



## Solefield School

# **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and DISABILITY POLICY**

## **Solefield School**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies to ensure the effective and efficient provision for children with SEND and English as an additional language (EAL) at Solefield School. This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

#### **Definition of SEND**

According to the SEND Code of Practice:

‘A child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.’

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

*(Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years, January 2015 DfE)*

A copy of the code of practice is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/342440/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_approved\\_by\\_Parliament\\_29.07.14.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342440/SEND_Code_of_Practice_approved_by_Parliament_29.07.14.pdf)

#### **The School in context**

We are an independent day school catering for pupils from the ages of 3-13.

#### **Admission arrangements**

Pupils with special educational needs are admitted to our school according to the same criteria as other pupils, provided that admission is compatible with:

- The provision of efficient education for the children with whom he will be educated; and
- The efficient use of resources; and
- Our Admissions Policy

Prospective pupils entering the school will normally spend a minimum of half a day in the classroom with their year group and be assessed by the class teacher or subject teachers. All pupils in years 3 and above will be screened for dyslexia using the online GL dyslexia screener assessment by the Head of Learning Development. Younger pupils complete a brief spelling, reading and maths assessment. Should any child already have identified SEND, relevant reports should be brought to the admission interview.

The Headmistress will contact the child's current head teacher.

Any child who, at the admission interview, is identified as having any additional needs, may be referred for further assessments so that the school is able to provide the appropriate intervention on arrival.

The School maintains a strong academic tradition and may not be suitable for children with below average ability.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

To enable all pupils to develop their full potential in a structured, caring environment. The school has high but realistic expectations of its pupils and encourages each child to work hard to the very best of his ability, constantly giving of his best effort and receiving effective and positive encouragement.

- To apply a whole school policy to meeting each child's individual needs following the guidelines of various national legislation and policies, i.e. the *Special educational needs code of practice 0 to 25 years, January 2015, Section 19 Children and Families Act 2014, The Equality Act 2010 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.*
- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, any child who may have special educational needs.
- To provide different levels of intervention to match the child's level of needs.
- To ensure that all school staff are aware of each child's needs so that such needs may be met in all school settings.
- To ensure that no child is discriminated against, in any area of school life, on the basis of his disability.
- To provide pastoral care and support for all children so that they may develop in all areas and build a strong sense of self-esteem.
- To ensure that children's records include information relating to their individual needs and the interventions which have been provided and their outcomes.
- To conduct regular reviews of children's progress.
- To work in partnership with parents and other external agencies to provide for the child's special education needs at all stages.
- Where possible to include the children themselves in decision-making about the type of intervention and targets.
- To endeavour to ensure that each child with SEND or EAL progresses to a suitable Secondary School where his current needs will be met.
- To provide a regular INSET programme for all teaching staff.
- To provide support for staff so that children's needs can be met in the classroom.
- To ensure all pupils' Social, Emotional & Mental Health is monitored, maintained and nurtured.

## **3. Identification**

'The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person. A pupil has SEND

where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age'

*(6.14-15 SEND code of practice 2015)*

Children will have needs and requirements that by and large fall into at least one of four areas, although many children will have interrelated needs.

*Cognition and Learning*

*Communication and Interaction*

*Physical and/or Sensory*

*Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties*

The school's assessment procedures (see Assessment Policy) provide information that is used to identify pupils with SEND.

A child's needs may become apparent through:

- Admission procedures
- Teaching within the Reception year group
- Screening procedures and GL Assessments
- Reading and spelling tests
- Assessments in Maths and English
- Class Teacher Observations
- Inconsistencies in assessment and attainment
- Through expression of parental concerns
- Further specialist assessments undertaken by the Head of Learning Development.

A teacher has an obligation to raise with a child's English or Maths teacher any problems or difficulties that in his/her opinion may result in the need for support. Informal discussions between the teacher and the Head of Learning Development form the initial stage. A record of discussions held are to be completed by the Head of Learning Development, who will then decide the next course of action.

