



# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

## Introduction

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the principles outlined in the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice 2015 that should be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEND or disabilities. It also adheres to the guidance provided by the Equality Act 2010.

As defined by the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice, “children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they: a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or (b) have 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 schools within the area of the local education authority (c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them. 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 means: (a) for children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area (b) for children under two, educational provision of any kind.” **The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice**

These include:

- Taking into account the views of children, young people and their families
- Enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision-making
- Collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- Identifying the needs of children and young people
- Making high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people
- Focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning
- Helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood

Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, the designations of School Action and School Action Plus have been replaced by SEND support, a graduated approach to supporting pupils with SEN or disabilities.

This school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to pupils’ diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs or learning difficulties and require particular action by the school.

These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs or significant learning difficulties. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional help or different help from that given to other children of the same age.

Children may have special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with such needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

Whilst some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, may not have special educational needs but, according to legislation, may still have certain rights. We will assess each child as required, and make the appropriate provision, based on their identified needs.

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum suitably differentiated to meet their individual needs and to support students – particularly those with SEND- in becoming confident, independent learners who are able to achieve their individual potential.
- To work with students, parents and staff to ensure early identification, assessment and appropriate provision for students with SEND.
- To involve students in decision-making and planning by providing opportunities to self-review, identify own needs, discuss interventions and actions, set high and realistic targets and also self- monitor and review progress in order to increase independence as learners.
- To monitor and record individual pupils' progress through assessment, target setting, review and liaison with pupils, parents and staff.
- To liaise, consult and work with staff to enable them to take responsibility and provide appropriately for pupils with SEND.
- To encourage and foster effective partnership, working with parents.
- To ensure that students requiring access arrangements for examinations are identified and catered for as early as possible. Where the School has insufficient evidence, assessments by outside agencies, such as Educational Psychologist (EP), Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and/or medical professionals, may be advised.
- To follow the Code of Practice 2015, SENDA 2015 and DDA 2005.

## **Admissions**

The Laurels School can cater for a limited number of pupils with mild special educational/learning needs. Some pupils enter the school having previously been assessed as having SEND and/or additional needs by qualified professionals, eg: EPs, SLTs, medical. Each pupil with special/additional needs is considered for admission on an individual basis. Prior to sitting our entrance examination, we advise parents of children with special educational needs to discuss their daughter's requirements with the Headmistress so that we can make adequate provision for her during the examination. Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report

or a medical report to support their request, for example, extra time or other special arrangements.

## **Educational Inclusion**

In our school we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- Have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- Require different strategies for learning;
- Acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- Providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences;
- Planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

## **Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities call for special provision to be made. Children have SEND if:

- They have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- They have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for other children of the same age.

All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for tracking the progress of all students.

As well as the initial assessments, all subject teachers, supported by the senior management team, will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These will seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

- 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 the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life. Where a pupil is making less progress than expected, the first response to such progress will be high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. Where progress continues to be less than expected the subject teacher, working with the SENCo, will assess whether the child has SEND. While informally gathering evidence (including the views of the pupil and their parents) the school will not delay in putting in place interventions to help identify their particular needs and secure better progress.

The school is alert to emerging difficulties and will respond early. In particular, in line with our ethos, we are aware that often parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. We also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.

### **SEND Support – the Graduated Approach**

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND support will take the form of a four-part cycle (assess, plan, do, review) through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEND of children and young people.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and, where appropriate, plans will seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home. Parents will also be involved in reviews of support provided to their daughter and have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.

### **Identification, Assessment and Provision**

If a pupil is known to have special educational needs when they arrive at the school, the Headmistress, SENCo and Assistant Heads will:

- Use information from the pupil's primary school to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for the pupil
- Identify and focus attention on the pupil's skills and highlight areas for early action to support the pupil within the class
- Ensure that ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback to all teachers and parents about the pupil's achievements and experiences, and that the outcomes of such assessment form the basis for planning the next steps of the pupil's learning
- Ensure that appropriate informal opportunities for the pupil to show what they know, understand and can do are maximised through the pastoral programme
- Involve the pupil in planning and agreeing targets to meet their needs
- Involve parents in developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and in school.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's head teacher, SENCo and all other members of staff have important operational responsibilities. All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs. Teaching such pupils is therefore a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response. This is why the Pupil Review Meeting, which takes place once a term will focus on the evaluation and monitoring of those pupils with special needs.

The school's approach is to support pupils within the classroom setting with individualised teaching and learning and differentiation. In addition to this, some pupils are withdrawn from Latin and are given extra support in English and Mathematics.

In Key Stage 4 some pupils will study fewer GCSE options (8-9 subjects) and the additional periods are used for independent study support.

