

Elmfield SEND policy

Ethos and Policy Aims

The school aims to ensure that all children, including those with additional needs, have access to, and can benefit from the Steiner Waldorf curriculum. Each pupil is valued for his/her uniqueness and is encouraged to develop into the best that he or she can be. We take a holistic approach and aim to support children in a variety of ways, to respond to their social, emotional, behavioural, physical as well as educational needs. It is our intention that all pupils are equally valued and respected.

All children have individual needs, which may be ongoing or arise at particular times, and the school tries to meet these in a way appropriate to the child's age, stage of development and personal circumstances. We recognise that some pupils will have particular needs, whether they are exceptionally gifted or able or because they have difficulties that make learning more challenging. We seek to identify those needs on an ongoing basis through our procedures, and to put in place support to meet those needs wherever reasonably possible.

Sadly, there are limitations to our provision, and there may be circumstances where unfortunately we have to take the difficult decision that we are not able to meet a child's particular needs within our school.

In implementing this policy, the school will comply with its obligations under applicable equality legislation (the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and the Equality Act 2010), including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for children who have a disability.

As an independent school, we are currently under no statutory obligation to follow the DfE Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disability (2015). However, we recognise its importance and we do follow the Code of Practice. This enables us to work with the Local Authorities and to follow the national guidelines for statutory assessment. It also simplifies the transfer of children to other schools, should that be required.

This policy accepts the definition of SEND in the Revised Code of Practice (2015), i.e. a child of compulsory school age or a young person has 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.

Special Educational provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision generally made for other pupils of the same age.

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.

Admissions

Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we value diversity. We welcome pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, providing that our staff can provide them with the support and resources they need to make adequate progress. We will 'use our best endeavours' to make sure that a child with special educational needs or a disability gets the support he/she needs.

Elmfield's admission procedure includes in-depth discussion with parents, as well as reference to the child's work, documents and reports presented by previous schools, Early Years settings or other professionals as appropriate. If, after the admissions assessment procedure, it is felt that the school does not have the necessary resources to educate the child, either in terms of staff expertise, or practical support, the school may decide not to offer a place.

Parents are required to inform the school as part of the admissions process, and on an ongoing basis, of any information relating to their child's needs, whether this is an identified special need, disability, or a general concern regarding the child. This enables us to work together to ensure a child's needs are met wherever reasonably possible, and so that they can settle in quickly and make good progress in our school. Without this information we may not be able to assess your child properly, with the result that the appropriate support may not be provided, and his/her needs will not be met.

Please also refer to our Admissions Policy.

Procedures and Responsibilities

This sets out the school's procedures for identifying and supporting the needs of the children at the school.

The school has a SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator) who is responsible for co-ordinating the provision for children with particular needs within the school. The school's current SENDCo is Kate Penny. Kate can be contacted via the school office. Within the Learning Support department we also have two part-time specialist learning support teachers, Celia Friedeberg and Jane Newsome, and a Eurythmy therapist, Brenda Newton. The Council member with special responsibility for the Learning Support department is Nick Godwin.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the SEND policy
- Liaising with and advising members of staff about pupils with special educational needs or disabilities
- Co-ordinating provision for these pupils
- Advising on the graduated approach to special educational needs or disabilities
- Supporting the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and needs, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support
- Where applicable, recruiting suitable 1:1 learning support assistants (in conjunction with the pupil's class teacher or class guardian)
- Maintaining the SEND registers and overseeing records, including Support Plans, minutes of meetings and reviews and discussions with parents, teachers and other professionals
- Liaising with parents of children with special educational needs or disabilities or arranging that class teachers do so
- 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, including the local authority and its support services, liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Contributing to in-service training of staff

Graduated Approach and Assessments

At Elmfield, we follow the model of a graduated approach to special educational needs or disabilities, as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. This takes the form of a 'four-part cycle 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' (SEND Code of Practice 2015 6.44). This four-part cycle comprises the following steps: Assess, Plan, Do, Review. This may be repeated at different levels depending on the needs of the child. (See Levels of Support below.)

We recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational needs or disabilities. In practice, the precise causes of need may be varied, multiple, and in some cases hard to identify.

We also acknowledge that all 'teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff' (SEND Code of Practice 2015 6.36). Kindergarten, class and subject teachers know the pupils for whom they are responsible very well indeed. They constantly observe their successes and struggles and assess their progress, making adjustments to their teaching daily in order to meet individual needs. This routine monitoring and the continuous daily observations are referred to as 'Quality First Teaching.'

Teachers or parents who have concerns about the progress of individual pupils can refer them to the SENDCo at any time. Where time permits, the SENDCo aims to meet with each class teacher once a term, to discuss the needs of all pupils in the class, thus enabling continuity and monitoring of progress, and to highlight any particular concerns.

