



The Acorns School
Complex Needs, SEN and Inclusion Policy

Purpose and Introduction

The Acorns School has a statutory responsibility for the education of:

1. Those permanently excluded from school
2. Children with medical needs who cannot be educated at school
3. Pupils who are deemed 'hard to place' or those 'missing education'

Additionally Acorns will provide a school placement for

- Pupils who have not attended school regularly and would benefit from a personalised programme.
- Pupils at risk of exclusion.
- Some pupils who attend on an agreed Intervention basis.
- Any commissioner who feels that a place at the school will enable progress

Most pupils are at School Action, Action Plus of the Code of Practice on entry to the centre. Some pupils may have a EHCP/ Statement of SEN.

At Key Stage 3, a full range of curriculum subjects are offered supported by Enrichment activities. In order to promote success and achievement, a personalised curriculum - based on individual needs - would be offered at Key Stage 4.

The mission statement of our school affirms our commitment to valuing the individuality of all of our children. We give all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by respecting and taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background and that pupils have a common curriculum experience.

This school believes that every pupil has an entitlement to develop to their full potential. Educational experiences are provided which develop pupils' achievements and recognise their individuality. Diversity is valued as a rich resource which supports the learning of all. In this school, inclusion recognises a child's right to a broad, balanced, relevant and challenging curriculum which is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents and personal qualities.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils.

We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our school:

This policy applies to those pupils who:

- Have learning, physical, communication, sensory and/or medical needs;
- Have or experience behavioural, emotional and social needs;
- Reflect social and cultural diversity;
- Have attendance difficulties;
- Experience significant ill health;
- Have relatives to care for;
- Have children of their own or are expecting children;
- Use English as an additional language;
- Have residency in this country or may be refugees or asylum seekers;

- Have a mobile life style as travellers;
- Are 'looked after' children;
- Live in poverty or who may be homeless;
- Are gifted and talented;
- Bully or who are victims of bullying;
- Are bereaved;
- Are traumatised.

AIMS

The school aims to:

- Help pupils develop their personalities, skills and abilities;
- Provide appropriate teaching which makes learning challenging, enjoyable and successful;
- Provide equality of educational opportunity;
- Engender a culture of tolerance and acceptance of all, mutual respect where all are valued.

OBJECTIVES

The school will

- Ensure implementation of government and LA inclusion recommendations;
- Ensure the school's inclusion policy is implemented consistently by all staff.
- Ensure any discrimination or prejudice is eradicated;
- Identify barriers to learning and participation and provide appropriately to meet a diversity of needs;
- Ensure all pupils have access to an appropriately differentiated curriculum;
- Recognise, value and celebrate pupils' achievements, however small;
- Work in partnership with parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Guide and support all staff, governors and parents in inclusion issues.

Responsibilities

The SENCO will:

- Work positively with all members of the school community to promote inclusion;
- Induct new staff in the school's commitment to inclusion;
- Monitor and assess inclusive provision by helping the school to establish indicators to judge its effectiveness in relation to inclusion;
- Monitor the inclusion policy and report annually to the governing body on its effectiveness;
- Report annually on the efficient and effective use of resources for pupils at school action, school action plus and those with statements;
- Work with key staff to identify barriers to learning and provide staff with appropriate strategies;
- Share inclusive expertise with, and support the professional development of classroom teachers and teaching assistants;
- Purchase appropriate resources;
- Work with key staff such as the Assessment Co-ordinator, subject leaders, keyworkers etc to monitor pupil progress;
- Analyse with key staff the recording of incidents which may relate to bullying or discrimination of pupils on the grounds of SEN;
- Liaise with parents;
- Co-ordinate cross-phase / cross-school transition;
- Co-ordinate external specialist provision.

All teachers are also committed to meeting the needs of all pupils in their class and promoting the culture and ethos of inclusion within the school community.

INCLUSIVE PROVISION

The school offers a continuum of provision to meet a diversity of pupils' needs. Although all groups are mixed ability, the school and individual teachers have the flexibility to set smaller ability groups, within their classes, for specific aspects of the curriculum.

Additional in-class support is available in all classes/subjects. This is provided by teaching assistants (Keyworkers). This additional support is targeted at individual pupils and small groups of pupils. The learning mentors and keyworkers support pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as working with gifted and talented pupils. Access to learning is enhanced through technology.

Resources include interactive software, interactive whiteboards and Moodle virtual learning environment. A range of vocational activities/courses are available.

PROMOTING AN INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

All pupils are engaged on personalised learning programmes developed according to need. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. We meet these needs through:

- Setting suitable learning challenges;
- Responding to children's diverse learning needs;
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils;
- Providing other curricular opportunities outside the National Curriculum to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children.

When setting suitable learning challenges, we aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. The National Curriculum programmes of study set out what most pupils should be taught at each key stage but our teaching reflects the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit our pupils' abilities. This may mean choosing knowledge, skills and understanding from earlier or later key stages so that individual pupils can make progress and show what they can achieve. Where it is appropriate for pupils to make extensive use of content from an earlier key stage, there may not be time to teach all aspects of the age-related programmes of study. A similarly flexible approach is used to take account of any gaps in pupils' learning resulting from missed or interrupted schooling (for example, that may be experienced by travellers, refugees, those in care or those with long-term medical conditions, including pupils with neurological problems, such as head injuries, and those with degenerative conditions).

For pupils whose attainments fall significantly below the expected levels at a particular key stage, a much greater degree of differentiation is necessary. In these circumstances, teachers use the content of the programmes of study as a resource or to provide a context, in planning learning appropriate to the age and requirements of their pupils.

