

# Special Educational Needs Policy



## Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools Federation and NURSERY

**‘Respect, Honesty, Kindness,  
Perseverance’**

*‘Welcoming, Forgiving, Generous, Flourishing’*

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## **Aims and Objectives**

At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools we are committed to ensuring every child reaches their optimum potential including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We believe every child deserves to be safe and loved and to have a happy and healthy childhood free from harm. By providing a safe, supportive and secure environment where self-confidence can grow, we actively encourage children to feel valued and give every child the entitlement to a sense of achievement. We aim to identify, at the earliest opportunity, all children who need special consideration to support their physical, sensory, social, emotional, communication or cognitive development. We involve parents, children and others in developing a partnership of support, which allows every child full access to a broad, balanced and suitably differentiated curriculum relevant to the children's needs. At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools, every teacher is a teacher of every child including those with SEND.

Our main objectives for Special Educational Needs are as follows:

- To early identify pupils with SEN and to enter such children on the SEN list
- To provide equal opportunities for SEN children by providing access to a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to individuals' special needs
- To systematically assess children's abilities and set learning targets for them to achieve in order that they may make optimum progress towards overcoming their difficulties
- To nurture home-school relations in providing for SEN and in developing children's skills
- To provide a clear framework for teachers and classroom assistants to implement the Code of Practice through a staged approach
- To inform parents as soon as possible when a child is identified as showing a concern and explain school partnership and procedure
- To use appropriate support services promptly following a specific concern
- To use a range of media to update staff knowledge and understanding of specific difficulties.

## **Definition of SEN**

A child or young person has SEN if he/she has a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or young person has a Special Educational Need if he/she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. *SEN Code of Practice (2014, P4)*

## **Definition of disability**

Many children and young people who have SEN may also 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.’ SEN Code of Practice (2014, P5)

## **Our Commitment to Inclusion**

This is an inclusive school and we are committed to ensuring that all children in the school are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum.

Inclusion is about creating an environment that provides the opportunities for all to succeed. We recognise that incorporating an inclusive practice is paramount to first quality teaching. To do this we will continue to improve existing skills and expertise to meet individual educational needs. We will make sure that all children are welcomed into the school community and have opportunities to raise their achievements.

It is considered the class teacher’s responsibility to monitor the progress, applicability and quality of provision even where children are working in small groups or 1:1 with another adult outside of the classroom. This includes children working with specialists where the class teacher must endeavour to ensure they are fully involved with the provision planning and aware of outcomes. The child remains the class teacher’s responsibility and they are accountable for them at all times (Code of Practice p90 6.52).

## **Provision for special educational need at the school**

At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools, we endeavour to make provision for every kind of special educational need; either with or without a statement of special educational need/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). For instance: Speech, Language or Communication needs, Autism, Cognition and Learning Difficulties, Dyspraxia, Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties, Visual and Hearing Impairments. Provision is outlined as follows:

- Provision of teaching assistants who can support groups of children in their differentiated learning in the classroom
- Provision of specialist teaching assistants to carry out small group and individual programmes in Speech and Language, Phonics (KS2) and Motor Coordination.
- The school purchases support from external agencies.
- Outside agencies work with teachers, individual pupils and groups of pupils and are able to advise on appropriate strategies for support.
- Access to professional support from the Community Paediatricians, Occupational Therapy and support from a speech and language therapist.
- Specific resources are purchased to support pupils with SEN.

## Identification and assessment of pupils

The staff and Governors of the school are aware and believe in the importance of identifying, monitoring and supporting pupils with additional needs. The Code recognises four broad areas of need:

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

(A simple description of each of these categories can be found at Appendix 1.) When identifying a child's need/s, the school considers the needs of the whole child which will include not just the special educational needs of the child.

The graduated approach is at the heart of our school practice as we are continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing our approach to the teaching of all children. However, where a potential special educational need has been identified, this process becomes increasingly personalised, as it responds over time to a growing understanding of the child's barriers to and gaps in learning and an increasingly individualised assessment of need.

At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools, we monitor the progress of all children, at least 3 times a year to review their academic progress. We use a range of assessments with children at various points e.g. phonics screening, writing and maths assessments, SpeechLink and LanguageLink, in-house SEN assessments, reading/spelling age. In Early Years including the Nursery we also use Portage to track small steps of progress if needed.

