



# **Aspiration and Achievement Policy for Supporting the Special Educational Needs of Pupils: Information, policy and guidance**

for

**Oaklands Infant School  
Butler Road, Crowthorne, RG45 6QZ**

**Ratified by:**

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## **Purpose of this Document**

This document sets out how Oaklands infant school provides support to ensure that children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can access an education which is inclusive and responsive to their individual needs. It describes our graduated response to providing support which will enable all our pupils to succeed and have high aspirations.

This document describes the national requirements introduced by The Children and Families Act 2014 and how Oaklands Infant School will meet the requirements through the funding made available to us throughout budget and through other funding streams. It also sets out under what circumstances we would refer to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

This document does not replicate the legislation or the statutory guidance. Wokingham local authority has produced detailed documents which sit alongside this policy guidance.

## **Background**

### **The Children and Families Act 2014**

This Children and Families Act is wide ranging but this document is linked only to the areas which are about children and young people who have special educational needs/disability (SEND). The Act sets out a new context for ensuring that children and young people who have SEND are supported to access and benefit from the range of educational opportunities that are available, so that they are enabled to have fulfilling lives as members of their community. The Act is supported by statutory guidance, 'The Code of Practice: 0 to 25' (CoP). It is this guidance to which all local authorities, all publically funded early years and education settings, including academies and free schools and a range of national and local NHS bodies must 'have regard'.

The Children and Families Act has introduced a new statutory plan called an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan which replaced Statements of SEN. The Act also introduces a single pre-statutory stage called 'SEN Support' and this is relevant at all age levels and educational settings.

### **What are schools required to do?**

Schools and governing bodies have responsibilities to ensure that they plan on the basis that, at all times, some individuals and groups of children/young people will be experiencing difficulties with learning. At Oaklands Infant School we follow the advice of the CoP to ensure that we follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review' which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them. This is known as the 'graduated response'. In addition, there are specific duties on us and our governing body to:

- Publish information on the school website about the implementation of the governing body's policy for pupils with SEN.
- Identify pupils with SEND, ensure parents are informed and provision is made in line with SEN and Disability Code of Practice and comply with Children and Families Act 2014 legislation.



- Publish the SEND policy and the school's Local Officer (in conjunction with parents, pupils and the Local Authority) on the school website and review regularly.
- Publish information on SEND funding and provision and monitor expenditure.
- Appoint a SEND governor and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- Maintain a current record of number of pupils with SEND.
- Ensure SEND provision is integrated into the school improvement plan.
- Monitor progress of SEND pupils and ensure provisions specified in Statements/EHC plans are in place.
- Ensure **all** policies take SEND into account through the Equality Impact assessments.
- Keep under constant review the arrangements for pupils present and future with a disability.
- Admit all pupils who meet admissions criteria, whether or not they have SEND.

### **The link between special educational needs and disability**

Many children and young people who have special educational needs may also have a disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as '... 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'. In this context 'long term' means over a year and 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer and sensory impairments. Many children and young people who have these medical/health conditions will not have special educational needs and their safe and full access to learning and progress will be covered by the duties set out in The Equality Act, including the requirement on all public bodies to make reasonable adjustments.

This means that, where a child or young person has a disability, the way in which their needs are met will depend on the impact the disability has on their access to education. If, with the appropriate non-discriminatory practices and reasonable adjustments, they can access education and make progress commensurate with their peers by accessing the resources 'normally available' to their educational setting, there will not be a need for them to be protected by an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC). Some of these children and young people with long term health conditions should have a Health Plan which addresses their safety, health and wellbeing whilst in the early years, school or college setting. The Department for Education (DfE) have published new guidance, 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions>



## Meeting special educational needs in Oaklands Infant School

### I. What needs can the school meet?

At Oaklands Infant School we are committed to supporting a wide variety of Special Educational Needs, including learning, physical, emotional and behavioural difficulties. We endeavour to minimize barriers to learning within the constraints of mainstream education.

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. The Code of Practice (2014) has the following definitions in paragraphs xiii to xvi.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv when they reach compulsory school age, or would do if special educational provision was not made for them.

The Code of Practice defines special educational provision in paragraph x v as:

*“Special educational provision for children aged two and over is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally available for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools and mainstream post 16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.”*

National figures continue to suggest that as many as 1 in 5 children and young people are, at some stage, considered to have special educational needs. This means that mainstream schools, in particular, will always be employing a range of strategies to stimulate the learning of individual or groups of children.

Although the needs of children and young people often cross more than one ‘area of need’, the CoP uses four main categories of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs



At Oaklands Infant School we will ensure that we meet the needs of all our pupils through the provision we have available and the advice and support of other specialist professionals and practitioners and ensuring that we have the resources available.

## **2. How we identify pupils who are having difficulties with learning and/or special educational needs**

Children are carefully monitored in all areas of learning including their emotional and social development as well as their academic progress. Monitoring is done through formal and informal methods and recorded clearly. Progress is monitored through observations and formal assessments which are carried out regularly throughout each year group. Children with extra needs are monitored through a provision plan which summarises their difficulties and provisions that might be required to help them move forward. Any form of intervention is carefully monitored to measure the impact to ensure progress is made. Depending on the result of the progress made the intervention may be continued, ceased or changed in direct response to the child's needs.

It is the responsibility of all schools to provide good teaching and holistic support for all pupils/students. We believe that it is particularly important that pupils who have most difficulty with their learning are taught by good quality teachers and in our school we believe that all teachers are teachers of pupils who have special educational needs.

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they: achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and; make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

Where our assessment has identified that a pupil is experiencing difficulties we follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review' which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them. This is known as the 'graduated response' and we ensure that:

- The class teacher carries out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, supported by the school's SENCO
- The analysis includes data on progress, attainment and approaches to learning and the views of the pupil and their parent/carers and advice from any other support staff
- Where behaviour is an area of concern we use a behaviour support plan which draws on an analysis of Antecedents, Behaviour and Consequences
- We plan provision which can remove the barriers to learning for the pupil using evidence based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions
- We provide support which may include differentiation, additional programmes, small group and/or individual support
- the class teacher retains the responsibility for the learning of the pupil even if the pupil is receiving support away from the rest of the class, for example, in a small group



- we review the pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to be made in consultation with the pupil and their parent/carer
- where progress is limited we take advice from external specialists/practitioners and discuss their input, advice and support with parents and all staff involved
- where assessment indicates that specialist services are required, we make referrals promptly
- We draw up either an SEN Support Plan/Provision Map/IEP as necessary.

**Our SENCO is: Mrs S Bunce**  
**Contact details: 01344 774644**

### **3. Involving parents in their child's education**

Parents are key partners in their children's education. Evidence shows that children make most progress when their key adults work together. At Oaklands Infant School we demonstrate this by:

- Always discussing any concerns we have with the pupil's parents at the earliest point
- Listening, and hearing, what parents say
- Identifying any outcomes to be achieved with parents
- Planning any interventions with parents
- Meeting with parents to review their child's interventions and progress
- Being honest, open and transparent about what we can deliver
- Making sure parents know who to contact if they have any concerns

Where children and young people are 'looked after' by the local authority we have an additional role as we are all corporate parents. National figures show that children who are looked after are significantly over represented at school support stages and through statutory needs assessments. In order to ensure that we are responding appropriately we:

- Do not make assumptions based on a pupil's care status
- Monitor the progress of all out looked after children termly
- Have an up to date Personal Education Plan which is easily understood by everyone involved
- Ensure close working with the specialist services who support looked after children including the LAC nurse, social worker, Virtual Headteacher
- Normalise life experience wherever possible
- Ensure our looked after children, especially those with SEN are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities



#### **4. Arrangements for consulting children and young people with SEN and involving them in their education**

The Children and Families Act is clear that:

- All children and young people need to be supported to develop aspirations for their future lives as active members of their community
- All children and young people have the right to have their voice heard
- Involving children and young people in discussions about their learning, progress and how provision is made

At Oaklands Infant school we consult all pupils by spending time with them to talk through their achievements and discuss any difficulties. This sometimes happens through IEP reviews or as a more informal chat with the child. For example, a child who particularly enjoyed learning facts, requested that he had learning his 2 and 10 times table would appear on his IEP, it did, and he achieved his target!

In addition where pupils have special educational needs we ensure that:

- All pupils are encouraged and supported to make their views known. Strategies we use may include written comments, talking to a preferred adult, friend or mentor, drawing, etc
- Any interventions or strategies will be explained and discussed with pupils
- All pupils will be encouraged to monitor and judge their own progress in a positive and supportive environment
- Reviews of progress are 'person centred', ie, they will have the pupil, their aspirations and needs at the centre of the review
- Reviews are always outcome focussed. Outcomes reflect what is important to, and for, the pupil

#### **5. How we assess and review progress**

Children are monitored on a regular basis through class work, discussion, observation, both formally and informally. Progress is shared with parents at parents' evenings and at extra meetings as arranged by the class teacher. Outcomes are talked over and prioritised as necessary and other agencies involved if required, either to help with more precise monitoring or support with strategies to help move the child forward. We review as necessary both with the child and parents as well as other agencies. Termly, there is an opportunity for staff to discuss any child that they have concerns over with the Educational Psychologist and learning support team. Each term there is also a chance to talk over any child that may be having more severe difficulties. Parents are strongly encouraged to share any concerns they have with the class teacher and the SENCO.



## 6. Preparing for transition

Transition is ever present in our planning for pupils as we are constantly aware of the skills pupils will need in order to access the next part of their learning. When that learning is to take place in a new setting or phase, transition planning for this is a key task. Preparing for adulthood and the outcomes which will support independence and choice making, involves the graded development of skills. These skills begin at the earliest ages with opportunities to practice those skills at age and stage appropriate levels. For all pupils we make opportunities to practice developmental and transferable skills which will prepare them for life as members of their community.

We help to prepare all pupils for the next stage in their learning by regular opportunities to visit our Junior School throughout the year. Extra visits can be arranged to the school with a member of Infant School staff if a child is particularly worried. Children from the Juniors visit the infants and also help at the School Sports day. For pupils with special educational needs we initiate a transition plan. This may include additional visits, child taking photos, creation of a booklet, use of social stories. The Oaklands Infant School SENCO talks in detail to the Junior SENCO and the year 2 teachers talk to the year 3 teachers. If there is a particular need that the other children in the juniors need preparing for this is done before the child starts. Any equipment is passed on or ordered ready for the start of term. All paperwork is transferred. Most of the SEND staff from the local authority are the same for the Infant School as they are for the juniors, so continuity is maintained.

## 7. The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN and how adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment

To support children, young people and their families the Children and Families Act requires all local authorities to set out a local offer. The Local offer is a description of support and services which are available to children and young people who have SEND, and their families, how services can be accessed and any criteria for accessing them. It is the opportunity to bring together in one place, information about provision, including how this can be accessed from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers including voluntary organisations. Wokingham's Local Offer can be accessed on <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/our-local-offer-for-children-and-young-people-with-additional-needs/>

Wokingham Local Authority has set out what it expects should be available in all mainstream settings to meet the needs of children and young people without recourse to a statutory EHC needs assessment. This document, 'SEN Support: what Wokingham expects can be reasonable provided by education settings from the funding available to them' can be found on the Local Offer page.



## 8. The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist support will be secured

All staff have access to training through Wokingham School Hub and can access training provided in groups or bespoke training from Wokingham's Educational Psychology Service. We meet with our EP to plan our training needs on a termly basis. Through our school cluster group we can identify training needs and plan training in a cost effective way as well as using our cluster meetings as a professional forum to share expertise across schools.

The knowledge of the current staff around predictable SEN is already well established and training is updated regularly. New staff would receive the appropriate training as needs dictate. For more exceptional needs, training would be sought and provided accordingly.

### SENCO

Legislation requires that

- the SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the school
- any newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment
- a National Award must be a postgraduate course accredited by a recognised higher education provider
- Schools should satisfy themselves that the chosen course will meet these outcomes and equip the SENCO to fulfil the duties outlined in this Code. Any selected course should be a least equivalent to 60 credits at postgraduate study

Our SENCO has responsibility in school for:

- with the Headteacher and Governing body, determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school
- day to day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies
- being aware of the provision in the Local Offer and working with professionals to provide a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching
- overseeing the day to day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support



- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the Headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

In order to carry out these duties effectively, as a school we ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This includes providing the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within a school.

## **9. Evaluating the effectiveness of our provision**

Most children and young people who have SEN respond to quality first teaching. Where individual or different interventions are used these will be evidence based and our progress tracking allows us to verify that the interventions are effective. Sometimes individual pupils respond to different interventions and approaches. Where we try a different approach or intervention we will measure its efficacy by measuring the outcomes achieved by the pupil and take into account the cost of the intervention.

Firstly the children's individual needs are recognised, then if required an intervention will be matched to their needs. Each intervention has a way to monitor the progress made. If the child is making progress then the intervention may continue, if not it could be changed, or ceased. Sometimes it may be necessary to consult the Educational Psychologist for advice at this stage.

## **10. Inclusive Practice**

We ensure that all our pupils, but particularly those with SEN are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities.



