

ASTON FIELDS MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Date: November 2023

Date of Review: Annually in September

Aston Fields Middle School

SEN Policy

Contact Details

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator at Aston Fields Middle School is Miss Ward. The Assistant SENDCo is Mrs Winch. They can be contacted via Aston Fields Middle School.

Mrs Birrell (Deputy Headteacher) is the advocate for Special Educational Needs on the Senior Leadership Team. It is Mrs Birrell who will represent the Senior Leadership Team at all SEN meetings, including pre and post admission, if Senior Leadership Team presence is required, and she will report back to the Headteacher and other Senior Leadership colleagues where necessary.

Mrs Mynott (Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Assistant Headteacher) will also be present if any Safeguarding or Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs concerns are raised.

Beliefs

Aston Fields Middle School believes in a highly inclusive approach to the education of all pupils including those who have a disability or Special Educational Need. All possible efforts are made to ensure that pupils are included into the whole life of the school. It is our aim to help identify “Special Needs” within the school and to ensure that provision enables pupils to make the best possible progress, increase their independence and prepare them for the next stage of their education and life. The school’s motto is “Striving for Excellence: Learning for Life”.

Aston Fields Middle School believes that all Teachers and Teaching Assistants are responsible for the education of pupils with SEN.

This Policy reflects the DfE’s SEND Code of Practice 0-25 guidance (September 2014). This policy should be read in conjunction with the school’s Safeguarding policy.

Definition

Pupils have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a *Special Educational Need* if they:

“Have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (section 20). Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different from that which would normally be provided for children or young people of the same age in a mainstream education

setting (section 21). (As defined by The Children and Families Act 2014)”. *This definition is the same as the definition of SEN in the Education Act 1996*

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different to the language in which they will be taught.

Aims

To identify children with Special Educational Needs within school.

To identify and seek assistance from the Educational Psychology Service, Access and Inclusion Service which includes ISSS (Integrated Specialist Support Service) and some health services (including Speech and Language Therapy) for children who have more severe difficulties.

To optimise the all-round development of pupils with special needs and to enable them to follow the National Curriculum at a level appropriate for their ability.

To maintain high aspirations and expectations for all pupils with SEN.

Objectives

That every child is encouraged and supported to exceed their potential.

To ensure pupils with SEN make at least good progress from their starting points.

To work within the guidance provided in the SEN code of practice (September 2014).

To ensure that the school responds to pupils' varying needs through adaptations and not through offering an entirely different curriculum unless exceptional circumstances mean special approval has been sought from LA Specialist SEN Advisors and the Headteacher and Governors to disapply a child from the school's curriculum.

To ensure access to the curriculum for all pupils. Note: The links between key stages and chronological ages may not be realistic for all pupils and some may need to work at National Curriculum levels below those designated for the key stage, whilst still having access to age appropriate programmes of study.

As much as is reasonably possible in a mainstream setting, to use a range of special needs resources to respond to pupil needs throughout the school.

To follow guidelines for a staged approach to meeting children's Special Educational Needs, as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice (September 2014).

To provide support and advice for staff working with Special Educational Needs Pupils.

To develop effective partnerships with parents/carers and outside agencies.

The arrangements for co-ordinating educational provision for pupils with SEN

The school will follow the DfE's SEN Code of Practice (September 2014) and the advice given by Worcestershire LA, including that defined through 'Ordinarily Available – The Worcestershire Offer'.

Identification of Special Educational Needs

The DfE's SEN Code of Practice (September 2014) describes Special Educational Need under four broad categories:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs.

In deciding whether a pupil has a Special Educational Need we will take into consideration the needs of the whole child.

Other factors may be contributing to holding back a pupil's progress and attainment, however these alone would not be considered a SEN. These include (but are not limited to):

- disability, where reasonable adjustments can ensure equality of access to the whole school and curriculum
- attendance and punctuality
- health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- being in receipt of pupil premium funding
- being a looked-after child
- being a child of a service man/woman
- behaviour – this in itself is not a SEN, however there are a number of underlying needs that may be identified and responded to in terms of a Special Educational Need

Cause for concern

Teachers will initially inform the SENDCo if they are concerned that a pupil may have a SEN which is affecting their access to the curriculum. Any concern raised will be discussed at the earliest opportunity with parents/carers. An action plan will then be formulated following detailed observation and discussion between the SENDCo, teachers and parents/carers. This will identify further support if required and appropriate strategies and resources that can be used or procured.

Placing a pupil on the Register for SEN

A pupil may be placed on the Register for SEN once a need, under one of the four categories, has been identified. The Code of Practice (September 2014) recommends that pupils are only identified as SEN if they do not make adequate progress once they have received all appropriate interventions and adjustments. This identification can occur through:

- Significantly lower than average National Curriculum levels being achieved over a period of time, despite receiving support (assessed on a half termly basis at this school).
- Standardised reading and spelling ages (assessed yearly, although this can be more frequent if required).
- Observations by staff.
- Assessments and reports from supporting agencies.
- Transition from a previous school.