Where progress is less than what is expected, even if a special educational need has not been identified, we put in place additional high-quality teaching, differentiating for individual children's' needs to enable the child to catch up. Examples of extra support are: precision teaching, class-based interventions and adjustments to class provision and environments.

Despite high quality teaching targeted at children's areas of need, some pupils may continue to make limited progress. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, we will use a range of assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty. As well as our experience in using a range of assessment tools, we also have access to external advisors who are able to use specific assessments linked to their area of specialism e.g. Learning Support Service and Educational Psychologists.

The purpose of this more detailed assessment is to understand what additional resources and alternative approaches are required to enable the child to make better progress. This information will be shared with parents and put into a SEN support plan; the plan will be reviewed regularly and refined/revised if necessary. At this point we will have identified that the child has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the pupil which is additional

and different to what is normally available. The step used to identify pupils to be placed on our register is applying the 'Assess-Plan-Do-Review' cycle.

If the child is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain the good progress without it) we will continue to identify the child as having a special educational need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources, he/she will no longer be identified with special educational needs. When any change in identification of SEN is made, parents will be notified.

### **What are the criteria for being removed from the register?**

- When a child consistently meets their targets during the reviewing process
- When a child makes progress that is in line with expectations for both age and ability
- When agencies, specialists or in school assessments show targets met or age appropriate levels
- Parents will be informed of the above and their views sought and a decision made as to whether to remove the child from the SEND register will be made.

### **Statutory Assessment**

Kent LA will consider the school's application for a statutory assessment leading to a possibility of an EHCP. If Kent consider statutory assessment an appropriate route, then assessments are carried out by key professional agencies which inform the outcome of the statutory assessment. Once all the advice requested has been received, Kent must decide whether to draw up an EHCP. Kent may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's SEND is such as to require that Kent determine the child's SEND provision through an EHCP. Parents have the right to choose a different education provider. Parents are fully informed throughout the statutory assessment process.

### **Provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have EHC plans, including how the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils.**

Each review of a support plan will be informed by the views of the child, parents and class teachers and the assessment information from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The SEN Code of Practice (2014, 6.17) describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

For children with/without a statement of special educational need/Education, Health and care Plan, there will be reviews/Person Centred Annual Reviews which enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of specialist and additional provision.

Additional provision will be evaluated, recorded and costed on the school's provision map.

### **What is not SEND but may impact on progress and attainment?**

Children with disabilities may not necessarily be considered SEND under the guidance within the Code of Practice (2014). The Code outlines the 'reasonable adjustments' duty for all schools provided under the current Disability Equality legislation (2010). At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools, the deciding principle would be to what degree the disability has a negative effect in spite of the reasonable adjustments made on the child's day to day life and whether or not these are sustained and/or long term (longer than 12months Quality Act 2010).

Equally, in the line with the Code, we do not automatically consider slow progress and low attainment to be prerequisites for addition to the SEND Register (P84 6.17) but would maintain close assessment and review of such a pupil for an agreed period and initially seek to identify a means of support within the class as part of Quality First Teaching, prior to consideration for SEND.

Other areas that would not be considered SEND but would have an impact on progress and attainment are:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- Pupil Premium
- Children who are in Care (CiC)
- Children from service families

### **Medical Conditions**

Within the legislation set out in The Children and Families Act (2014) maintained schools and academies have a duty to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions (Code of Practice, 2014). Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools recognises its duty to properly support pupils with medical conditions, adhere to any individual health care plans and ensure that such pupils have full access to educational experiences including physical education and off site trips. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and therefore we will comply with our duties under the Equality Act, 2010.

### **Teaching pupils with special educational needs**

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools we are aware that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Therefore we regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered. SEN Code of Practice (2014, 6.37)

If appropriate and as advised by internal and external assessments and monitoring, Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools employs some additional teaching approaches e.g. one to one tutoring.