## 11. The Social and Emotional Development of our Pupils

- We have a trained nurture assistant who responds to children's emotional needs. There is also a nurture group (Proud Lions) and a friendship group
- Before an EHCP review the child is asked about school, the subjects they like/dislike, what they enjoy and how they feel about lessons. They have this discussion with the class teacher whom they have built a relationship with. The child regularly goes through their IEP or support plan.
- We are aware that for children and young people with SEND, bullying is a major issue. Please see the school's anti-bullying policy. <http://oaklandsinfants.boxbear.co.uk/repository/Policies/Anti-Bullying%20Policy.pdf>

## 12. Working with other professionals and practitioners

At Oaklands Infant School we are committed to working with other professionals and practitioners to ensure that we maximise the impact of our interventions whilst minimising duplication and disruption for pupils, families and practitioners. In order to do this we:

- Listen to parents to ensure we know which services they use and are valued by them
- Ensure that we contact all practitioners working with our pupils to invite them to relevant meetings and reviews
- Use person centred approaches with all our pupils who have SEN to ensure that interventions are co-ordinated and so add extra value
- Value the contribution of all
- Engage with local authority services in a timely and professional way.

For example:

- ✚ We hold termly 'surgeries' with the EP to look at the needs of individual children
- ✚ We hold termly 'planning meetings' with all relevant professionals from the LA to co-ordinate interventions to support the needs of individual children as well as to identify training needs for the school staff
- ✚ The local cluster of schools work together to promote effective SEN support and to ensure commonality in process across the cluster

## 13. Arrangements for handling complaints about SEN provision

We know that all parents want the best for their child and we will always seek to resolve any concerns quickly. Where parents have a concern about the provision being made initially they should contact the SENCO. If this does not resolve the situation reference should be made to the Headteacher, and failing that the Chair of Governors. See Complaints policy.

<http://oaklandsinfants.boxbear.co.uk/repository/Policies/Complaints%20Policy.pdf>



## 14. Funding

### How funding is made available to school to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs at SEN Support stage

Our school receives funding through a formula basis using indicators agreed by the School Forum. This funding, which is known as elements 1 and 2 allows us to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils who have special educational needs including those who require up to six thousand pounds of individual support. Further information on funding for SEN can be found in the document 'Funding to Support Learners who have Special Educational Needs'.

Whilst elements 1 and 2 will meet the needs of most children and young people with special educational needs in our school, those with the most exceptional needs may require additional funding. This funding stream is called Element 3 or 'top up' and comes from a funding stream which is part of The High Needs Block held by the local authority on behalf of pupils and students in Wokingham aged 0-25. This funding, which provides resources to an Education Health and Care plan can also be accessed through the exceptional needs funding mechanism.

### Exceptional Needs Funding

Wokingham has developed an Exceptional Needs funding model which can provide the additional resources to meet learning needs in mainstream settings. Oaklands Infant School is part of a cluster of schools who discuss individual cases where the schools feel that the support needs for that pupil are exceptional. We also use our cluster meetings as a professional support forum to share ideas and expertise about how different approaches, provisions and interventions could be used effectively.

We would apply for this funding stream particularly where the learning needs of the child/young person are exceptional but do not require a special school or significant levels of intervention from health or social care. Further information about exceptional needs funding can be found in the document 'Exceptional needs funding: Procedures and guidance'.

### When would school 'refer to the Local Authority'?

'Referring a child to the local authority' means that the person who submits the referral believes that the child's needs are so complex that they cannot be met from the resources which are normally available to a school. In the past any child who underwent a statutory assessment may have received a Statement of SEN which set out their needs, the targets they needed to achieve and the resources which would be provided to help them achieve them. The Children and Families Act has replaced Statements of SEN for any new referrals from September 2014 with a new process called Education, Health and Care needs assessments. These needs assessments may result in an Education Health and Care Plan.



Education, Health and Care plans are required by those pupils/students:

- Where the resources required to meet their special educational needs, cannot reasonable be provided from the resources normally available to mainstream providers and
- Who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age

Low attainment does not automatically indicate a need for an EHC needs assessment as the progress made may still represent adequate progress relative to the child/young person's ability.

In all circumstances the school will ensure that, prior to submitting a referral to the local authority it has:

- Used all the resources available within the last 12 months
- Made any appropriate health referrals
- IEPs/provision plans which are relevant to the presenting need. Targets are SMART, reviewed and show progression
- Made provision which has is appropriate to the child, young person and specific to them/their needs
- Made provision which has been evidence based and cost effective
- Undertaken an assessment of unmet needs where appropriate
- Fully and appropriately involved parents
- Involved relevant professionals/practitioners have been involved in the last 12 months
- Evidenced that their advice/strategies being followed and evaluated.