inform parents/carers of any outside intervention, and share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of their child.

Access to the Curriculum

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is scaffolded to enable children to understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities and experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement. Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives and staff scaffold work appropriately, using assessment to inform the next stage of learning. All staff receive regular training on teaching and learning styles and they endeavour to meet each child's needs. The use of targets allows the child to access the curriculum using smaller steps that are appropriate to their needs. We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences as their peers. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom situation. There are times though when, to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom.

Intervention

The child's class teacher with support from the SENCo will decide on the action needed to help a child progress in the light of assessments. Intervention support may include:

- different learning materials or specialist equipment
- some group or individual support on specific interventions or targeted work e.g. Time to Talk, Lego Therapy or Precision Teaching
- extra adult time to devise/administer the nature of the planned intervention and also to monitor its effectiveness
- staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies

After initial discussions with the SENCo, the child's class teacher will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and ensuring delivery of any individualised programme in the classroom. Parents/carers will continue to be consulted and kept informed of the action taken to help their child, and of the outcomes of any action.

Parents/carers will be invited to meet regularly with the class teacher and SENCo when necessary. The SENCo will support further assessment of the child where necessary, assisting in planning for their future needs in discussion with colleagues and parents/carers.

Outside Agencies

Outside agencies may become involved if a child continues to make little or no progress despite considerable input and adaptations. They will use the child's records in order to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have previously been set. The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, or provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the child directly. The child's individual targets will set out strategies for supporting the child's progress. These will be implemented, at least in part, in the normal classroom setting. The delivery of the interventions continues to be the responsibility of the class teacher.

Outside agencies may become involved if the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematical skills
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which regularly and substantially interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group
- has sensory or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- has an on-going communication or interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning
- despite having received intervention, the child continues to fall behind the level of their peers

The Role of the SENCo

At our school, the SENCo:

- manages the day-to-day operation of the policy
- co-ordinates the provision for children with additional needs
- supports and advises colleagues
- oversees the records of all children with special educational needs
- acts as the link with parents/carers
- acts as the link with external agencies and other support agencies
- liaises with local secondary schools to provide support for transition to Year 7
- liaises with local Nurseries to provide transition support to Reception
- monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision, and reports to the governing board
- manages a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs
- contributes to the professional development of all staff where necessary

The Role of the Governing Board

The governing board has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.

The governing board does its best to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. They consult the LA and other schools, when appropriate, and report annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs. The governing board ensures that parents are notified of any decision by the school that SEND provision is to be made for their child.

The governing board has identified a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. The 'responsible person' in this school is the headteacher. The headteacher ensures that all those who teach a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan are aware of the nature of the plan.

The SEND governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEND provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

Allocation of resources

The SENCo is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with Educational, Health and Care Plans. The headteacher informs the governing board of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed. The headteacher and the SENCo meet annually to agree on how to use funds directly related to Education, Health and Care Plans. This informs the next school development plan related to SEND.

Monitoring

The SENCo monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in school. The SENCo provides staff and governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school. The SENCo and the headteacher hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in this area. The SENCo and the named governor with responsibility for special needs also meet.

Open Door

The SENCo is available to discuss your child's needs at a time that is suitable to you. If you have concerns about your child's needs please ask to speak to Miss Snowden so we can support them and ensure they can reach their full potential.