In our school the SENCo is Mr Michael Dowd. He, together with the tutor, subject teachers, specialists, (if appropriate) and involving the pupil's parents, will consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions in order to support the pupil's progress. They will agree the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed and he also:

- Manages the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy;
- Co-ordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
- Supports and advises colleagues;
- Oversees the records of all children with special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Acts as the link with parents;
- Acts as the link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- Monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision;
- Manages a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- Contributes to the professional development of all staff.
- Liaises with external agencies including the LEA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services and voluntary bodies.

### **English as an Additional Language**

Lack of competence in English must not be equated with learning difficulties. At the same time, when learners who have EAL make slow progress, it should not be assumed that their language status is the only reason; they may have learning difficulties.

We may recommend that some children, whose first language at home is not English, receive tuition in English as an additional language.

We host PACT International pupils every year and the normal process regarding SEND applies to these pupils.

## Identification

The triggers for intervention will be the teacher's or others' concern, underpinned by evidence, about a learner who, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- Makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a learner's identified area of weakness.
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing language or mathematics skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas.
- Presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the School.
- Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment.
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

## Education and Health Care Plans (EHC Plans)

Pupils admitted with an EHCP, which will outline the nature of the needs and provision (as deemed by the local authority) will be given appropriate support, such as a LSA, as specified in their plan. Implementation of this support will be monitored within the school by the SENCo and reviewed annually with the relevant external agencies.

## Other Adjustments

We are able, depending on need, to arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes, and they can be given large print or documents printed on colour paper if required.

Menus can be devised to cater for special dietary requirements.

## Partnership with Parents

*“Partnership with parents plays a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation between parents, schools, LEAs and others. This is important in enabling children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children's education. They have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. It is therefore essential that all professionals (schools, LEAs and other agencies) actively seek to work with parents and value the contribution they make. The work of professionals can be more effective when parents are involved and account is taken of their wishes, feelings and perspectives on their children's development. This is particularly so when a child has special educational needs. All parents of children with special educational needs should be treated as partners. They should be supported so as to be able and empowered to:*

- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents and play an active and valued role in their children's education
- Have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the SEND framework
- Make their views known about how their child is educated
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special educational provision.” Special Educational Needs Code of Practice
- In line with The Laurels School's PACT Charter of Educational Principles, which recognises parents' role as the prime educators of their children, The Laurels seeks to work in close

partnership with parents. We provide three reports a year for parents and an annual Parent-Teacher Meeting to inform them about their daughter's progress, as well as holding Parent-Tutor Meetings every term to discuss with the parents all aspects of their daughter's development. Where a pupil is receiving SEND support, the tutor will talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress with them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.

### **Involving Pupils in Planning and Reviewing Progress**

*“Children and young people with special educational needs have a unique knowledge of their own needs and circumstances and their own views about what sort of help they would like to help them make the most of their education. They should, where possible, participate in all the decision-making processes that occur in education including the setting of learning targets and contributing to IEPs, discussions about choice of schools, contributing to the assessment of their needs and to the annual review and transition processes. They should feel confident that they will be listened to and that their views are valued. However there is “a fine balance between giving the child a voice and encouraging them to make informed decisions, and overburdening them with decision-making procedures where they have insufficient experience and knowledge to make appropriate judgements without additional support.”*

### **The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice**

In our school we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and reflects the recommended practice, as set out above, by the SEN Code of Conduct. The views of the pupil will be included in these discussions. Her views will be gathered through the tutorial system and will involve her in all or part of the discussion itself. A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion will be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff. This record will be given to the pupil's parents.

### **Preparing for Adulthood**

High aspirations about employment, independent living and community participation will be developed through the curriculum and extra-curricular provision. The Laurels School, where appropriate, will seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations and arts and sports groups, to help our pupils to understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.

The Laurels School seeks to raise the career aspirations of pupils with SEN and broaden their employment horizons. It will seek to use a wide range of imaginative approaches, such as taster opportunities, work experience, mentoring, exploring entrepreneurial options, role models and inspiring speakers. Unifrog is used from Year 7 upwards which gives them the opportunity to explore different career pathways.

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

The PACT Governing Body has due regard to the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice, 2015 when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there is a designated member of the Governing Body who has oversight for the School's arrangements for SEND and disability.

The Governing Body does its best, within the limits of the overall needs of the school, to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. They consult the LEA and other schools, when appropriate, and report annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Governing Body ensures that parents are notified of any decision by the school that special provision is to be made for their child.

### **Allocation of Resources**

The SENCo is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with Educational Statements of special educational needs.

The Head informs the Governing Body of how the funding allocated to support children with learning difficulties has been employed.

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