## **Curriculum and Learning Environment**

We believe that all children have a right to have their needs assessed and that provision should match the nature of those needs. We aim for children with SEND to have the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education including the National Curriculum. We adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for all pupils with special educational needs as well as incorporating advice provided as a result of assessments and strategies described in statements of special needs/Education, Health and Care Plans.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body holds ultimate responsibility for the school's response to the Revised Code of Practice and ensures that the school's policy is followed. In co-operation with the Executive Headteacher and Heads of School, the Governing Body determines the school's policy and approach to provision for children with SEND, establishes the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintains a general oversight of the school's provision. The Governing Body also has duties under Section 161(2a) of the Education Act to ensure that a child with SEND receives the help that his/her learning difficulty requires. It is the responsibility of a named Governor to ensure that SEND is reported on to the sub-committee and through reports to the Full Governing Body. Prior to this meeting the named Governor will liaise with the Inclusion Manager and Head of School so that relevant information is included.

### **The role of the Inclusion Manager**

The Inclusion manager has responsibility for overseeing SEND provision throughout the schools and promoting and facilitating the application of the mainstream core standards throughout the schools.

The Inclusion Manager is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and operation of the SEND Policy and is expected to co-ordinate and monitor provision and progress for pupils with SEND in the schools, directing the work of the SEND team. This will include liaising with and advising teachers, contributing to the in-service training of staff, liaison with external agencies, including the Educational Psychology Service, Specialist Teaching & Learning Service, voluntary bodies and other support agencies. In addition, monitoring through in class observations, data analysis and intervention observations are included.

Whilst quality first teaching with regard to the mainstream core standards is the direct responsibility of class teachers and Senior Leaders, they will be supported by the Inclusion Manager to help prevent over identification of SEND. The Inclusion Manager will take responsibility for overseeing identification of children for discussion at the regular LIFT meetings, reporting on the outcomes to teachers and parents and ensuring those outcomes are implemented. Other responsibilities include

maintaining and updating the SEND register, SEND records and the whole school provision map which records details of additional provisions for pupils with SEND and other pupils within the schools.

The Inclusion Manager is able to delegate to the SENCO and the Nursery SEN Lead where appropriate and as needed dependent on the demands of her wider role.

### **The Role of the SENCO**

The SENCO works under the direction of and alongside the Inclusion Manager. The main focus of their role is practical and they are responsible for the development of inclusive practice through promoting adaptive strategies and the use of IT.

### **The Nursery SEN Lead**

The SEND lead in the nursery works under the direction of the Inclusion Manager and is responsible for SEND provision in the nursery including, referrals, funding submissions, parent liaison. They work with the Nursery Teacher to upskill the nursery staff and develop practice.

### **The Role of the Class Teacher**

The class teacher is responsible for the progression and attainment for all pupils in their class, this includes those with SEND, and they should ensure lessons and learning experiences are accessible and appropriate for all as part of quality first teaching. The class teacher will be responsible for the identification of needs and delivery of programmes of work for the SEND pupils in the classroom including differentiation of National Curriculum provision as appropriate to ensure equal opportunity of access to learning for pupils with identified SEND. The class teacher will raise any concerns regarding pupils with the Inclusion Leader using the appropriate procedures. The class teacher will liaise with parents and keep them informed at all stages of provision for special needs through teacher/parent meetings and, where necessary, through written contact. The class teacher will ensure appropriate additional provision is made available for those pupils who, whilst not SEND, are not making expected progress. They must maintain a provision map which sets out any additional in-class support that is being deployed for individual pupils. The class teacher is responsible for ensuring that Teaching Assistants (TAs) are deployed effectively to maximise learning, particularly for SEND pupils. This will be achieved through informed planning based on assessment for learning and a thorough knowledge and understanding of their pupils.

### **The role of the Teaching Assistant**

Teaching assistants will be used to support children at all levels of special needs. They will report to class teachers any concerns which may indicate special educational needs. TAs will complete simple feedback and data sheets relating to any interventions they deliver to assist with tracking and monitoring the progress of SEND pupils. They will inform the class teacher or the Inclusion Leader of any training needs.

### **The views of the child**

Children with SEN, like all other children, are expected to share the responsibility for their learning, as far as is appropriate to their age, ability and maturity levels. All adults working with the child have a responsibility to listen to and to take account of

the views of the child. Children of all ages are taught to evaluate their work and to monitor their own behaviour. As they mature, children with SEN will be encouraged to participate more formally.

### **Records and Reporting**

Records to be kept for SEND will include a provision map, register and individual SEND profiles. Information for any pupil with SEND will be kept in accordance with the confidentiality policy of the school. A SEND folder will be held in each class that includes specific SEND information for children on the SEND register in that class e.g. Provision maps, copies of assessment reports and quality first grids.