Pupils falling behind in their achievement are initially identified by teaching staff and/or the SENDCo. Intervention is then planned upon the request of, and following consultation with, the teaching staff. This is assessed at the end of the period of intervention to identify the progress a pupil has made. The effectiveness and impact of the intervention is then discussed. If a pupil continues to require intervention to maintain a good level of progress, or despite intervention, progress has been limited, the decision may then be made to place a pupil on the SEN register. Parents/carers will be kept informed of interventions by either the Intervention Manager or Teacher or SENDCo. Should a concern of SEN then be recognised, the SENDCo will discuss the matter further with parents/carers.

Outline of the provision on the Register for SEN

Aston Fields Middle School will:

Adopt a *graduated response* in the provision for children who are identified as having SEN.

Inform the child's parents/carers that SEN provision is being made for the child.

Match provision for children with SEN with the nature of the child's need.

Make full use of available resources before seeking outside support.

Class teachers will apply the '*Key Test for the Need for Action*', taking care to differentiate between difficulties in language and SEN. For example:

Is the child making adequate progress?

(It should not be assumed that all children progress at the same rate. A judgement needs to be made in each case as to what it is **reasonable** to expect a particular child to achieve).

Where progress is not deemed to be adequate, some *additional* or *different* action should be taken to enable the pupil to learn more effectively.

The Graduated Response

- High aspirations will be maintained for pupils.
- Identification by class teacher and SENDCo that a child has SEN.
- Provision by the class teacher of additional or different intervention from the school's (usual) curriculum.
- Intervention and support will be provided to support pupils in achieving their full potential, following the cycle of **assess, plan, do and then review**.
- Interventions will recognise a pupil's individual need and target that specifically.
- The additional or different strategies adopted to support the child will be recorded within a Group or Individual Education Plan.
- Should further support beyond that already provided by the school be needed, requests for external services to assist in the provision of more specialist assessments advice may be made.

School Requests for Education and Health Care Plans

This school will make a request for an EHCP if a child demonstrates significant cause for concern. The decision to request an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be made in consultation with parents/carers, based on a pupil meeting the criteria for an EHCP and the professional opinions of other agencies involved in supporting the pupil.

Detail of provision

The Graduated Response at Aston Fields Middle School

In order to help children who have Special Educational Needs, Aston Fields Middle School will adopt a graduated response that encompasses an array of strategies. This approach recognises that there is a continuum of Special Educational Needs and, where necessary, requires increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. However, the school will, other than in exceptional cases, make use of available resources before expecting to call upon outside agencies.

For a pupil who has not made adequate progress within the differentiated curriculum, the SENDCo and class teacher may decide to move the child on to the SEN register. Class teachers are responsible for tracking children's progress and are responsible for advising the SENDCo of children who are failing to make adequate progress. Class teachers and the SENDCo are responsible for generating and reviewing Group Education Plans to address the specific needs of identified groups of pupils. Individual Education Plans and Group Education Plans are ongoing documents that are reviewed on a termly basis by the inclusion department. Additional appropriate support either from the SENDCo, HLTA or TAs may be offered to support the Group Education Plan. Pupils who have additional social and emotional needs may be supported by inclusion in a Nurture Group.

Provision for most pupils will occur within the classroom. It may however be necessary for the SENDCo, HLTA and/or TA to work with the child as an individual or as part of a group outside the classroom, in support of the Group or Individual Education Plan e.g. precision teaching, speech and language skills, social skills etc.

The level of provision a pupil receives is decided through:

- targeted assessments that identify particular areas of concern.
- standardised diagnostic assessments that identify a need.
- recommendations from supporting agencies.
- observations that identify social or behavioural needs.
- staff feedback and recommendations.

Intervention will follow a cycle of “**assess, plan, do and review**”, to ensure that all provision is effective and the specific needs of each individual pupil is targeted with accuracy. The purpose of this process is also to assist the SENDCo in assessing the effectiveness of provision, as well as identifying those pupils requiring further support, either in school or from supporting agencies.

Higher needs funding

For some pupils who have a very high level of need, it may be necessary to try to access further funding and support from the Local Authority. This may occur when the needs of the pupil require more time and money than has been allocated to the school by the Local Authority. An application, with supporting evidence, will then be made to Worcestershire County Council Local Authority to request higher needs funding.

Requests for Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) and Monitoring the Progress of Children who have an EHCP

Following a period of time of the graduated response, with the knowledge and advice of LA agencies and agreement of parents/carers, the school may decide to approach LA agencies to request an EHCP. The decision to award an EHCP lies with Worcestershire County Council Local Authority and will be based upon evidence submitted from the school and agencies supporting the child, including parents/carers.

