

Special Educational Needs Policy

Updated July 2014

Introduction:

The vision of Woodlands School is:

- to allow every pupil to pursue academic excellence
- to create an environment which is stimulating, secure and provides opportunities for all
- to develop an empathy and understanding for our local community

As part of this vision, underlying principles of this Special Educational Needs (SEND) Policy are:

- To set high expectations for children with SEND;
- To promote the inclusion of children with SEND within mainstream education;
- To support parents/carers of children with SEND;
- To take account of children's views in the SEND process;
- To operate within the statutory framework;
- To develop the knowledge and skills of all staff working with SEND children.

Aims:

The Woodlands School Mission Statement highlights the worth of each individual and the importance of partnership with parents/carers, in pursuing excellence and seizing opportunities. This policy explains how we aim to do that for students with special educational needs thus developing skills and raising achievement for all.

Definitions:

Special Educational Needs refers to a child with difficulties which range from mild degrees of learning difficulties to profound and multiple disabilities. Learning difficulties may be caused by hearing or visual impairment, physical disability or emotional and social difficulties.

The school Governing Body accepts the following definition of SEND (based on section 156 of the Code of Practice):

A child has SEND if he/she has a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

A child has a learning difficulty if he/she:

- a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- b) Has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child 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.

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.

Special Educational Provision:

Special educational provision is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in mainstream schools, other than special schools, in the area.

Definitions of the Disability Discrimination Act

A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of the SENCo:

In collaboration with the Headteacher, Leadership Team and Governing body, to determine the strategic development of the SEN/D policy and provision at the school with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of students with SEN/D. This will include:-

- Liaising with and advising colleagues on all matters relating to SEN/D.
- Contributing to the continuing development and training of school staff.
- Overseeing the review and maintenance of statements and records for all SEN/D students.
- Liaising with parents/carers of SEN/D students in co-operation with form and subject tutors, learning support assistants and others as appropriate.
- Liaising with external agencies including the local authority officer with responsibility for SEN/D and the educational psychology service, health and children's services, voluntary bodies and others as relevant/appropriate.

The SENCo is supported with two SEND consultants with particular specialisms.

The Role of the Lead SEND assistant:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND Policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND students including attendance monitoring, examination access arrangements and reading tests
- Managing the SEND team of LSAs on a daily basis.
- Organising the records of all SEND students.

The role of Governing Body

Governors have responsibility for the strategic overview of and the implementation of the SEN/D Policy. The day-to-day management and organisation of SEN/D in the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher, SENCo, with the support of colleagues in the Learning Support Department. Governors will make sure that they are fully involved and will undertake review and monitoring of the school's SEN/D Policy. All governors, especially the SEN/D Governor will ensure that they are up to date and knowledgeable about the school's SEN/D provision.

The SEN Link Governor is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the SEND Policy and reporting to the Governing Body on the issue of SEND. They are also responsible for commenting on the success of the policy over the previous year in the Annual Report to parents.

The role of the Learning Development Administrator

The Learning Development Administrator acts as the first point of contact for parents/carers and outside agencies who have enquiries concerning learning support. The Learning Development office is staffed between 8am - 3.30pm Mon-Friday.

The Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are responsible for supporting students with SEND. LSAs are allocated to support individual statemented students within groups or whole classes as directed by the class teacher. They also provide support to individuals or small groups in the learning support base to address pupil targets.

Specialist Expertise:

The Woodlands School has a bespoke programme for students with speech and language difficulties. This is supported by a specialist teacher for children with speech and language difficulties who visits the school weekly as well as dedicated specialist LSAs, who work with various aspects such as dyslexia or hearing impaired.

Admission Arrangements:

The Governing Body has agreed with the Local Authority admissions criteria which do not discriminate against students with SEN or disabilities, and its admissions policy has due regard for the Guidance in the Code of Practice (2001) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

Access:

The school has a lift to all floors, wide doorways, disabled toilets, and a hygiene room. Special arrangements are made for students with physical difficulties to move around the school safely either when the corridors are quiet or with assistance from a peer or LSA. Refer to the School Accessibility Policy plan for full details. We strongly encourage those who wish to attend the school to visit with their parents/carers so that a fully informed choice can be made before applying.