If it is determined that specific action is required, the Headmistress and parents are to be informed at that stage. It is recognised that not all parents that are consulted may wish action to be taken. Staff members are to be informed when action is to be taken. As a school we follow the principles embodied in the SEND code of practice 2015 and follow a graduated 4 step approach (assess – plan – do - review cycle). High quality teaching, differentiated for individuals, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Pupils are identified under a single category of support.

A pupil who joins the school who is identified as having English as an additional language (EAL) is supported by the class teacher, teaching assistant and if needed by a learning development assistant. An initial assessment is undertaken and a Pupil Profile is created, as this is an essential record of a new arrival's progress in learning English. It highlights areas where the pupil is gaining proficiency and helps to identify targets for future teaching.

### **Consultation with Educational Psychologists**

In some cases it may become necessary to advise parents on the desirability of a consultation with an educational psychologist or other external agency e.g. speech and language therapist. Parents may or may not be willing to undertake this (the school cannot exert pressure on them to do so, only recommend it as a course of action) and in any case may wish to keep any ensuing report confidential to themselves which

they are fully entitled to do. However they are to be encouraged to allow a report to be seen by staff in order that the teachers may better be able to give support to their child.

#### **4. Provision**

It is accepted that a small number of children in each year group will require support to ease learning difficulties and that the school has an obligation to provide such support both in the classroom (through targeted differentiated learning opportunities) and outside the classroom on an individual basis or small group with a member of the Learning Development department.

Learning Development provision is to be seen as a partnership of support, involving parents, class teacher, Headmistress, subject teachers, the Head of Learning Development and teaching assistants, Governors and, of course, the child himself.

When support is needed in a withdrawal situation, the first priority is to ensure that all children have access to a broadly based curriculum and do not miss core subjects. Their individual preferences and strengths are taken into account in addition to the advice of the staff members and parental requests in timetabling this support.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's Headmistress, the Head of Learning Development and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities. *All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs.* Teaching such children is therefore a whole school responsibility.

##### **Strategy Team**

The Strategy Team includes the Headmistress, Deputy Head, Assistant Heads, Head of Pre-Prep and Registrar.

##### **Strategy Team Responsibilities**

- Overseeing provision of SEND and EAL pupils
- Keeping governing body informed
- Working closely with the Head of Learning Development to co-ordinate provision
- Monitoring and evaluating success of this policy
- Ensure the school makes reasonable adjustments to allow all pupils to access the curriculum fully

##### **Head of Learning Development**

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is Lisa Glennon-Cousins who holds the National Award of SEND Coordination and a Post Graduate Diploma in Dyslexia and Literacy.

##### **Head of Learning Development's responsibilities:**

- Along with the Strategy Team oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- Co-ordinate provision for children with special educational needs and / or disability
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers
- Co-ordinate the work of Learning Development assistants
- Oversee the records of all children with special educational needs and / or disability including the SEND register and class Profile of Needs
- Liaise with parents of children with special educational needs and / or disability
- Contribute to the in-service training of staff

- Liaise with external agencies including the LEA, educational psychology services, health and social services and voluntary bodies
- Provide some specialist teaching to small groups or individuals in response to needs identified
- Keep records for pupils with an EHC (Education Health Care Plan) under review and evaluate them termly with class teachers
- Carry out informal testing of individuals in response to needs identified by members of staff and screen prospective pupils who come for a taster day
- Liaise regularly with class teachers to create termly Provision Maps for each class to show the provision in place and to record, track and help the management of interventions
- Lead discussions about pupils with SEND at twice weekly staff and pastoral meetings

### **Teaching Staff Responsibilities**

- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that each pupil is given every opportunity to fulfil their potential within the normal classroom situation;
- All staff are expected to be aware of the SEND needs of all the pupils they teach, and to ensure that the needs of each pupil are addressed during classes and in the prep set.
- In the classroom, differentiated tasks should where possible be given by way of supporting those children. (The difficulties inherent in this approach as children move towards Common Entrance in the higher year groups of the school when all pupils are supposed to be moving towards taking the same exam are recognised.) It is also very likely that these pupils will be spending some time each week out of lessons with the Head of Learning Development teacher either as an individual or as one of a small group. Additionally the possibility of the Head of Learning Development or teaching assistant giving support to an individual pupil within the classroom situation is an option. This support is regularly reviewed.

