



Outcomes
First Group

SEND and Inclusion Policy

Acorn Park School



Acorn Park

Updated September 2026

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Aims:

At Acorn Park our aim is for every child to feel safe, in a nurturing and caring environment which meets their individual needs and educates them enabling and empowering them to reach their full potential.

We have four Core values, “We Care, We Strive, We Grow, We Thrive.” Our aim is to ensure every young person feels safe and confident to achieve their goals, (emotional, social and academic) using these values.

As a centre of learning Acorn Park holds the effective management and implementation of Special Educational Needs provision and Inclusion as central to realising the whole school aims and objectives.

Our SEND policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and or Disabilities (SEND)
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND

Every pupil at Acorn Park has an Education, Health & Care Plan. Each pupil will have an Annual Review, chaired by the SENDCo or Assistant SENDCo, to review the needs of the pupil and the appropriateness of the provision. Recommending to the respective LA whether any changes need to be made, either to the EHCP or to the funding arrangements for the child. (in accordance with SEN Code of Practice 2014)

1. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools’ responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools’ responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCOs)

2. Definitions

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

Acorn Park is committed to providing an appropriate, ambitious and high-quality education for children and young people with special educational needs. We believe that all our pupils, have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them and fully inclusive of all aspects of school life. We believe that all our pupils should be equally valued in school and we strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, developing an environment where all our pupils can flourish

and feel safe.

At Acorn Park we are committed to inclusion. We aim to improve and develop cultures, policies and practices that include all our pupils. We aim to provide a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties.

This does not mean that we treat all pupils in the same way, but that we respond to pupils in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs. We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background.

We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of pupils:

- Pupils from minority, ethnic and faith groups, Travellers, asylum seekers, refugees
- Pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- Pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils with physical disabilities
- Pupils who are gifted and talented
- Pupils who are looked after by the local authority
- Pupils who are young carers and those who are in families under stress
- Pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

This policy describes the way we meet the needs of children and young people who experience barriers to their learning, which relate to one or more of the following:

- Communication and Interaction difficulties
- Cognition and Learning difficulties
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health development
- Sensory and/or Physical Impairment

We recognise that pupils learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and maturity. We are particularly aware of the need for a nurture approach, as many of our pupils have had difficult and traumatic experiences in a previous school setting. We believe that many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At Acorn Park we aim to address and meet the SEND EHCP outcomes and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every pupil to achieve their full potential.

We recognise that in some cases, the full national curriculum may not be the most appropriate route to maximise pupils learning and achievement. We provide two academic pathways for our pupils:

- The Formal pathway follows a differentiated National Curriculum
- The semi formal pathway follows the EQUALS Formal curriculum which is a thematic based approach to learning.

We identify a child's suitability for each curriculum which is never rigidly fixed. For many students, it will be the right curriculum to see them through their time at Acorn Park. However, for others where barriers to education are removed, or such progress is made that they are viewed as more suitable for a formal curriculum. In these cases, school should facilitate a change from a semi-formal to a formal curriculum. In some cases it maybe in the child's best interest to move from a formal curriculum to a semi-formal curriculum and this can be facilitated when it is appropriate.

We see the inclusion of children and young people identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue, we also aim to model inclusion in our staffing

policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community.

Objectives:

1. To ensure the SEN and Disability Act, Children and Families Act 2014 and relevant Codes of Practice and guidance including SEN Code of Practice 2014 are implemented effectively across the school.
2. To ensure equality of opportunity for, and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against, children and young people with special educational needs.
3. To continually monitor the progress of all pupils, to identify needs as they arise and to provide support as early as possible.
4. To provide full access to either curriculum through differentiated planning by class teachers and support staff as appropriate.
5. To provide specific input, matched to individual needs, in addition to differentiated classroom provision.
6. To ensure that pupils are perceived positively by all members of the school community, and inclusive provision is positively valued and accessed by staff and parents/carers.
7. To enable pupils to move on from us well equipped to continue learning and developing their social independence to meet the demands of their community.
8. To involve parents/carers as much as possible in plans to meet pupils needs.
9. To involve the pupils themselves in any decision making and planning that affects them.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The SENDCo and Provision Team

The SENDCo: Paula-Marie Leech. T: 01953 888656 E: Paula-Marie.Leech@acornpark.org.uk

Assistant SENDCo: Louise Bebbington E: Louise.Bebbington@acornpark.org.uk

Assistant SENDCo: Harriet East E: Harriet.East@acornpark.org.uk

SEND team assistant: Lisa Murton E: Lisa.Murton@acornpark.org.uk

They will:

- Work with the Co-Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEN policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Ensure that initial baseline assessments including therapy assessments are completed as quickly as possible following a pupil's admission.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options, and a smooth transition is planned.
- Work with the Co-Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and governing board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

4.2 The Co-Headteachers

The Co-Headteachers will:

- Work with the SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.

4.3 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Working closely with Learning Support Assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions including how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENDCo to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEN policy.

5. SEN information report – See separate document

5.1 The kinds of SEND that are provided for:

Although Acorn Park identifies as specialist school for autistic students, we recognise that there are often co-occurrences with other learning disabilities. Therefore, our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

Communication and interaction including:

- Autism
- Tourette's
- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Speech and language difficulties.