Once a child has an EHCP, the SENDCo will ensure all relevant teachers and staff are aware of the needs of the child. The SENDCo will monitor the progress of the child, liaising with the Senior Leadership Team, the LA, supporting agencies and parents/carers if there are still concerns about the progress the child is making and/or the behaviour of the child and/or whether the school’s SEN provision is meeting the child’s needs, including consideration of appropriateness of setting.

Where the school has concerns about the behaviour of a child with a statement of EHCP (including at risk of exclusion) the SENDCo will consider what additional support or

alternative placement may be required. Where the school has concerns about the behaviour of a child with an EHCP this will involve working in partnership with the Local Authority, parents/carers and supporting agencies. It is the SENDCo's responsibility to make the initial judgement about whether interim or emergency review meetings are required in order to decide the best way forward in the best interests of the child. The Deputy Headteacher will attend interim or emergency review meetings wherever possible. The Deputy Headteacher will ensure that the Headteacher is kept fully informed of the outcomes of all interim and/or emergency review meetings. Any decisions about how to best deal with a child's lack of progress and/or underlying behaviour issues and/or the appropriateness of the school's SEN provision for a child, will be made in consultation with the LA and parents/carers and could include providing a child with SEN with a part-time education at the school with a phased return in order to best meet the child's needs. It could also include admitting a child with SEN initially on a part-time basis, to ease the child's transition into the school or arranging for a part-time placement with another school or outreach centre. The school will engage with parents/carers in supporting the behaviour of pupils with SEN and will do what is reasonably possible to reduce the risk of suspension/exclusion. As far as possible, the school will try to avoid permanently excluding any pupil with a statement of SEN. Permanent exclusion will only be used if there is a compelling reason to do so, in accordance with the Governors' Behaviour for Learning Policy and Exclusions Policy.

Education Plans

Group or Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be written where support beyond that normally provided in the classroom is given to address group or individual needs. The IEP will be reviewed by the SEN Team, annually. Parents/carers of pupils with an Individual Provision Map will be invited to discuss the review with the inclusion team. Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (P.I.V.A.T.S) indicators will be used to aid target setting on IEP's when appropriate. A Behaviour Support Plan may be written for a pupil when the school feels a child needs a more detailed consistent approach to their Special Educational Need and resulting behavioural traits. A PSP (Pastoral Support Plan) may also be used if the school feels a child with SEN is at risk of exclusion. Should the school feel that this has not been successful, the SENDCo will ensure a multi-agency approach is undertaken in order to attempt to address a child's underlying behaviour problems and to ensure the school is not discriminating unfairly against a child's SEN by placing them at an unfair risk of exclusion. For children who have ongoing medical conditions an Individual Health Care Plan may have to be completed. At the beginning of each term, the SENDCo and Deputy Headteacher will meet with named contacts from Education Psychology and Access and Inclusion Service, to discuss the progress of pupils who are on the register of SEN and to agree and plan LA intervention for individuals or groups.

Exiting the SEN register

It may become apparent over time that a pupil no longer meets the above stated criteria for being on the SEN register. The SENDCo will discuss the evidence with teaching staff to ensure all agree with the evidence, and then parents/carers will be contacted to inform them of the decision to remove the child from the SEN register. If pupils are removed from the SEN register, the teachers retain the responsibility to monitor and track their progress, providing quality first teaching and intervention if required.

The role of the SENDCo in mainstream schools

The SEN Coordinator (SENDCo) plays a key role in determining the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school, in order to raise the achievement of children with SEN. The SENDCo takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN policy and co-ordination of the provision made for individual children with SEN, working closely with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies. The SENDCo also provides related professional guidance to colleagues, with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with SEN. The SENDCo seeks to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching through the analysis and assessment of children's needs and by monitoring the standards of pupils' achievements. In addition, targets for improvement will be set and recorded on the IEP. The SENDCo will collaborate with staff to ensure the learning for children is given equal priority, and available resources are used to maximum effect.

At Aston Fields Middle School the key responsibilities of the SENDCo include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for children with Special Educational Needs arrangements.
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers.
- Line managing the Deputy SENDCo and teaching assistants.
- Ensuring that SEN children are supported academically and pastorally through the SEN team and teaching assistants.
- Working with the Class Teacher to support and guide the HLTA's and TA's appointed to support individual pupils.
- Overseeing the records of all children with Special Educational Needs.
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs, particularly those in receipt of an Individual Education Plan.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff including induction and recruitment.
- Liaising with external agencies including the LA's SEN support service; educational psychology services; health and social services; voluntary bodies; and feeder or receiving schools.
- Overseeing the arrangements for SEN reviews, including the annual reviews (for pupils still in receipt of a statement of SEN or with an ECHP). For a pupil with a Statement or Education and Health Care Plan this may also include any emergency or interim reviews deemed necessary by school staff or requested by parents/carers.
- Tracking SEN children by using the Provision Map.

