

Aylesford School

and Sixth Form College



wonder aspiration respect discipline

Secondary Phase

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

AND

DISABILITY POLICY

Written: September 2019
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Lead: Director of Learning Support and Inclusive Practice
Via: Standards, Personnel and Curriculum
'from potential to reality'

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SECTION 1

Contact details

Director of Learning Support and Inclusive Practice: Miss Kate McDonagh

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (June 2014) 3.66 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:-

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (June 2014) updated in January and May 2015
- Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (2014)

Context

This policy was written following the publication of the Children and Families Bill in June 2014, which provided new statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years became law on September 1st 2014 and led to the need to rewrite the school policy on SEND.

During the writing of this policy the SENCo consulted with many stakeholders, including the Governors with responsibility for SEND; some of the parents of students with SEND; teachers and teaching assistants.

This policy should be read with reference to the following school policies:-

- Single Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Bullying Policy

This policy is based on several fundamental beliefs:-

- The school recognises and values diversity amongst its students
- All students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum
- All teachers should be aware of their responsibility to meet the full range of educational needs that are presented by their students
- That the special educational needs of students can best be met when all involved work as a team, recognising the value of good communication between parents, students, school staff and relevant support agencies.

SECTION 2

Aim

Aylesford School's vision statement is to take each young person from 'potential to reality,' and this underpins our approach to SEND, as we try to raise the aspirations and expectations for all students, including those with additional needs.

High aspirations for our students with SEND will help to prepare them for adult life, and help them to go on to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, health and community participation. We aim to provide a diverse learning environment which supports all students, including our students with SEND, in maximising and applying their potential.

Objectives

- To identify and provide for students who have special educational needs and additional needs
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated May 2015)
- To operate inclusive practices to ensure that the provision for students with SEND does not disadvantage them compared to their peers without SEND
- To provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the policy
- To provide the resources required to implement the policy, including staffing within the Learning Support Department
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with students with special educational needs and/or disabilities

SECTION 3

Identifying Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Code of Practice describes the four broad categories of need:-

Communication and Interaction – includes speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with ASC, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and Learning – support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, and in a mainstream school we are only likely to have students with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), not the more severe SLD or PMLD.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning, and include conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEND.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties – social and emotional difficulties may manifest themselves in many ways, including becoming withdrawn or isolated, displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder are also included in this category. Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has a SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being registered as having SEND. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEND. Concerns regarding behaviour need to be investigated to identify the underlying need which has triggered such responses.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs – some children with a physical difficulty (PD) require additional ongoing support and/or equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers. Students with vision impairment (VI), or hearing impairment (HI), will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.

These four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. In practice, individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEND, and children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) may have needs across all areas, including particular sensory requirements. A detailed assessment of need will ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual will be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs, and seek to address them all using well-evidenced interventions targeted at their areas of difficulty and where necessary specialist equipment or software.

There are other situations that can impact on a student's progress, but do not constitute special educational needs in themselves. These include:-

- Disability
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Disadvantaged

- Being in receipt of free school meals within the last six years
- Being a CLA
- Being a child of a serviceman/woman
- Adopted child

Disability

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

SECTION 4

A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. At Aylesford School we regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

Provision for students with Special Educational Needs is through the 'ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW' cycle.

ASSESS

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the SENCo and SEN support will consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. The SENCo or SEN support will discuss this information with the relevant Head of Student Progress and other key staff, such as teachers and teaching assistants who know the student well. Additional screening tests may be used to try to identify the particular area of difficulty.

For higher levels of need, the SENCo will make arrangements to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals, such as Educational Psychologists or specialists from the Integrated Disability Service or Specialist Teacher Service where appropriate.

The information gathering will include discussions with the students and their parents or Carers. The school will ensure that the parents have a good understanding of their child's strengths and areas of difficulty, and give them an opportunity to share their concerns with the member of staff. These will be recorded and kept on file.

PLAN

Consideration of whether special educational provision is required should start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the student and their parents. This should then help determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required. The SENCo or SEN support will make arrangements for the agreed interventions to be put in place.

DO

The provision to support the special educational needs of the student will be provided and monitored by the SENCo and Learning Support team.