When planning, we set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This is based on a system of tracking pupil achievement in order to ensure that pupils do not underachieve or fail to reach their potential. We respect and value pupils that bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way in which they learn. Our teachers plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively.

To ensure that we meet the full range of pupils' needs, our teachers are aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation that covers race, gender and disability. We take specific action to respond to pupils' diverse needs by:

- Creating effective learning environments
- Securing their motivation and concentration
- Providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches
- Using appropriate assessment approaches
- Setting targets for learning.

Our teachers take specific action to provide access to learning for pupils with special educational needs by:

- Providing for pupils who need help with communication, language and literacy
- Planning, where necessary, to develop pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences
- Planning for pupils full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities
- Helping pupils to manage their behaviour, to take part in learning effectively and safely, and, at key stage 4, to prepare for work
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

The School also works collaboratively with a range of services i.e. CAMHS, Adaction, Young Peoples Service, Wellbeing Prevention and Early Health Services, Children's Social Care

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Subject co-ordinators or leaders; submit curriculum resource bids in April as part of the annual school improvement planning process which take account of the needs of all learners. The Headteacher, in conjunction with the SENCO review each bid, and approve the necessary curriculum priority spending, that supports moving inclusive practice forward. The SENCO identify the need for additional funding for individual pupils who require high support/enhanced provision. Funding is applied for if applicable.

10. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

We believe that all children and young people deserve to have their achievements and progression recognised and the school's curriculum reflects the different levels of attainment likely to be achieved.

The school uses consistent nationally recognised assessment system across the KS and flexible curriculum arrangements permissible at Key Stage 4. Assessment guides us in the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and our teachers to decide where the pupils are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

All teachers monitor, review and analyse pupil progress in accordance with the school's assessment policy. In order to ensure accurate assessments are made, teachers annually moderate and standardise samples of pupils' work and achievements across the curriculum.

Underachievement is identified as early as possible. On entry all pupils complete a range of baseline assessments in Literacy and Numeracy. Pupils are set individual challenging targets which address the area of underachievement. Pupil progress is monitored and reviewed termly by all teaching staff.

- Check the progress individual pupils make against their targets;
- Verify that barrier-free learning is taking place across the curriculum, particularly where there have been changes in staff or syllabus / schemes of work, or low attendance rates;
- Provide a cross-check with teachers and teaching assistants or learning mentors regarding the pupils who are underachieving in relation to their prior attainment;
- Monitor the progress of specific pupil cohorts, e.g. different ethnic groups, boys and girls, SEN, gifted and talented, looked after children, etc.
- Identify particular strengths and weaknesses of particular year groups or teaching sets, in a key stage or subject area;
- Show 'value added' in view of the additional resources put in place to support inclusion; to compare the accuracy of teacher assessment with external test results at the end of a key stage (i.e. the difference between actual and expected pupil performance);
- Compare the school's performance with other similar schools in the country via national performance data for PRU's

In addition to the culture of support and praise which underpins the school ethos, the reward system of merits, certificates of achievement and letters of commendation for outstanding work and performance, effort and improved behaviour, contribute to raising pupil self-esteem and motivation.

11. DISAPPLICATION AND MODIFICATION

The school can, where necessary, modify or disapply the National Curriculum and its assessment arrangements. The school makes every effort to meet the learning needs of all its children, without recourse to disapplication or modification.

However, in exceptional circumstances we may decide that modification or disapplication is the correct procedure to follow. We would only do this after detailed consultation with parents and the Local Education Authority and taking account of the most recent DfES guidance. The school's governor with responsibility for special educational needs would also be closely involved in this process. We would ensure that every effort had been made to provide the necessary support from within the school's resources before considering such action.

12. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SLT oversees the professional development of all teaching staff and teaching assistants. SENCO liaises with the DHT to review staff skills related to SEN, behaviour and pupil emotional well-being and to ensure that there is a good balance of training to enhance the skills of all staff. Staff are encouraged to observe good inclusive practice within the school and also in other schools.

13. WORKING WITH PARENTS

The knowledge, views and first-hand experience parents have regarding their children is valued for the contribution it makes to their child's education. Parents are seen as partners in the educational process. All parents are welcome to contact the school if they have any concerns about inclusive educational provision. Parents are also strongly encouraged to keep regular contact with the school regarding their child's progress. The home-school agreement outlines how parents can support their child's learning at home.

14. EVALUATING THE INCLUSION POLICY

The policy is reviewed every 2 years. Policy evaluation focuses on:

- Establishing how far the aims and objectives of the policy have been met;
- How effective the inclusion provision has been in relation to the resources allocated;
- The attainment, achievements and progress of different groups of pupils.
- Listening and responding to the views of pupils;
- Comments from the annual parent questionnaire;
- The school's own self evaluation of the inclusion of pupils with SEN based on pupil progress and achievement data.

In the light of these findings, our policy is revised and amended accordingly. We believe that effective schools are also inclusive schools and to this end, our evaluation focuses up on a shared vision and commitment to inclusion which ensures:

- A stable and experienced teaching team working in collaboration with teaching assistants;
- Strong support from parents, carers and governors;
- Careful and systematic use of resources;
- Thorough monitoring, evaluation and assessment of progress;
- A calm and consistent school climate that promotes good, positive social relationships;
- High expectations of all pupils;
- That pupils' views are valued, and the pupils' voices are listened to;
- Clear and consistent whole-school policies, with the emphasis on early intervention;
- Recognition and respect for diversity;
- Appropriate, effective communication systems;
- Regular inter-school collaboration; and
- The school is a community resource for learning and leisure activities for ALL.