Involving Students:

The positive involvement of students is crucial both for their self-esteem and the successful achievement of self-initiated and agreed targets. At Woodlands School we strongly believe in supporting all students with SEND to become independent learners and to this end students are always given responsibility in achieving targets and making progress with their learning and with their personal and social skills. They will contribute to short term targets in their Learning Passports.

Students with statements are central to the Annual Review process and they are encouraged to share their views both through the completion of the student's views section of the Annual Review paperwork and through attendance at the meeting. Care is taken to ensure the student is fully aware of the process and the fact that they are the 'most important' person in the meeting; their views are listened to and their input is reflected in the paperwork. In this way they feel more involved in their own learning through target setting, planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Identification, Assessment, Provision and Review:

The process of identification and assessment of students' requirements involves:

- Primary school records, National Curriculum records and verbal information gathered during the transition process;
- Use of the Essex criteria to establish the level of need;
- Advice from outside agencies;
- Meetings with parents;
- In house testing, including reading and spelling assessments;
- Information from school staff;

- Implementing the model for identification, assessment and provision of special educational needs as outlined in the Code of Practice.

The identification of pupils with SEND involves allocating a level of concern (SEN stage) and a main area of difficulty (category of need). There is a staged approach for the identification of need and the level of support this brings for the student. Woodlands School fulfils the requirements of the Code of Practice in ensuring all students receive their full entitlement for support.

During 2013/14 Woodlands will transition from pupils being identified as School Action, School Action Plus or with a Statement towards the introduction of Education and Health Care Plans (which replace Statements) and identifying pupils with Additional Needs (formerly School Action and School Action Plus). This reflects the introduction of the New Code of Practice (2013).

Pupils with Additional Needs require additional support to access the curriculum. They will receive the majority of their support through differentiated learning within the classroom. Some may be included in intervention groups or have LSA support within some lessons. Their progress will be monitored against their targets. If concerns continue there may also be a need to seek the involvement of professionals from outside agencies.

In exceptional circumstances, after significant intervention from the school and significant involvement of a range of professionals from outside agencies, it may be necessary to apply for an Education Health Care Plan. In these cases the SENCo will work closely with parents/carers and the student to ensure that the process is fully understood.

Once a Statutory Assessment is agreed by the Local Authority an Education Health Care Plan will be awarded to the student. This carries particular targets for improvement and is outcomes focused. All students with EHC Plans must undergo a thorough Annual Review of their progress. Parents/carers, the student, teachers, LSAs and relevant professionals from outside agencies are all invited to contribute to the Annual Review. This is in addition to termly reviews of progress carried out by the student's nominated Progress Mentor.

Progress with Learning Passport targets are monitored by LSAs throughout the year and reported to the SENCo. In addition each child receives an annual review of the progress with Pupil Profile targets by the SENCo. At these reviews their SEN stage and category of need will also be reviewed. These reviews are timed to coincide with Consultative evenings to maximise the involvement of parents/carers. The SENCo uses multiple sources of information when preparing reviews including: □ Reports on progress made with last Pupil Profile targets from LSAs,

- Written reports from LSAs,
- Written comments from class teachers,
- Progress reports,
- Results of assessments completed since the last review,
- Reports from outside agencies,
- Behaviour records.

At the Consultative evening the views of parents/carers and the student are also gathered and added to the review. In an effort to ensure all parents/carers are involved, should a parent/carer not meet with the SENCo at the Consultative evening, their views are sought in writing.

In addition to these reviews the SENCo is happy to meet with parents/carers by appointment to discuss progress and any concerns. Information may have to be gathered from colleagues in advance of these meetings to ensure an accurate review of progress can occur.