REVIEW

Regular informal reviews will take place between the Learning Support team, student and relevant staff members. Teaching assistants record information on individual students in the department file. Parents will be kept informed through notes in the planner, emails, phone calls or meetings as required. Students with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP), will have a formal annual review when all concerned meet to review progress and plan for the next year.

Managing Students Needs on the SEND register

Students are included on the SEND register in a single category, SEN Support, where previously there were two categories: School Action and School Action Plus. The small proportion of students with the highest level of need have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

A student will be included on the SEND register when the process described above has resulted in the need for some provision that is 'additional to and different from' the universal provision in the school. Please refer to the SEND Information Report which describes the universal and additional provision in Aylesford School.

It is the SENCo's responsibility to maintain the SEND register and review it three times a year, for the October census, the January PLASC, and in the summer term to ensure that it accurately reflects the provision in school.

Teachers are informed of changes to the SEND register and can access it electronically in the shared area.

It is the responsibility of individual subject teachers to make sure that they are aware of which of their students are on the SEND register, and the provision that they need, in order to access the curriculum affectively and make good progress in that subject.

If a student on the register is failing to make expected progress then the subject teacher needs to discuss this with their head of department and consider the strategies needed to support the student. If these fail to help, the teacher needs to talk to the SENCo for further advice. At this point a review meeting is useful, to bring together the pupil, parents and staff to discuss further provision. If the student continues to fail to meet their targets a referral to an outside agency for further assessment may be made by the SENCo. A cost benefit analysis would be made at this stage, and the permission of the Head teacher sought, as these referrals have to be paid for from the school budget.

If the student has an EHC Plan, and requires funding for additional support, an application to the LA Higher Needs Block may be made by the SENCo. The LA has a pro forma for this, and the school has to evidence how it has spent the £6000 in the indicative SEN budget, before a request for additional funds will be considered. A costed IEP will provide this evidence.

If the student is at SEND Support on the register when additional provision is required, then a discussion is needed to decide what the best route is for that provision. It may be that the additional support could be provided through the Early Help process, by an agency such as Rise or the Integrated Disability Service, or that the Statutory Referral process for an Education Health and Care Plan needs to be initiated. The SENCo, HoSP and/or their line manager would discuss this with the parent to ensure that all are agreed on the best course of action. The SENCo will provide the parents with information about the SENDIAS service, which provides support for parents and carers of children with special educational needs: Email: warwickshire@kids.org.uk Tel: 02476 366054 – No charge

SECTION 5

Criteria for Exiting the SEND Register

The SENCo reviews the register three times a year, in consultation with the HoSPs, members of the Learning Support Team and other relevant staff. If the student has made good progress, and is no longer in receipt of additional provision, they will be removed from the SEND register. The SENCo will maintain (and share with staff) a register of students with a diagnosis of ASC, and conditions such as SpLD, who are no longer on the SEND register, as their needs are being met within the Universal Provision (as indicated on the Provision Map).

SECTION 6

Supporting Students and Families

- Warwickshire County Council is required, by law, to provide a comprehensive directory of services provided for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This can be found on the LA's website at: <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send>

Aylesford School and Sixth Form College provides detailed information on the provision for students with SEND in its SEND Information Report which can be found on the school website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25> or on request by contacting the school office.

- Independent support and advice is offered by SENDIAS through the Family Information Service at www.kids.org.uk/Warwickshire-sendias-front-page or by telephoning: 024 7636 6054

Admission arrangements can be viewed in the school's Admissions Policy on the website.

Access to exams and assessments for students with SEND

The SENCo is responsible for ensuring that students have the access arrangements that they require to enable them to access all assessments fairly. Access arrangements are designed to create a level playing field, and are not granted on the basis of a diagnosis of SEND. School enlists the Specialist Teacher Service to carry out detailed screening tests to ensure that the students who need the arrangements are identified. The arrangements reflect the students' normal way of working in school. They may include the provision of a reader, scribe, extra time, rest breaks or use of a word processor. The student has to provide their permission for the arrangement to be applied for, and the parents are notified in writing when the application is granted.