In addition to ongoing observations, class screening is carried out with all pupils in Classes 2-9 in the summer term of each year. The screenings vary according to the age and stage of development of the children, but include reading, spelling and maths assessments. Maths and spelling assessments are carried out in class by the class teacher. Individual reading assessments are carried out by members of the Learning Support Team. The results from these screening assessments provide an overview of the pattern of attainment in basic skills for each class. They are used by class teachers and Learning Support staff to enable appropriate planning and differentiation in an inclusive classroom.

Staff are not able to make a professional diagnosis of a medical condition or officially recognised learning difficulty, for example, dyslexia. If concerns are identified, the school may recommend that a child be formally assessed by an appropriate professional at the parents' expense (or via the local authority) to enable the school to better understand the child's needs and the adjustments which may be required in order to support those needs.

Response and Levels of Support

A concern may be raised about a child in one or more of the following areas of need:

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

Class Teachers will approach the SENDCo or member of the Learning Support Team in the first instance. They will use information from:

- teachers' own observations in class
- main lesson or exercise books
- any results of and recommendations from previous tests, screening or reports
- notes from discussions with parents, pupil, assistants or other subject teachers
- current or previous Support Plans

to form the basis of a meeting and discussion around the child's possible needs. Parents are informed and the SENDCo may wish to observe the child in class. A meeting with parents may also be arranged. This is the first 'Assess' part of the cycle.

Parents may also raise concerns with the SENDCo, but should first speak to the class teacher.

1. Universal Support

The teacher continues to deliver Quality First Teaching in class, working closely with the SENDCo and parents. They provide differentiated provision and support strategies for the pupil within class, with clearly defined targets and plans of action. They may at this stage draw up a Support Plan for use in class. This is shared with other subject staff, support staff, parents and pupils (where appropriate). This is the first 'Plan' and 'Do' part of the cycle. A review of progress towards the defined targets is reviewed after an appropriate time (normally one term). This forms the first 'Review' of the cycle. The pupil is placed on the 'SEND Awareness Register.' (See SEND Register below.)

2. Targeted Support

On review of the above, if it is considered that the expected progress has not been made, more investigation may be needed. Additional assessments may be made by members of the Learning Support Team and a new Support Plan may be drawn up with the teacher. Whilst the class teacher is still responsible for the daily education provision, the SENDCo now shares this responsibility and supports the teacher in the various parts of the cycle. Supportive action, still within school, may consist of:

- Internal Learning Support assessment
- Help from a class learning support assistant, where provided
- Short term 1:1 or small group support lessons from a specialist Learning Support teacher, Eurythmy Therapy or other extra provision within the school as appropriate
- Documented provision with a Support Plan which reflects the cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review'
- Involvement of parents (and pupil where appropriate)
- Possible recommendations to parents to consult with external professionals at their own expense

The pupil is at this stage added to the SEND Register (see SEND Register below). If no significant progress can be identified after an appropriate time (usually one term) on this cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review,' it may be necessary to move to the next level of provision. There may be several cycles of support at this level before seeking outside help.

3. Specialist Support

All teachers continue to provide a differentiated supportive learning programme in class. In addition to the above support, advice and assessment may be sought from professionals and specialists outside the school. This is always in close consultation with parents, all class and subject teachers, and the pupil (where appropriate). This may have been sought at an earlier stage, by parents or school, depending on need.

The following services may be involved:

- GP
- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist/Psychiatrist
- Counsellor
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Hearing Impairment Specialist
- Visual Impairment Specialist
- Physical Impairment/Medical Inclusion Service (PIMIS)
- Specialist Early Years Service (SEYS)
- Local Authority Early Years SENDCo
- Children's Services e.g. Early Help, Social Services
- The School Doctor/School Health Professional

Reports and recommendations from any of the above will be discussed in meetings with parents and teachers to determine appropriate longer-term support in specific areas of learning and development.

For a small minority of pupils, an application may be deemed necessary to the local authority to request an assessment for further specialist provision, i.e. an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Although as a school we will do everything possible to support such an application, our resources are very limited, and without full funding provided by the local authority, we may not be able to meet such a pupil's needs within our school. This will be discussed fully with parents at every stage. If a pupil in school does have a funded EHCP, this will be reviewed annually with members of the local authority's SEN Team, as is statutory practice.

NB: These cycles and stages are not necessarily definitive and flexibility may be needed according to individual needs.

SEND Register

As detailed above, we keep separate registers of pupils for whom we have an awareness of need, as well as those who receive support from within or outside school. The registers are working documents and are recirculated to all teachers in the school as and when changes occur, and parents are informed of their children's inclusion on these lists, with reasons, every year.

A pupil may move between the two registers as their needs change. If successful progress is made over the period of a whole year, and it is deemed that the pupil no longer needs any support, he/she may be removed from the register altogether. The pupil may be added again at any time in the future if necessary.

The two registers consist of:

1. SEND Awareness Register

The names, dates of birth and SEND details of:

- Pupils who are being kept under observation by the SENDCo while their needs are being addressed by their teachers under 'Universal Support'
- Those who are taking part in small group sessions directed by the class teacher
- Those who have been diagnosed previously with special educational needs or disabilities, but are not receiving any support at present

The names of these pupils are not included on the annual school census.

2. SEND Register

The names, dates of birth and SEND needs/provision of:

- All pupils receiving targeted or specialist SEND support, and/or have an EHCP

The names of these pupils are included on the annual school census.

Pupil Participation

The school works together to ensure that pupils have an age-appropriate awareness of their learning targets, and there is opportunity for an effective pupil voice at all stages.

Record Keeping

Confidential detailed records are kept of the pupils receiving extra support. These include:

- Child's details, date of birth, family contact details
- Educational history
- Support Plans
- Progress reports
- Results of any standardised tests
- Results of Screening Assessments
- Letters and reports from specialists and professionals
- Minutes from SENDCo, class teacher, parents' meetings
- Notes on conversations with parents, staff and pupils
- Documents relating to any behavioural issues

Parent/School Partnership

Parents are required to inform the school as part of the admissions process, and on an ongoing basis, of any information relating to their child's needs, whether this is an identified special need, disability, or a general concern regarding the child. This enables us to work together to ensure a child's needs are met wherever reasonably possible, and so that they can settle in quickly and make good progress in our school. Without this information we may not be able to assess your child properly, with the result that the appropriate support may not be provided, and his/her needs will not be met.

The school expects the involvement of parents in the education of their children as laid out in the home-school contract. It is recognised that this is even more important with pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities where the support and participation of parents is often a significant factor in achieving success. Parents are always kept informed about the needs of their children in accordance with the recommendations in the SEND Code of Practice (2015). Parents are fully consulted before the involvement of local authority support agencies or other external specialist with their children, and are invited to attend any formal review meetings at any stage. Equally, parents have a duty to share any up to date information, professional reports/recommendations in a timely manner in the best interests of their child and his/her education.

Reasonable Adjustments

The school gives careful consideration as to whether an adjustment or auxiliary aid sought for a pupils is a reasonable adjustment. Independent schools cannot charge for reasonable adjustments (which now include auxiliary aids and services) under the Equality Act 2010 (Section 4). Cost can be considered a factor in determining such provision.

Access Arrangements for Examinations

Pupils with known special educational needs or disabilities are assessed in Upper School by an appropriately qualified exam access assessor, who is responsible for these arrangements. Where appropriate the school applies for approval for Access Arrangements from the relevant examination boards. The assessor works closely with the school's examinations officer to ensure that all paperwork is in place and that arrangements are carried out within the regulations. Other Upper School pupils whose needs become identified by teachers may also be referred for an Access Arrangements assessment.

Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language

Elmfield School welcomes children for whom English is an additional language. We aim to provide support to enable children to learn English in a variety of ways.

- Ensuring that lesson planning includes differentiated work for EAL pupils if necessary
- By setting appropriate expectations; encouraging children to contribute and give more than one-word answers
- Recognising that EAL pupils may need more time to process answers
- Through the rhythm, repetition and routine and through the spoken word, in poems, songs, rhymes and verses. All of these activities provide structure to strengthen, develop and help enhance their learning of the English language.
- Giving newly arrived young children time to absorb English (there is a recognised 'silent period' when children understand more English than they use – this will pass if their self-confidence is maintained)
- Ensuring that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing
- Encourage children to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another
- Providing children with visual clues to the English language, for example, labelling the classroom or providing labelled pictures to show commonly used words
- Working with parents and carers to allow for translation and understanding, including taking main lesson work home, providing parents with copies of stories and also allowing parents to assist in the classroom following an approved DBS check
- EAL pupils may work with a teaching assistant where available.

- Staff to familiarise themselves with common words in the child's first language where appropriate.

For further advice and support relating to children with SEND, please consult your local authority's *Local Offer* which should be available on your council's website.

Complaints

If any parents, carers or pupils have a complaint about the SEND provision in the school, they should refer to the school's Complaints Policy.

Safeguarding

All safeguarding issues are reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be kept under regular review. The SENDCo, Learning Support Team, class teachers and College of Teachers will gauge the success of the policy against all the above information, and its implementation within school. They will also take into account feedback from parents and professionals.

Written June 2017 by Ro Yates (SENDCo)

Reviewed and revised January 2018 by Kate Penny (SENDCo) and Diana Ball (Education Lead)