

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

**Legal Status:**

- Complies with Part 6, paragraph 24 (3)(b) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years: statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Applies to:**

- Whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

**Related documents:**

- Inclusion Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Gifted and Talented
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- The Pointer School Local Offer

**Availability**

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

**Monitoring and Review:**

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster.
- The Proprietor (who is also the Headmaster) undertakes an annual review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Date reviewed: March 2018

Mr R.J.S. Higgins  
Headmaster and Proprietor

## **Principles**

The Pointer school aims to enable all children to develop a lifelong love of learning. As such, we operate a whole school approach to identifying and supporting children with SEND in order that they might reach their full potential. We aim to identify children with SEND at the earliest opportunity and offer appropriate support and interventions. All staff are involved in supporting pupils with SEND, including peripatetic staff. All staff have a responsibility to differentiate lessons to cater for individual learning needs. Parents / guardians and pupils will be involved fully in the process of the planning and delivery of support. It is the policy of The Pointer School that pupils who have been accepted into the school will be offered appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum effectively and fulfil their potential. We are an inclusive school, determined to meet the needs of all our pupils. Our school has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We recognise the benefits of early identification – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person.

All our pupils will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, with teachers having high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers at our school will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Lessons will be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. By planning in this way, our pupils with SEN and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, will be a core part of our school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

## **Interpretation**

As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN will be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people. Independent schools are required to follow the *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (DfE and Department for Health: 2015)*.

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision (provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age). Within the context of Pointers pupils who might require additional support at The Pointer School include:

- pupils with specific learning differences e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia;
- pupils with hearing and/or visual impairment and
- pupils with specific physical and medical conditions

## **Equality Act 2010**

Our school has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people. We will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. We give prior thought to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage. Our school has a duty to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. School leaders regularly review how expertise and resources used to address SEN can be used to build the quality of whole-school provision as part of their approach to school improvement.

## **Disability Discrimination Act**

The Pointer School aims to support all pupils, including those with SEND, and enable them to realise their potential. We would always consider admitting any pupil, no matter what accompanying disabilities they have, providing we are confident that we are able to meet their special educational needs. In the light of the Disability

Discrimination Act, we have carefully considered what we might do to make our building more accessible to those who have a physical disability. Please refer to our Accessibility Plan and also our Single Equalities Policy.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The Pointer Schools' Special Educational Needs policy provides a framework for the provision of teaching and support for pupils with learning difficulties. The framework refers to entitlement, access and partnership. Although we aim to make provision for identified Special Educational Needs, it may not always be possible to do so within the school's resources. In such cases the Headmaster and the pupil's parents would be informed. Where a concern has been raised, any special needs or disabilities will be identified at the earliest possible opportunity. The assessment process will involve partnership with all those concerned with the pupil, including parents/carers, teachers and other professionals. The pupil's views will also be sought. The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each pupil;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of pupils are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for pupil's special educational needs;
- to enable all pupils to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their pupil's education;
- to ensure that our pupils have a voice in this process.

In order to meet these aims, our objectives are:

- to ensure pupils with learning needs are identified as early as possible;
- to assess the pupil to identify specific areas of difficulty;
- to ensure all peripatetic staff are aware of the pupil's needs and are able to meet those needs within the school setting;
- to ensure pupils' records include information relating to their individual needs, interventions and outcomes;
- to assist staff in modifying curriculum to meet the pupil's needs within the classroom and provide training programmes when required;
- to ensure that no pupil with learning needs or disability is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability;
- to work in partnership with parents, guardians and the pupil themselves in providing appropriate support and advice.

At The Pointer School we have developed a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We always aim to know precisely where children with SEN are in their learning and development. We:

- ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children themselves;
- have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them;
- track their progress towards these goals;
- keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them;
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and
- ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.

In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the need for more costly interventions at a later stage. Special educational provision will be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs.

### **Admission Arrangements**

Pupils entering the school from Years 1 - 6 will normally have an English and Maths assessment and a generalised discussion with either the Headmaster or a member of staff. If a pupil has already been identified as having

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learning needs, relevant reports should be brought to the family interview. If necessary the SENCo or a member of the SEND team will meet the pupil and talk to parents. Pupils are admitted to the school at the discretion of the Headmaster. Pupils with additional needs will be admitted if the school can offer appropriate support. Where a child who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan joins The Pointer School, we will always consult with parents and, where appropriate, the Local Authority to ensure that the required curriculum is provided for as set out in the EHC Plan. We will also co-operate with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant reviews, including the annual review, are carried out as required by regulation and best practice. The school will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children with an EHC Plan or SEND. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan or additional services such as dyslexic tuition will be subject to charge. This will be directly to the parents, or the Local Authority if they are responsible for the fees and the Pointer School is named in the EHC Plan.

### **Use of data and record keeping**

Our school has developed its own approach to record keeping in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The provision made for pupils with SEN will be recorded accurately and kept up to date. Our school will particularly record details of additional or different provision made under SEN support. This will form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. They will ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact. We use our information system to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists will be recorded as part of this overall approach. Our school will readily share this information with parents in an accessible format.