### **Funding**

The notional SEND budget is not ring fenced and therefore it is for the school to manage the whole of its budget to include provision for SEND. At Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools we always strive to use this process to provide the highest quality of SEND support possible. The governing body together with the Head of Schools and Executive Head Teacher will determine the appropriate allocation of resources (staffing and physical) following receipt of information about budget allocations. The school allocates this SEND funding strategically and in the context of the total resources available towards the additional expenditure on SEND provision in line with the LA's budgetary guidelines.

In the Nursery SENIF funding is ringfenced and the Nursery SEN lead and Executive Headteacher determine the appropriate spend for this funding.

### **Staffing and Partnership**

#### **Access to expertise**

Teaching staff have the opportunity to attend training courses relevant to SEND and to further their own professional development. The Inclusion Manager and SENCO will ensure that there is adequate INSET training through staff meetings and other means, such as the federation subscription to National College and by brokering training from external specialist teachers.

#### **Facilities outside the School**

Agencies to which the School has current access are:

- Specialist Teaching Service
- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapy
- School Health
- CAMHS
- Social Services
- Other voluntary Organisations

#### **Protocol for Contacting Agencies**

The class teacher will discuss the cause for concern directly with the parent (e.g. eyesight, hearing). Information will then be passed to the Inclusion Manager. Parents will be informed by the Inclusion Manager that involvement by outside agencies is deemed appropriate and permission will be sought to make the referral.

## **Parents**

Lower Halstow and Newington CEP Schools has a commitment to working in partnership with parents. Parents are valued for their knowledge, experience and support. We aim to provide a warm, welcoming environment to all parents. We believe that good home-school links are particularly important in the case of pupils with SEND. Hence, parents and guardians are invited to parents' evenings and additional review meetings in order that they may be kept fully informed about their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to support children through homework tasks. We respect parental wishes to discuss their child's progress with any member of staff and support them in doing so. Parents are actively encouraged to seek the advice of the Inclusion Manager at any time.

Parents' views are sought and acknowledged as part of the identification, assessment, provision and review cycle of SEND support. Parents will be provided with relevant information regarding provision made for their child by the School and the Local Authority.

At all stages of provision, the School will involve the parents by:

- reacting promptly to parental concerns over their child's progress.
- seeking parental comments about their child's health and general development.
- seeking parental comments about their child's performance, progress and behaviour.
- seeking parental comments about factors that may be contributing to the child's difficulties.
- seeking views from other agencies or individuals that the parents would like to be involved.
- offering advice to parents on how they can help their child at home.

Parents will always be informed of the outcome of periodic reviews and will be invited to contribute if they so wish. Parents will always be told, either in person or in writing, of any changes to their child's SEND status.

The School will endeavour to be explicit about the child's needs, current support and the support structure in school.

The School will provide information on voluntary organisations and support groups and on parents' rights in relation to a request for statutory assessment.

The School is committed to a policy of integration of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities wherever this is in the child's best interests.

## **Access for Disabled Pupils and Adults**

As a federation we have put in place a number of measures to increase or assist access to the school sites;

- Ramps to the external entrance points so that wheelchair users can access all parts of the building
- Accessibility toilet facilities installed
- Designated disabled parking slot
- Paperwork is available in larger font/different coloured paper if requested.

- Alternative meeting spaces at Newington for those unable to access the second floor offices.

### **Complaints Procedure**

The Complaints Procedure for SEND issues follows the same guidelines as the school's Complaints Procedure. The School is committed to working in close partnership with parents and would hope to ensure that concerns or problems are dealt with promptly and effectively. In the event that a parent wishes to make a complaint about a SEND issue, there is an agreed complaints procedure.

### **Broad areas of need descriptors**

#### **Communication and Interaction**

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 ASD, 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, including **moderate learning difficulties (MLD)**, **Severe learning difficulties (SLD)**, where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to **profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)**, where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

**Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)**, affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

#### **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as 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. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

#### **Sensory and/or physical needs**

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with **vision impairment (VI)**, **hearing impairment (HI)** or a **multi-sensory impairment (MSI)** will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an **MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties**. Some children and young people with a **physical disability (PD)** require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.