### **SEND Staff**

Currently the school's support team comprises of the Head of Learning Development and the Learning Development Assistants, plus two 1:1 Learning Support assistants who specifically support pupils with EHC plans.

### **6. Records**

Reports of SEND children are filed in the Learning Development room.

Records and targets of those children receiving 1:1 support are filed in the Learning Development Room. Each class has a Profile of Needs that identifies which pupils have specific additional needs and the provision in place for them within class. We also use Provision Maps to show provision that is "additional to and different from" what is offered through the school's differentiated curriculum.

A report is sent to the parents of children receiving 1:1 support with the Head of Learning Development at the end of the year and parents have an opportunity to speak directly to them at the Parents' Evenings if they request an appointment. Solefield School offers an open-door policy throughout the year.

### **7. Exam Procedures**

It is the school's policy that children should be enabled to show what they know rather than what they do not know in tests and exams. Extra time is allowed wherever a pupil's reading, writing or processing speed is below his age level or where proof reading is essential. Occasionally children with SEND find the

examination process to be very stressful. In these situations, children may, for example, sit their exams with a member of the Learning Development team so that they can have questions read. In public exams the official guidelines are followed. Future schools are contacted to discuss the need for additional access arrangements in Common Entrance and entrance exams.

## **8. External Agencies**

We recognise the expertise of external agencies and the school maintains a list of Educational Psychologists to whom the parents may take their children for assessment. Locally based psychologists and external agencies will visit the school and offer help and advice. External agencies will be invited to attend Annual Reviews for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHC plan). Good relationships have been established with a range of professionals and external agencies. Parents can find more information and support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities through the Kent County Council's website which provides Kent's Local Offer (SEND Information Hub).

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs>

## **9. Complaints**

Should anyone have any concerns or complaints about SEND Provision, they can refer to the Head of Learning Development, the Headmistress or, in extreme cases, to the Governors. The school has a complaints procedure, published on the school's website or available from the school office.

## **10. INSET**

All staff at Solefield School attend regular conferences and training days on their own specialism. There are also regular INSET days held at school on topics of general concern and supporting children with SEND is part of this programme.

## **11. Monitoring and Evaluating the School Policy for SEND Provision**

Both the Head of Learning Development and the Headmistress will monitor the administration and development of special educational needs provision within the school. There will be an annual review which identifies outstanding tasks and agrees future objectives to be included in the policy statement.

## **12. Gifted and Talented**

We recognise that teaching should make learning challenging and enjoyable. We aim to provide high order thinking and questioning skills in lessons to challenge our more able pupils. Enrichment and extension work is provided by all teachers as part of normal differentiated provision in lessons. In addition to this, identified pupils take part in extra activities such as General Knowledge Club, Philosophy Club, Chamber Choir, Art Enrichment Club, Art Scholars' Club, Music groups, Chess, LAMDA and Drama. Pupils are also encouraged to work independently, researching topics of their own choosing for our Holiday Take Away Menus, Mind Gyms and Enrichment Weeks. Pupils, and their parents, are encouraged to attend our "Thinking Allowed" talks by visiting guest speakers. Pupils for extension in any area are identified via testing, teacher recommendations and consultation with parents. These pupils are identified clearly on lesson plans. A list is held centrally and is reviewed regularly as a staff. Staff set appropriate work and they are seen regularly in small groups for extension. All pupils in Year 7 & 8 follow a Scholarship Path Programme for one afternoon a week with specialist teachers which may lead to a formal scholarship application in their chosen area. The areas are Academic, Art, Drama and Music, Sport or STEM.

Lisa Glennon-Cousins (Head of Learning Development)

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Helen McClure

Headmistress

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