Dissemination

The SEN Register is a live document where the status of students is continually under review, therefore staff are encouraged to regularly review the Register and note any changes. Email reminders are sent out to teaching staff after each review so that they can view the updated targets.

The SEND Register is available to staff through the shared areas (SEND folder). Learning Passports are available to staff through SIMS, where they are attached to each student's profile as a linked document. Each student on the SEN Register has a paper record of relevant information which can be viewed by staff; these are located in the Learning Support Office. Pupil Profile reviews for students with Additional Needs (previously School Action and School Action Plus) are held at Consultative evenings, following these meetings staff are informed through the staff bulletin of any changes to the SEND Register and actions needed.

Urgent or important new information regarding a student may be circulated by:

- An announcement at morning briefing, the minutes of which are posted in the staff room for one week and then filed centrally,
- A memo from the SENCo to relevant staff,
- An entry into the notes section on a student's profile on the SIMS system,
- Staff email,
- Telephone calls to relevant staff.

Exam Dispensations:

As part of our support for students with SEND, teachers are periodically asked to identify those students who may need special arrangements to be able to manage examinations.

These include: ☒

- Scribe
- Reader
- Transcribe
- Extra time
- Prompt
- Rest Breaks
- Enlargement of examination papers
- Coloured paper
- Overlays

These students will have a range of skills assessed by a qualified specialist teacher and, if they fall within the criteria as outlined by the Joint Council for Qualifications, applications will be completed by the SENCo and submitted to the exam boards for approval by the school's Examinations Officer.

Broad and Balanced Curriculum:

Central to Woodlands School's ethos of education is the fact that all students are entitled to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and that this right should include those with SEND.

All teachers at Woodlands School are responsible for students with SEND in their classrooms. All teachers are responsible for differentiating their lessons to ensure all learners can achieve and make progress. Teachers' planning takes into consideration the targets on Pupil Profiles as it is envisioned that the majority of targets can be met through support within the classroom. Teachers plan for the role of additional adults within their classroom, maximising their effectiveness in ensuring the needs of all learners are addressed.

All staff are committed to the vision that education is more than academic performance; it is also about fostering qualities of independence, self-advocacy, positive self-esteem and a respect for others. To achieve this, some students may need extra support beyond what is considered the normal level of provision. Supporting students who have a wide range of SEND requires a flexible use of support strategies, for example:

- Social skills groups,
- Peer support,
- Individual reading,
- Spelling skills groups,
- Homework support sessions,
- Use of safe person/place,
- Time out,
- Individual behaviour programmes,
- Small group sessions for intervention programmes to address basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Where it is identified that these interventions are needed consideration is given to the timing of such provision and disturbance to curriculum time is kept to a minimum.

Inclusion:

Students with SEND are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school. All students, including those with SEND, are encouraged to participate in extracurricular clubs, school visits and social activities. LSAs accompany students on these activities, when appropriate, to facilitate participation.

As part of the school's pathways curriculum, students in years 7 and 8 who are identified as working below functional levels in literacy and numeracy receive additional support with these basic skills by participating in small group literacy and numeracy interventions for 3 hours per week. This is achieved by disapplying these students from Modern Foreign Languages, therefore avoiding disruption to other curriculum areas.

In Key Stage 4 the school offers a wide variety of practical and vocational courses which are suited to the learning styles and skills of students with SEND. At the times when Option choices are made in years 8 and 9 the Deputy SENCo works closely with the Senior Managers responsible for Key Stage 4 to ensure that students with SEND are placed on appropriate courses.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Review of the Policy:

Monitoring and evaluating this policy is an ongoing process. The SENCo meets with the Link Governor and a report is submitted to the Governing Body on a termly basis. Parents/carers are informed as to the effectiveness of this policy through the Annual Governors Report.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation demands. The appendices will be updated annually, at the start of each academic year.

