



Special Educational Needs Policy

THE OAKS

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Special Educational Needs Policy

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Rationale

All pupils at Amberleigh have special educational needs in that they all have learning difficulties which require special educational provision to be made. The needs that have been evident in previous schools have usually been assessed before the pupil arrives at Amberleigh and are described in the pupils' Statements of Special Educational Needs or Educational Health Care Plans (if pupils have a Statement or EHCP), but in practice further assessment on entry is required to be able to provide sufficiently precise objectives and programmes to work to.

Basic Information about SEN Provision

Principles and objectives:

Amberleigh Therapeutic School has regard to the definition of SEN stated in the "SEN Code of Practice",

"Children have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special education provision to be made for them."

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the LEA.

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.

How Special Educational Needs are Assessed

As defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015, a pupil has SEND:

‘Where their learning or disability calls for special educational provision, namely different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age’ (6.15).

In particular we endeavour to monitor all students who are not making adequate progress in the four areas specified in the Code.

- Communication & Interaction (6.28/6.29).
- Cognition & Learning (6.30/6.31).
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health (6.32/6.33).
- Sensory and/or physical needs (6.34/6.35)

Observations are made during the first few weeks by teachers on the pupil’s approach to classwork, relations with other pupils, relations with adults and personal competence/life-skills.

The needs and objectives arising from these observations are then incorporated into the classroom and used as the basis for the social, emotional and behavioural programmes.

Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) is an all-age attitudinal survey that provides a measurement of a pupil’s attitudes towards themselves as learners and their attitudes towards school. The assessment covers nine factors proven to be linked to key educational goals, including attitude to attendance, preparedness for learning and response to the curriculum. A low score in any factor can pinpoint negative attitudes that might not otherwise be apparent. The resulting data can help interventions to be put in place and provide a benchmark to evidence progress.

Within the first three months of entry to Amberleigh School pupils are screened by the therapy team dependant on behaviours, emotional stability, academic achievement and attainment of the pupil, pupils may also be screened by the therapy team to establish the pupil’s cognitive abilities, social skills and resilience. This is done by giving the pupil a number of brief tests which provide an overall IQ score, a profile of the pupil’s intellectual strengths and weaknesses, an understanding of the pupil’s emotional/behavioural development and their self-esteem.

Assessments currently used include:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children which consists of a series of tests that assess verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, working memory and processing speed and tests skills in literacy including reading and phonological decoding.

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) measures emotional/behavioural development relating to five distinct categories: emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and pro-social ability.
- B/G Steem questionnaire which tests for self-esteem (how a child feels or sees himself/herself across a range of areas) and locus of control (how much control a person has over their own life).

Following completion of these assessments the therapy team provides recommendations and interventions; this is not a definitive list but instead provides ideas for school staff and care staff to develop, drawing on their own expertise and understanding of the child.

These assessments can be requested on a needs-to basis dependant on the needs of the pupil, on the recommendation of the Director of Education, SENCo/Education Manager, Therapy team and relevant external agencies. Notwithstanding, here at Amberleigh we are mindful over the assessment process and are mindful not to over assess our learners if it causes them unwarranted stress. All learners have the right to decline to participate in assessments, although Educators and Therapists do their utmost to ensure the learner feels safe and secure prior to assessment.

The school's SENCO assesses pupils' skills using a variety of assessments:

- The Star Reader assessment is used for accuracy and comprehension of text and provides a reading age for text reading. It provides interim data on students' reading skills, provides recommendations, monitors progress, and maximizes growth.
- Bksb assessments are used to provide an initial and diagnostic assessment level for English and Maths; whilst providing tailored learning resources and skills checks.
- Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic (VAK) learning styles questionnaire is used as a tool in understanding a student's overall personality, preferences and strengths in relation to classroom learning.
- Detailed Assessment of the Speed of handwriting (DASH) is comprehensive assessment of 5 areas related to handwriting speed, providing a standardised score for normative comparison and requesting access arrangements for examinations.
- Pupil Assessment to Self and School (PASS) identifies fragile learners and discovers hidden barriers towards learning.

Assessment data and data obtained from our monitoring and tracing system is used to provide information for each pupil's Person Centred Profile (PCP).

If the child has a Statement or Educational Needs/ Education, Health and Care Plan, the pupil will have four targets included in their PCP. This will incorporate one literacy target, one numeracy target, one social/behavioural target and one target derived from the pupil's Statement or Educational Needs/ Education, Health and Care Plan. If the pupil does not have a Statement or Educational Needs/ Education, Health and Care Plan, but is still demonstrating areas of need, they will have three targets incorporating literacy, numeracy and social/behavioural areas. All target settings are SMART and are derived from valid assessment data, observations and/or the pupil's Statement or Educational Needs/ Education, Health and Care Plan if they are in receipt of one. All targets are reviewed termly by the education team and the pupil and shared with the pupil's guardian.

Other needs may be identified and investigated as they arise when the pupil begins work in the first assignments and assessment modules in class work.

Pupils with assessment levels below the national age are provided with extra support using a structured intervention. These interventions are based on current areas of needs which include:

- Mindfulness - Mindfulness is a practice that individuals and groups can do on a day-to-day basis. It can enable people to change the way they think and feel about their experiences, especially stressful experiences
- Numeracy Ninjas - a Key Stage 3 numeracy intervention designed to fill gaps in students' basic mental calculation strategies and also to empower them with the numeracy skills and fluency required to fully access GCSE Maths concepts when they move to Key Stage 4 study.
- SNIP - aimed at increasing reading and spelling and uses the primary high frequency words (HFW).
- Phonics - a flexible synthetic phonics programme especially designed for all ages and needs and suitable for those whom need support to read and spell.
- Dockside - systematic phonics-based reading intervention programme, specifically designed for older pupils.
- bksb programme of study: information derived from the bksb diagnostic assessment provides an individual programme of study which enables pupils to 'close the gaps' in their literacy and numeracy targeted areas.