### **SEND Staff at Pointers**

- The Headmaster has appointed a Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo) to oversee SEN provision within the school. The current SENCo is **Penelope Fisher**.
- The Nursery Manager, **Pamela Ringer**, has responsibility for managing referrals within the Nursery.
- The school also has two Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who are timetabled termly to work with various pupils either individually or in the classroom. **Lisa Vivian** provides support for pupils in KS1. **Sabine Rogers** provides support for pupils in KS2.

### **Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children and young people with SEN in our school**

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can:

- 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

The Pointer School will identify and address the SEN of the pupils that we support. Our school must:

- use our best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything our school can to meet children and young people's SEN;
- ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of our school alongside pupils who do not have SEN;
- designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision – the SEN co-ordinator, or SENCO
- inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child;
- prepare an SEN information report and our arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others in our school, the facilities provided to enable access to our school for disabled children and our accessibility plan showing how we plan to improve access progressively over time.

At The Pointer School we follow a four stage approach to helping children with SEND:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do

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- Review

### **Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (Assess)**

The identification of SEND will be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. The identification of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities can be:

- on entry when specific needs are identified and recorded as part of the entrance/transition process;
- by staff recognition of a pupil whom they perceive as having difficulties or specific needs in their particular curriculum area;
- by staff referring a pupil who is experiencing emotional/behavioural problems;
- through discussion with external professionals such as doctors, counsellors, therapists and also
- through concern expressed by parents (recorded on the parental meeting record form).

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their potential by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. Teachers are responsible for tracking children's progress, and set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most should progress as expected. Some children progress beyond this point. For these children we differentiate within the classroom in order to stretch them, where necessary planning more advanced activities which build upon and extend the work that the rest of the class is completing. Despite this teaching and planning, some children do not make expected progress. This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

The first response to such progress will be high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. We recognise the benefits of early identification, identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision to improve long-term outcomes for children. We have a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning, and therefore special educational provision in our school is underpinned by high quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised. Where progress continues to be less than expected the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, will assess whether the child has SEN. In identifying a child as needing SEN support the class or subject teacher, working with the school SENCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information from our school's core approach to pupil progress, attainment, and behaviour. It will also draw on other subject teachers' assessments where relevant, the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experience of parents, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. Our school will take seriously any concerns raised by a parent. These will be recorded and compared to the school's own assessment and information on how the pupil is developing. This assessment will be reviewed regularly. This will help ensure that our support and intervention are tailored to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed. For some types of SEN, the way in which a pupil responds to an intervention can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need.

Our school will always be alert to other events that can lead to short-term learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to children having SEN but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe. Our school will ensure that we make appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs in order to prevent problems escalating.

Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Our school will look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. However difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not classed as SEN.

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Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, our school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support will take the form of a 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. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.

### **Plan**

Once a pupil's difficulties have been identified appropriate provision is made. At this stage the pupil is placed on the SEND register and staff are made aware of any adaptations including differentiation that needs to take place in the classroom. At this stage parents are formally notified, although they will have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above.

The teacher and the SENCO will agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the school interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the intended targets, along with a clear date for review. This will be set out in a Learning Plan, which should be written for all children who are receiving additional support beyond classroom differentiation. A Learning Plan sets out personal targets they are working towards which are written and reviewed termly (or more regularly if required). Targets are discussed with the child who is encouraged to participate in decision making, at an appropriate level about future options. They are also shared with parents, who are encouraged to work on them at home to reinforce the school's interventions. All staff who are regularly involved with your child in the School are aware of the child's targets. We aim for the targets set to be S.M.A.R.T.E.R.

1. Specific
2. Measurable
3. Achievable
4. Relevant
5. Time bound
6. Evaluated and
7. Reviewed.

### **Do**

The class teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. However, most interventions at The Pointer School are carried out by our Learning Support Assistants, supported by Teaching Assistants in class where appropriate. The class teacher will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The school SENCO will support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

### **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support and interventions will be evaluated, along with the views of the pupil and their parents. This will feed back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, will revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil. Parents will have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps. Where a pupil has an Education Health Care Plan, the local authority must review that plan as a minimum every twelve months.

### **Involving Specialists**

Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are provided in school and matched to the pupil's area of need, we will consider involving specialists such as outside agencies. We will always involve a specialist where a pupil makes little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age despite evidence-based

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SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff. The pupil's parents will always be involved and consulted in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed will be recorded and shared with the parents and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEN support. Where our assessments have indicated that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children and young people receive it as quickly as possible. The Pointer School Local Offer sets out clearly what support is available from different services and how it may be accessed. Some of these services may incur an additional cost to parents, which is set out clearly in the Terms and Conditions of the school. In the rare instance that a child is still not making good progress despite the involvement of external specialists, the school may recommend requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment from the Local Education Authority.

### **Provision mapping**

Each term a provision map showing the provision of support by the Specialist Learning Support Assistants is drawn up. Additional interventions are written up for any additional provision that takes place within the year group. These outline details of the provision that is currently taking place. Teachers monitor the pupil's progress and make note of any improvements that can be made or whether the provision should or is necessary to continue. The amount and type of support offered to a pupil is dependent on need. The Pointer School believes that pupils with additional needs should spend as much time as possible in the classroom with the most effective teachers and that removal from class should be avoided wherever possible. We believe that all subjects are important to the pupil's development and that every pupil is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Therefore, timetabled lessons should not be sacrificed for support unless entirely necessary. When a pupil needs to be withdrawn for learning support, every effort is made to ensure that a pupil does not miss core curriculum subjects. Their individual strengths are also taken into account in addition to the advice of staff members and parental requests. Some pupils are withdrawn from a second language in order to ensure extra support is given for English and Maths as appropriate. Some support lessons are also delivered at the same time as the timetabled subject following the same lesson objectives but in a smaller group with a smaller range of abilities.

### **Able Pupils**

Occasionally a pupil will stand out from their peers as having exceptional abilities. If the need is considered very different from their peer group, the pupil has special needs. In most cases these special abilities can be nurtured within the classroom by differentiation of the curriculum. For further information, please see the Able, Gifted and Talented Policy.

### **Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties**

The Pointer School caters for pupils with mild emotional and behavioural difficulties primarily through effective pastoral care. The school also provides additional support through a designated school counsellor.

### **Partnership with parents**

The Pointer School works closely with parents in the support of those pupils with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an on-going dialogue with parents. Parents will be encouraged to contribute their own ideas about how their child's needs could be met and what helps the child to learn. They will be expected to share with the School success when targets are met at home. Teachers hold meetings to share the progress of special needs pupils with their parents. We inform the parents of any intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of pupils with special educational needs. Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, we will talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and our school. We will meet parents at least three times each year.

### **Pupil participation**

In our school we encourage pupils to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to pupils of all ages. Pupils are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets and in the termly review meetings. Pupils are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their targets. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

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## **Monitoring, evaluation, and continued development**

The SENCo supports teachers, where necessary, in drawing up targets for pupils, and reviews all targets that are set on Learning Plans. The Headmaster reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, is a core part of our school's performance management arrangements and our approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. Regular training about SEND is provided to all staff.

## **APPENDIX: SEND in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

At the Pointer School EYFS we believe that all our children matter. All the children in our EYFS stage are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their potential by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Expected outcome of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the foundation stage. Some children progress beyond this point. For these children we differentiate within the classroom in order to stretch them, where necessary planning more advanced activities which build upon and extend the work that the rest of the class is completing.

At The Pointer School we are aware that some children may not progress at the expected rate as outlined in the document 'Early Years Outcomes' (Department for Education, 2013). As a provider of early years education we have regard to the '*Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities 2014.*' (DfE and Department of Health: 2014). As set out in the EYFS framework we take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet their needs.

In assessing the progress of children in the early years, we use the non-statutory Early Years Outcomes guidance as a measure to assess the extent to which a young child is developing at expected levels for their age. We identify those children who do not meet these developmental milestones through a range of methods. The document 'Tracking Children's Progress', which is completed at periodic intervals throughout the year, allows practitioners to identify specific areas of learning in which children may not be making adequate progress i.e. moving within the developmental brackets from one point of assessment to the next. For more information on identifying progress through tracking, please see the section 'Tracking in the EYFS' in the EYFS Policy. In addition to our formal tracking, we also use a range of information where appropriate to help practitioners to identify children who may not be progressing at the expected rate, which may include information from: parents, Nurseries, or outside agencies. We also use ongoing teacher observations, the Foundation Stage Profile, and the termly school reports to help us to identify any children who may be making little progress.

Any child who is not making adequate progress will have an individual or group target sheet. This will list one or more targets which practitioners will be focussing on over the following weeks, and the small steps that will help the child achieve that target. They allow space for practitioners to note observations as children display their newly developed skills, in order to make a judgement of when each child has met their specific targets. The targets are shared with parents, usually through a specific meeting to discuss the child's progress. These target sheets will only be used as long as practitioners feel is necessary to enable the child to reach the developmental milestones for their age.

Those children who may need additional help in order to meet the Early Learning Goals are largely supported in the EYFS through in-class strategies which are implemented by the class teacher. These may include:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing extra time/ 1:1 activities with the class teacher or teaching assistant which focus on key areas for development.

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- The use of small 'nurture groups' to focus on developing key skills.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Using resources and activities which meet as many of the seven areas of learning as possible: this allows children with different learning styles to engage to their fullest potential;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

If appropriate, a referral may be made to the Greenwich Early Years Inclusion Team, via a referral form available from the school SENCO, Miss Penelope Fisher, or the Nursery Manager, Mrs Pam Ringer. A formal referral is always made with the consent of parents. This referral will be passed on to the relevant external agencies – Speech and Language, Education Psychology, etc – who will then be able to offer specialist advice and support to the school.

In the rare instance that the advice and help of external professionals has been sought, and the child in question is still making little or no progress, then the school will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment from the Local Education Authority.