Complaints Procedure:

Arrangements for considering complaints about special educational provision at Woodlands School are in compliance with the school's complaints procedure policy. Any complaints are dealt with at appropriate meetings convened by all concerned with the agreed consensus in respect of results and actions.

Staff Development:

The skills of the learning support team require continual development in response to the changing needs of the students currently on the SEND Register. The team receive training in various ways, including:

- A thorough induction package
- Departmental INSET delivered either by the SENCo, by other members of the school staff or by outside agencies;

The needs of individual LSAs, as identified in their performance management reviews, being addressed through access to county training programmes delivered by SENCAN;

- Access to other training as appropriate.

All in-house training sessions relevant to specific student needs are offered to other staff personnel as appropriate.

Outside Agencies:

Woodlands School is strongly committed to working in partnership with colleagues from outside agencies to address the needs of students. If multiple referrals are needed an appropriate member of staff works closely with the student and their parents/carers to complete a Common Assessment Framework referral (CAF). If parents/carers wish to request additional support for their child they can do so by contacting their child's Head of Year who will pass it to the SENCo for review and action.

Partnership with Parents:

Liaison with parents/carers is a key aspect of the school's policy and procedures are in place to enhance this partnership including The Woodlands School website, the School Offer, newsletters and Consultative evenings. The following pertains for parents/carers of students with SEN.

Our aim is to actively involve parents/carers in line with need – some have weekly telephone calls with Key Workers, others receive information at Consultative evenings, some come for termly meetings with the SENCo and some have annual meetings with the SENCo. Most parents/carers will have intensive involvement at the initial stages or in times of difficulty and less when programmes are working well. In all cases it is recognised that parents/carers are pleased to share recognition of positive progress, to enter into dialogue with learning support staff and to receive prompt feedback on their concerns.

The SENCo and Learning Development team are happy to meet with parents/carers and requests for appointments can be made by contacting the Learning Support Office. Phone calls and emails will be responded to within a maximum of 3 days; however the SENCo acknowledges that if a parent has concerns that warranted them initiating communication then a speedier response

would be appreciated and therefore endeavours to respond to all emails and telephone calls as soon as possible.

Transition/Transfer:

The SENCo maintains strong links with SENCos from local primary and secondary schools by attending SENCo Cluster meetings.

Students with statements considering their transition to secondary school in year 5 and students, parents/carers and staff from primary schools are welcome to tour the school and meet with the SENCo by appointment. The SENCo attends year 6 Annual Reviews for students with statements, at the invitation of the primary school.

In the Summer term the SENCo meets with the SENCo and class teachers from primary schools to discuss the needs of all transferring students with SEN. The school annually holds a Year 6 day to prepare all students for transfer to the school, in addition the learning support department offers additional visits to address the needs of students with statements (or EHC Plans) and students at SA and SA+ (or newly identified as those with Additional SEND needs) who are experiencing high anxiety about transferring schools. These arrangements are made based on the needs of and the number of transferring students; examples of arrangements are:

- Drop-in visits, accompanied by a member of staff from the primary school or a parent, where the student tours one department of the school each visit;
- Visits to the learning support department where school materials and routines are revisited and additional contact with key members of staff is arranged;

If students with SEN join the school during the academic year the SENCo will liaise with staff from the transferring school, organise provision and disseminate information to staff. Student records are shared with the SENCo once received by the school. If a student with SEN leaves the school during the academic year the SENCo will ensure all records are sent to the new school, to the attention of the SENCo, within 15 days of the student ceasing to be registered, as required under the Education (Student Information) Regulations 2000. The SENCo will usually discuss transferring students at the request of the new school; however in exceptional circumstances the SENCo may initiate transition support for the student, in liaison with the new school, in advance of transfer.

When students leave the school at the end of year 11 the SENCo completes any requests for transfer information sent from the learning support department of the incoming institution. A copy of the student’s last Pupil Profile is sent for their information.

Ratification:

Signature of the Headteacher: Date:

Signature of the Chair of Governors: Date:

