SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy

Notes on source material: based on MGS policy and Orchard Manor School, Devon, which is part of MAT

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Ascendancy Partnership Trust

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1. Context

The Ascendancy Partnership Trust includes special needs schools.

Our inclusive education provision aims to help our students feel valued, safe, respected and have a sense of belonging. The Trust actively promotes this within our provision, aiming to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

All our students aged 3 and upwards have an Education and Health Care Plan (ECHP) under the EYFS, a child aged five or under may be placed at the school without an EHCP while the child has a multi-professional assessment in agreement with and funded by the local authority.

The Trust has adopted a multi-disciplinary approach to meet its students' needs, working in partnership with appropriate professionals such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, child psychotherapists, teachers for the Visual and Hearing Impaired, (VI and HI) and the doctors and nurses of each school's Primary Care Trust.

Guiding Principles

The Ascendancy Partnership Trust and all schools within the Trust believes that all students should receive an education that takes account of their individual needs and enables them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood.

We encourage and support all students to have a voice in their learning development, the setting of targets and planning for their future.

Definitions

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of this policy, a student is defined as having SEND if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.
- A disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age in mainstream settings.
- Special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream settings.

2. Legal and Advisory Framework

This policy and the information report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015 and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for students with SEN and disabilities.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report.
- Equalities Act 2010.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

This document is part of a suite of policies outlining the Trust's commitment to providing a high quality of education and pastoral care for its students. It operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Student Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy

3. Aims and Scope

This policy aims to ensure:

- students have their educational needs met through teaching informed by effective target setting based on accurate assessment of the students' abilities.
- students are actively engaged in their own learning, the setting of their targets and planning for their future.
- students have bespoke learning pathways and individualised timetables.
- parents are respected and involved as integral part in the education of their child.
- learning is supported by relevant specialist teaching strategies and interventions.
- compliance with the SEND Code of Practice.
- leaders maintain an overview of how the special needs of every student in the school are being met. This includes needs that require clinical resources that are the responsibility of local authorities to provide. Where clinical needs are not being met, it is the duty of leaders to raise this with the commissioner.

4. Assessment and Monitoring of Students' SEN

Teachers are responsible for the initial, formative and summative assessment of students' abilities and progress. Staff work closely with outside agencies, including multi-disciplinary teams, to support the assessment of a student's special needs at all stages of their time at a Trust school.

- Before a child or young person joins the school, the school will coordinate a meeting with the parents and all the professionals that work with the young person to share information with the school and key staff before starting. This process is described in the Admissions Policy, which is available on the Manor Green School website. Transition arrangements will then be agreed. The school will actively seek parents/carers engagement in the assessment process.
- Where the new student has an EHCP in place, an education plan will be reviewed within 12 weeks of a student joining the school. Students will have a Progression Plan that will be created with short-term targets linked to the EHCP. These will be reviewed regularly with parents, and progress towards the long-term EHCP targets will be tracked.

- See Appendix A for Assessment placement information. The progression plan will detail termly outcomes based on the students' EHCP long term outcomes. The progression plan will be reviewed at the end of each long term and revised at the beginning of the following new term.
- There are parental consultations at least termly throughout the academic year. Communication with parents is facilitated in various ways to ensure parents have every opportunity to consult with staff on their child's progress.
- The school will ensure that all those teaching or working with a student named in an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) are aware of the student's needs and that arrangements are in place to meet them. Staff will be briefed about any potential problems and a procedure will be put into place to deal with certain situations. A thorough SEND focussed CPD programme is provided for staff.
- The school will hold an annual review once a year at which the child's EHCP will be reviewed. Appropriate professionals will be invited to the review, and advice will be sought. Prior to the annual review parents will receive a school report, aspects of which will be discussed at the review, and invited to share their views. Student views will also be collected prior to or during the annual review. The school will review each student's EHCP to ensure that it includes the statutory sections outlined in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', labelled separately from one another. The Local Authority will be notified of the annual review and any changes to the EHCP that have been identified, with supporting evidence. This will be sent to the Local Authority within 15 days of the annual review meeting.
- If a student's needs significantly change, the school will request a re-assessment of an EHCP at least six months after an initial assessment. Thereafter, the Headteacher will request the LA to conduct a re-assessment of a student whenever they feel it is necessary. Following the reassessment, a final EHCP will be issued within 14 weeks from the request being made.
- The school will ensure that any EHCP information is kept confidential and disclosed on a need-to-know basis.
- The Local Governing Board (LGB) and Director of Education in the Trust monitors the curriculum, and assessment process, ensuring they are appropriate and meeting the students' needs.

5. Involving Parents

The Trust places great importance in its constituent schools having a positive link with all parents and believes working with parents is the best way to support our students. Contact is encouraged regularly. For some students this takes the form of regular telephone calls between home and staff, whilst staff also make use of home/school communication books, email and home to school apps.

Parents will also have the opportunity to visit the school and meet with staff during annual reviews, parent open evenings, special events or when the need arises.

Each school encourages parents to apply to be parent governors when vacancies arise. There is also a parent, staff and friends' association (PSFA) which have regular meetings and support the

school through its major fundraising events. The PSFA raise funds for equipment and activities for the students.

The Trust will always welcome ideas and suggestions from parents for improving how it supports and develops student progress and wellbeing and asks parents to complete questionnaires and is grateful for all feedback.

6. Resources

All schools in the Trust offer small class sizes, with suitably qualified, skilled and knowledgeable teachers and support staff.

We have specialist employees within the school to support our learners and address the specific educational needs of students. Please see Appendix B for school specific information.

We work in partnership with health colleagues commissioned by local authorities to meet clinical therapy needs.

Allocation of resources

The school's budget is allocated by senior leaders and monitored by the Trust to ensure the maintenance of standards and further school development in line with the school development plan. Key staff have responsibility for specific budgets and resources are purchased to differentiate and enable all students to have access to a broad and enriched curriculum that supports them to reach their full potential. The spending and impact of all Student Premium funding is monitored to ensure that it is effective. Children in care and adopted children have additional funding through the PEP system that supports their individual needs.

Students identified as needing additional support may be supported through intervention sessions where they work in small groups or with individual support. Specific resources may be used within these sessions. Where appropriate students have access to assistive technology to improve access to the curriculum.

School staff work in partnership with NHS health colleagues; however, we have no authority to direct these resources.

7. Staff Training and Improving Practice

Training is identified through the School Development Plan and school's performance management programme. In addition to attending relevant courses, staff are encouraged to work collaboratively with other schools and education provisions offering specific skills to continuously raise their own professional knowledge and skills.

- All staff undergo an Induction Programme ensuring that they have knowledge of the range of SEN within the School.
- All appropriate staff have Behaviour Intervention training, People Handling and Intimate care training, as well as in-house training on communication.
- Appropriate CPD is provided for all school staff through a comprehensive training programme developed by the Director of Education, Headteachers and Director of HR.

- Contact with parents and carers is encouraged regularly. For some students this takes the form of regular telephone calls between home and staff, whilst staff also make use of home/school link books and email.

8. Complaints

Parents/carers with a concern about the curriculum support being offered can approach their child's Class Teacher in the first instance. If this does not bring about resolution, parents/carers can raise concerns with senior leaders or are asked to write to the school's Headteacher detailing their concerns.

All such concerns/complaints will be recorded in line with the Trust's Complaints' Policy.

9. Local Offer

- The school will collaborate with the Local Authority to provide information about our provision for the Local Offer, where required.
- The LGB will collaborate with and support the Local Authority in developing and reviewing the Local Offer, where necessary and appropriate, to ensure that it is collaborative, accessible, comprehensive and up to date.
- Where appropriate, the school will work with LAs, parents and students in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. The school will also cooperate with those providing services.
- The school will collaborate with the LA during development and review to ensure that the LA's Local Offer is easy to understand, factual and jargon-free; is structured in a way that relates to students' and parents' needs, e.g. by broad age group or type of special educational provision; and is well signposted and publicised.
- The school will help to ensure that parents and students understand what support can be expected to be available across education, health and social care from age 0 to 25 and how to access it. The school will assist the LA in ensuring that the Local Offer includes eligibility criteria for services, where relevant, and makes it clear where to go for information, advice and support, as well as how to make complaints about provision or appeal against decisions.
- The school will work with the LA to review the Local Offer to ensure that, when parents and students access the Local Offer, the information is up to date.

The Local Offer for The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) can be found here: https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/local_offer It also has links to neighbouring local authorities' Local Offer.

10. Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the Trust website
- the school website
- the Staff Handbook

- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school staff
- Headteacher's reports

11. Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and does not prioritise or disadvantage any student and it helps to promote equality at this school.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Trustees of the Academy Partnership Trust have overall responsibility for evaluating the impact of the Executive team.

The school's LGB undertakes a cycle of monitoring activity, examining and reporting the work undertaken. These reports are shared with Trustees to consider as they triangulate this with other sources of information about the school's performance.

In addition, the Trustees and Local Governors receive regular reports on students' attainment. Trustees and Governors are provided with details of student attainment including exam successes and standardised attainment tests (SATs).

Additionally, the Headteacher ensures that in the report to Trustees and local Governors, for their full termly meetings, provides details of the progress of students in a range of areas. Trustees and Local Governors evaluate the quality of education through a number of ways, these include:

- Reviewing and assessing reports presented to governors
- Monitoring by governor nominated to lead on SEND
- Occasional governor in school days

These evaluations are considered by Governors and contribute to setting the school Development Plan.

Appendix A: Assessment Placement Information

- The purpose of an assessment place is to assess a student's complex needs prior to an EHCP being in place.
- These placements are normally for Early Years students, over 3 years old but prior to being statutory school age.
- An assessment place is only considered if a child has complex needs that cannot be met in a nursery/mainstream setting.
- The Link Early Years Send Team (Via Early Help) must be involved with the family prior to an assessment placement for Early Years students; they will contact the school if a placement is to be sought. If a potential place is available, then parents will be offered a visit. If after the visit it is decided that a request for an assessment place will proceed, then the placement offer will be taken to the Local Authority panel for consideration.
- If placement is agreed, an initial review meeting will be held on the first term of the child's admission. A request for an EHCP will be made to the Local Authority within the first two terms of a child starting at Manor Green School. This will be discussed in the initial meeting.
- Assessment places do not lead to guaranteed school placements at Manor Green School. Long-term school placement will be discussed as part of the EHC needs assessment.

Appendix B: Resources

At Manor Green School we have a range of specialists that can support our students. These include, Counsellors, Play Therapists, Music Therapists, a Careers Advisor, Job Coaches, Family Support Staff, Nurture trained staff, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) trained staff, Intensive Interaction trained staff, Staff trained in supporting Mental Health, Subject Leads and Specialist Subject Support Staff.

Through the Therapies Hub we have access to Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. We also work closely with NHS Staff and have members of the School Nursing Team onsite.