Cognition and learning including:

- Dyslexia
- Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Dyscalculia

Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties including:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Mental Health difficulties
- Anxiety

Sensory and/or physical needs including:

- Visual impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Sensory processing difficulties
- Epilepsy.

5.2 Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

Pupils will be formally assessed using GL assessments to provide a baseline of their abilities, if this is not suitable, we use Mapping and Assessing Personal Progress (MAPP) tool. This assessment is a ten-point rating scale with descriptors which enables measurement of progress in four aspects of skill development. The therapy team will also assess all new students from their EHCP and identify SALT and OT needs or assessments.

The SENDCo will:

- Ensure regular meetings are held with teaching staff to discuss additional needs, concerns and to review Individual Learning plans.
- Be alerted to newly arising concerns through Pupil Internal Referrals by the class teachers or therapists.
- Discuss issues arising from these concerns with the class teacher in line with the Pupil Internal Referral process.
- Where necessary, hold reviews more frequently than once a year for some pupils.
- Use targets arising from Individual learning plans to inform and support whole class approaches to inclusion, e.g. differentiation, varied teaching styles.
- Together with the Strategic Leadership Team monitor the quality and effectiveness of provision for pupils through classroom observation, learning walks and book scrutiny.
- Ensure teaching is primarily delivered by class teachers through differentiated teaching methods.
- Additional support is provided by Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) or Teaching Assistants (TA's) throughout the school. Follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review. The class or subject teacher will work with the SENDCo to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:
 - The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
 - Their previous progress, attainment and behaviour
 - Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
 - The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data
 - The views and experience of parents
 - The pupil's own views
 - Advice from external support services, if relevant.
- The assessment will be reviewed regularly. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

5.3 Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this. Transition and induction will be individualised to each pupil.

5.4 Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class.

High quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN. This will be differentiated for individual pupils. We use a holistic and therapeutic approach in consultation with our team of on-site therapists including speech and language, Occupational Therapy and Psychotherapy.

5.5 Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment.

Acorn Park is a single site school; the main school is built on two levels with stairs from ground floor to first floor. Entrance to the main building is through the main lobby and there is a side entrance for pupil access, which if required, can both be fitted with a small ramp therefore suitable for wheelchair access. Classrooms are accessed by corridors; most ground floor classrooms can be modified for wheelchair access.

There are clearly identified male, female and accessible toilets for pupils and adults.

We have made sure that there are good lighting and safety arrangements for all. Our classrooms provide good acoustic conditions so that the effects of hearing difficulties are minimised (carpeting, curtains, and quiet areas) Reserved parking for pre booked visitors and disabled visitors has been made at the front of the school. We will incorporate all other issues into our repairs and maintenance programme. Pupils requiring equipment due to impairment will be provided with equipment recommended from the SEN and will be continually assessed in order to gain any extra support that they require.

Arrangements for providing access to learning and the curriculum

- The school will ensure that all children have access to a balanced and broadly based curriculum either formal or semi formal. (No child will be excluded from any learning activity due to their impairment or learning difficulty, unless it is clearly of benefit to that individual and leads towards inclusion.)
- Learning opportunities will be absorbing, rewarding and effectively differentiated and the teaching styles will be diverse.
- Staff will work in a way to avoid the isolation of pupils and will encourage peer working and collaborative learning.
- Differentiation takes a variety of forms within teacher planning. Learning intentions are always made explicit and then activities may be adapted or planned separately as appropriate.
- Pupils with sensory or mobility impairments or a specific learning difficulty will access the curriculum through specialist resources such as ICT where this is appropriate.

Access to Information

- All children requiring information in formats other than print have this provided
- Printed materials will be adapted so that children with literacy difficulties can access them and ensure access by pairing pupils/peer support/TA support.
- Alternatives to paper and pencil recording are provided where appropriate, including access through scribing.
- A range of assessment methods are used within lessons (such as audio recording, photographs, video and drawing) to ensure pupils can demonstrate their achievement appropriately.

Differentiated Curriculum Provision

In order to make progress a pupil may only require differentiation of the plans for the whole class. The differentiation may involve modifying learning objectives, teaching styles and access strategies. Under these circumstances, a pupil's needs will be provided for within the whole class planning frameworks and individual target setting. Differentiation will be recorded in the daily short-term planning by the class teacher.

Monitoring of progress will be carried out by the class teacher and used to inform future differentiation within whole class planning. The pupil's progress will be reviewed at the same intervals as for the rest of the class and a decision made about whether the child is making satisfactory progress at this level of intervention.