Transition

The key to a successful transition for any student is careful preparation and planning and students with SEND may need more support in this area than students without SEND. Whether it is a move to a different teaching group, or a transfer from primary school, or to Post 16 provision, the SENCo will ensure that the student receives all the support that they require to do this successfully. Aylesford School has a good track record for supporting the transition of students from primary schools into Year 7, with members of the Learning Support team working closely with the Year 7 pastoral team and the staff of our feeder primary schools. Additional visits to Aylesford are arranged as required, and Learning Support staff will visit the primary school to build a relationship with the student with a statement or EHC plan. A similar arrangement for students transferring to further education will be organised as the need arises.

SECTION 7

Supporting Students at school with Medical Conditions

The school recognises that Students 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.

Some students with medical conditions may also have SEND, and may have an Education, Health and Care plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision; in such circumstances the SEND Code of Practice is followed.

The DfE published statutory guidance in September 2014 which can be viewed at; www.sendgateway.org.uk In the light of this guidance the school's policy has been reviewed and can be viewed on the school website.

SECTION 8

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

- It is the teacher's responsibility to monitor and evaluate the progress of the student with SEND in their subject, using the school systems set up to monitor all students' progress.
- It is the SENCo's responsibility to monitor the progress of the student as a result of the SEND provision that she has ensured is in place.

SECTION 9

Training and Resources

- The training needs of staff are decided by the SLT each year. The SENCo may make a request for the inclusion of training on a particular aspect of SEND provision.
- All staff are encouraged to undertake training and development opportunities to maintain the quality of teaching and provision for all Students, including those with SEND.
- All new teachers undertake induction on taking up a post, and this includes a meeting with the SENCo to explain the systems and structures in place around the school's SEND provision and practice.
- The SENCo regularly attends the LA SENCo Network meetings in order to keep up to date with local and national updates in SEND.
- The school maintains a subscription to NASEN which provides a variety of resources to support the work of the Learning Support Department.

SECTION 10

Roles and responsibilities

- The SENCo, Miss Kate McDonagh and the SEN Support TA, Mr Thomas Tillier have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and coordinating specific provision made for Students with SEND
- Miss McDonagh, the Director of Learning Support and Inclusive Practice takes SEND issues to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- The SEN Governor provides a link between the governing body and the SENCo, meeting with the SENCo at least twice a year. It is the responsibility of the SEN Governor to champion SEND issues at governors meetings and to feedback relevant information to the SENCo. The link is currently Mrs S Clark.
- Teaching assistants are employed by Aylesford School for a variety of student support roles; those supporting students with SEND are line managed by the SENCO and SEN Support
- The Designated teacher for Safeguarding is Mr Martyn Payne. The Safeguarding policy can be viewed on the school website
- Mr MacRae is responsible for managing Pupil Premium Grant provision
- Mr Martyn Payne manages the school's responsibility for meeting the medical needs of Students and Looked after Children

SECTION 11

Storing and Managing Information

The Learning Support files on students with SEND are stored within the department, until the student's 25th birthday, before being destroyed in the confidential waste (see the school's Data Protection policy).

SECTION 12

Reviewing the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, normally in the autumn term, and presented to the December Governors' Meeting for approval.

SECTION 13

Accessibility

The school has an Accessibility Plan, as required by the Equalities Act 2010, which can be viewed on the school's website or requested from the school office.

Parents and carers are welcome to contact key staff via the school office (telephone or email), and the message will be passed on to the relevant member of staff.

The SENCo and SEN support are available to meet parents or carers who have a concern about their child's provision or to discuss progress, at a mutually convenient time within the school day.

SECTION 14

Dealing with Complaints

If a parent or carer has a complaint about SEND provision for their child then they should speak to the member of staff concerned in the first instance. If the complaint cannot be resolved, then contact the SEN Support, Mr Thomas Tillier or the SENCo, Miss Kate McDonagh. Ultimately the school's Complaints Procedure should be used. This can be found on the website or requested from the office.

SECTION 15

Bullying

It is of paramount importance that all students, and particularly those with SEND, should feel safe at Aylesford School so that they become independent learners, with the resilience to cope with the challenges they may face in society.

Any incidences of bullying are taken seriously, and followed up quickly. One of the advantages of the small size of the school is the ability we have to resolve issues by speaking to all involved. The school's bullying policy is available on the website or from the school office.