- Social Communication - Social communication teacher learner's skills we need when using language to communicate and engage in conversations with other. This intervention is led through the medium of play and group projects.
- Second Chance Handwriting - teaches basic patterns to help relax and get the tension out of writing. Guidance is given on how to form letters correctly. Covers capital letters and numbers and finally handwriting is put into context in several activities.
- Beat Dyslexia - a series to support learners struggling to read, write or spell. The comprehensive programme develops literacy skills by combining successful phonological approaches with the very best of conventional, multi-sensory and structured teaching methods.
- Accelerated Reader (AR) - a computer program that helps teachers and librarians manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Renaissance Learning, the manufacturer of AR, claim that the program can produce an average of two years' reading age growth whilst promoting a culture of reading for pleasure. Our students will select a book at his or her own level and read it at their own pace. When finished, they will take a short quiz on the computer.

Other needs

A full Speech and Language therapy assessment considers the three following areas of communication: receptive language skills (how we interpret and process the information that we receive), expressive language skills (how we get our messages across) and social communication skills (how we interact with and interpret the communication skills of others). Assessments are comprised of: formal standardised assessments, observation of the student in a number of different settings and liaison with staff.

Other forms of need (for example concerning language difficulties or specific difficulties such as those arising in Asperger's Syndrome or Attention Deficit Disorder, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia) are assessed through processes of observation and investigation coordinated by the therapy team, following which there is liaison with services outside the school to determine how those needs will be met.

Student Participation

Students with SEN are fully integrated into the life of the school and the curriculum; we recognise the strengths of every individual as well as any areas for development. We aim to ensure that all students contribute to the social and cultural activities of the school.

Students, who can form view, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion considered in any matters affecting them. The views of the children in school are given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability.

Students participate where possible in all decision-making processes by:

- Setting targets; Person Centred targets and learning and behavioural strategies
- Contributing to their PCPs with individual consultation with a member of staff.
- Discussing option choices
- Discussing their needs and problems
- Annual review, LAC & PEP.

Decision making processes are supported by Person Centred Planning

Students with Statements (or Education, Health & Care Plans upon conversion) will have a One Page Profile and Person Centred Plan – The Plan, in agreement with parents/carers and students, will agree what the students (and parents/carers) feels supports them and suggests strategies for use in the classroom by the teacher.

The Person Centred Plan will have termly targets specifically looking at the identified areas of difficulty; progress will be against the expected outcomes. This review will take place by all educators.

How Special Educational Needs are Met

Every member of staff is continually engaged in meeting special educational needs, in that everything they do with pupils helps to develop thinking, increase attainment, support positive relationships and improving and developing personal competence. Most special educational needs are met through consistent, fulfilling daily teaching and work practices that are a standard part of Amberleigh School's learning environment. Amberleigh School can meet the special educational needs of individual pupils where they could not previously be met because of the particular arrangements in the classrooms e.g. small groups and through the attention to detail in the school's routines and approach to the pupil's difficulties.

The persons responsible for SEN are:

- All staff**
- Ben Kovacs – Education Manager/SENCo**
- Michelle Maguire / Director of Education**

Details of the school's approach to managing behaviour are laid out in the Behaviour Policy. Every effort is made to help the pupils understand and manage their behaviour

and emotions for themselves. Ways in which they can be more successful are discussed with pupils.

Each pupil is assigned to a particular tutor group. The tutor's role is to offer support to individual pupils across different circumstances with the aim of ensuring a consistent approach. Pupils are involved at all stages as possible as active partners to ensure the best arrangements to help them are achieved.

Where there is a persistent difficulty a problem will be discussed with the Director of Education and Registered Manager who will then observe the situation more closely, meet the pupil, and offer advice and/or more specific forms of individual support.

The ethos of Amberleigh School is to understand the needs and take seriously the consistent application of good standard teaching practices in each of the following areas:

- Designing programmes of work to meet the needs of all pupils
- Delivery of these programmes using the 'small steps' approach
- Using a stimulating and challenging style of lesson delivery
- Using a variety of teaching methods
- Effective management of behaviour
- Constructive feedback on attainment
- Thoughtful and considerate correction of work
- Acknowledgement and praise of effort and progress.

Pupils often have very disorganised and ineffective thought processes with respect to learning. As a result of their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties pupils have generally not experienced success in school and have had shown little commitment to engaging positively with learning. Time is provided during school for social communication skills to be developed. Once pupils experience success as a result of consistent and fulfilling teaching, pupils develop a personal aptitude for learning and are able to apply their skills and knowledge successfully. Pupils are encouraged to develop personal thinking and learning skills in all subject areas. Pupils, who have previously demonstrated poor approaches to learning and have found it very difficult to engage with school work, find that they can be successful and start participating in meaningful learning. Teachers select courses and examinations that result in nationally-recognised qualifications and accreditation. To ensure all pupils can

achieve success, application is made for special examination arrangements e.g. extra time, a scribe and/or reader, for those pupils who fulfil the necessary criteria.

The SENCO attends relevant training and disseminates the details as is appropriate. Furthermore, the SENCO issues information and guidance about specific learning conditions to all staff. As well as training, a resource bank is available within Amberleigh School to provide information about special educational needs and how to meet individual needs and is available to all staff. Information and journals are received from national and local organisations to raise awareness and support special education needs.

The school strives to create a sense of community and belonging for all our students. We have an inclusive ethos with high expectations and suitable targets, a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and systems for early identification of barriers to learning and participation.

Policy Reviewed By:	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
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