The school uses the definitions of adequate progress as suggested in the revised Code of Practice (Chapter 5: Identification, Assessment and Provision 5.37) progress which:

- Closes the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- Prevents the attainment gap from growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting at the same attainment baseline, but less than the majority of peers
- Matches or betters the pupils' previous rate of progress
- Ensures full access to an available curriculum (Formal or Semi Formal)
- Demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Demonstrates an improvement in the pupils' behaviour

Targeted Intervention

Where a period of differentiated curriculum support has not resulted in the pupil making adequate progress OR where the nature or level of a pupil's needs are unlikely to be met by such an approach, targeted intervention may need to be made. This extra provision would be indicated where there is evidence usually through baseline assessment that:

- There has been little or no progress made with existing interventions
- Additional support is required to develop literacy or numeracy skills
- Additional support is required for emotional, behavioural or social development
- Additional support is required for sensory or physical impairments
- Additional support is required for communication or interaction needs

There are likely to be two groups of children recorded as needing extra provision:

1. Pupils, who have needs similar to other pupils but, with additional needs within the class, e.g. lack of phonic knowledge or phonological skills, spelling.
2. Pupils whom we consider to have more severe or longer term needs that are likely to result in an application for further professional advice such as CAMHS.

Where needs are similar, it is appropriate to support these children within a group, focussing on the common needs. However, each pupil will retain individual targets. Both groups of children will have provision for their common needs in a small group as well as some individualised support for their more unique needs. Provision will run concurrently with differentiated curriculum support.

The group may be taught by the class teacher and also supported by a TA. The responsibility for planning for these pupils remains with the class teacher, in consultation with the SENDCo.

Individual learning Plans will be reviewed Half termly, although some pupils may need more frequent reviews. The class tutor will take the lead in the review process. Parents/carers and wherever possible, the pupil, will be informed and will be consulted about any further action.

5.6 Expertise and training of staff

Our SENDCo has over 20 years experience of working with children with autism. We have a large staff team, including an Assistant SENDCo and Provision Lead, Provision Assistant both of whom are specifically trained to deliver SEN provision. Staff have been trained in Lego Therapy, Precision teaching, ELKLAN, Talking Mats and Pathological Demand Avoidance as well as Trauma Informed Practice.

We use specialist staff for Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Psychotherapy. They support and advise staff delivering individual therapeutic programmes.

5.7 Arrangements for and Inclusion In-Service Training

- The SENDCo holds regular meetings to update and revise developments in Special Needs Education and Inclusion.
- Meeting additional needs and Inclusion issues are targeted each year through the school's long-term goals and the School Development Plan. In-Service training and individual professional development.
- In-house SEN and Inclusion training is provided through staff meetings and training days.
- All staff have access to professional development opportunities and can apply for SEN or Inclusion training where a need is identified.
- Support staff, such as TA's are encouraged to extend their own professional development and the Strategic Leadership Team will ensure training where this is appropriate.
- No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in school activities because of their SEN or disability. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure all pupils can participate in activities offered at school.

5.8 Support for improving emotional and social development

As well as maintaining a therapeutic approach, we provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils are encouraged to be part of the school council
- Daily Personal Development lessons
- On site Psychotherapist
- We have a zero tolerance approach to bullying but recognise the need for a wider understanding of communication disorders and difficulties which are evident within many pupils with an ASD diagnosis.

5.9 Arrangements for partnership with parents/carers

- Staff and parents/carers work together to support pupils
- Parents/carers are involved where possible in stages of the education planning process.
- At Annual review meetings with parents/carers we ensure that the pupil's strengths as well as weaknesses are discussed.
- Where we make suggestions as to how parents/carers can help at home, these are specific and achievable and that all parents/carers leave the meeting clear about the action to be taken and the way in which outcomes will be monitored and reviewed.
- Parents/carers are always invited to contribute their views to the review process. All Individual Learning plans and reviews will be copied and sent to parents/carers after meetings.
- Ideas and materials for supporting learning at home will be shared through Parent shares on the school's website and through the school's communication system.
- Parents/carers are provided opportunity to discuss concerns and progress on parent

reviews or parents/carers are able to make other appointments on request.

- Regular communication between school and home will ensure that concerns are promptly acted on. Where this has not happened, however, parents/carers are able to make a complaint by following our complaints procedure (this can be found on our website or a hard copy is available on request).

5.10 Working in partnership with Health and Social Services, Education Welfare Services and any Voluntary Organisations (Children Families Act 2014)

- The school regularly consults health service professionals.
- Early Help Assessment (EHA) and the Education Welfare Service will be accessed through senior leadership and Family and pastoral Support team. Class teachers will highlight through the correct channels if there is a concern they would like discussed.
- Social services will be contacted by the lead Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jennifer Banol when appropriate. There are many voluntary organisations supporting SEN Parents/carers will be given details of these groups on request or as appropriate. Information sent from organisations will be posted within the school.
- CAMHS
- Children's Social Care
- Drug support networks and charities
- Bereavement counselling charities
- Education Welfare Service
- Pupils GP
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- CAHMS Planning for outside agency referrals is done so in consultation with parents/carers

5.11 Complaints about SEN provision

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the class teacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's Deputy Head or SENDCo, this could be escalated to one of the Co-Headteachers if a satisfactory resolution has not been found they will be referred to the complaints policy .

The parents of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

5.12 Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

<https://www.kids.org.uk/sendiaass>

5.13 Contact details for raising concerns

Parents should contact the class teacher in the first instance.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the SENDCo every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to:

- SEN Information report
- Accessibility plan
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- AP Complaints Policy
- Relational and Inclusive Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy



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