Monitoring the Provision Map and ensuring that it is kept up to date.
Liaising with the Senior Leadership Team about all aspects of SEN including accounting for the progress of pupils with SEN to the Headteacher.

Keeping parents/carers informed

At Aston Fields Middle School we work hard to promote a partnership with parents/carers and are committed to keeping parents/carers informed. We have two parents' evenings per year at which the progress of the child is discussed. In addition, during parents' evenings, class teachers and the SENDCo might initially discuss the child's SEN with the parent/carer and inform them that the child will be on the SEN register. If a child receives a more specialised provision the SENDCo or the deputy SENDCo will arrange to meet and discuss the child's SEN and the proposed action plan with the parent/carer and review progress at the appropriate time.

Record keeping and assessment

All pupils will undergo assessments to monitor and record progress. The SENDCo will track SEN children to ensure that adequate progress is being maintained. Pupils identified with SEN will, in addition, have a Group or Individual Education Plan which will be reviewed to record progress on objectives. Group and Individual Education Plans are available to all staff. Communications regarding SEN are securely stored by the SENDCo in the SENDCo's office. The SEN register is on the school's intranet, a copy of which is kept in the SENDCo's office and is available to staff.

Links with other mainstream schools and special schools, including arrangements when pupils change schools or leave school

The SENDCo will ensure that discussions of SEN take place with any feeder or receiving school and that relevant records relating to SEN provision are received from the previous school/forwarded to the new school.

Links with health and social care services, education welfare services and any voluntary organisations

The SENDCo will liaise with the Deputy Headteachers and the school Attendance Manager if there are concerns with attendance. The SENDCo may also liaise with the school's Designated Senior Lead for safeguarding who may then access the services of the Attendance Intervention Co-ordinator, if there are concerns with attendance/welfare/safety/child protection or if the child is in the Looked After sector or on the Child Protection register in line with the school's Safeguarding policy.

Resources

A range of resources, advice and suggestions may be sought from the SENDCo. Computer software is available on the network and for use on stand alone machines.

Arrangements for Training

Courses are available through the Local Authority and other providers. In-service training is provided for teachers and teaching assistants by the SENDCo or other specialist staff, sometimes in association with LA agencies.

Criteria for evaluating the success of the school's SEN policy

The SENDCo will ensure the Deputy Headteacher is kept aware of the quality of teaching, provision, standards and resources for SEN. The effectiveness of the SEN policy will be discussed in terms of:

Quality of support and advice for the teaching staff

Quality and quantity of support from SENDCo and TA's

Quality of training and support for TA's

Effectiveness of policy and procedures in meeting the needs of the pupils

Quality of support for pupils

The Deputy Headteacher will ensure that the Headteacher are kept up to date with SEN developments and the effectiveness of the SEN policy. There is also a Governor link person for SEN.

Arrangements for considering complaints about special educational provision within the school

Parents/carers are asked to discuss any concerns initially with the class teacher and/or the SENDCo. If their concerns have not been allayed they should discuss the matter with the Deputy Headteacher who will in the Headteacher's absence act as Headteacher. If problems remain they should discuss the matter with the Headteacher. After this, if they are still unhappy and wish to proceed further, they may write to the Chair of the Governing Body who will deal with the complaint in accordance with the Governing Body Complaints Procedure.

SEN and the School Behaviour for Learning Policy: Reasonable Adjustments (The Equality Act 2010)

In line with The Equality Act 2010, the school will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments to the Governors' Behaviour for Learning Policy to meet the particular needs of those pupils with professionally acknowledged and recorded in writing SEND conditions (including Looked After children and children on the Child Protection register) that, where officially and professionally identified and recognised, make it more difficult for them to comply with behavioural expectations set out in the Governors' Behaviour for Learning Policy. If, at the time of considering sanctions and whether to

award a fixed term exclusion or permanently exclude a child with SEND (or a Looked After child or child on the Child Protection register) or not, the Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher acting in their absence) in liaison with the school's SENDCo, is of the professional opinion that reasonable adjustments have been made to the Governors' Behaviour for Learning Policy in order to meet a pupil's SEND needs (including for Looked After children and children on the Child Protection register) the Governors of Aston Fields Middle School agree that, without prejudice, a child with SEND (or a Looked After child or child on the Child Protection register) may be given a sanction which could be a fixed term or permanent exclusion from Aston Fields Middle School in accordance with this policy (including section 5 of Aston Fields Middle School Governors' Exclusions Policy) and current DfE exclusion guidance.