



ABBOT'S WAY SCHOOL

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE (SENDP) POLICY

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ABBOT'S WAY SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE (SENDP) **POLICY**

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE (SENDP) POLICY

This policy is in line with the Independent School Standards (Revised April 2019)

This policy is written in line with the requirements set out in Part 3 of the Pupils and Families Bill (2014) and associated regulations. The policy is fully compliant with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice: for 0 to 25 years (Jan 2015). It relates to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabled children and young people. A 'young person' in this context is a person over compulsory school age and under 25. Compulsory school age ends on the last Friday of June in the academic year in which the child becomes 16.

1. Statement and vision

Our aim is to ensure that every pupil achieves their full potential in their educational attainment and personal development by receiving the highest standards of teaching and care.

Abbot's Way School believes that:

- All children and young people in our care are entitled to access a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to meet their special educational needs (SEN).
- All children and young people can raise their attainment in all aspects of life and that children and young people should be given the opportunity to fulfil their potential. We ensure that we have high aspirations for all of our pupils.
- All children and young people with SEN require a high level of support and guidance to ensure that they access learning, activities and the wider community successfully and to ensure that they are prepared for independent living and adult life.

At Abbot's Way School we believe that all of our pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability, disability or sexuality are entitled to a high quality education that will maximise their life chances.

Transitional arrangements may still be in place to support the changeover from the previous system to the new system in a phased and ordered way. These arrangements, which are set out in a statutory transitional order and accompanied by transitional guidance, will facilitate the transfer of those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They ensure that during the transition period local authorities must continue to comply with elements of the Education Act 1996 in relation to children with statements, and the Learning and Skills Act 2000 in relation to young people who have had learning difficulty assessments and remain in education or training (provided they still have learning difficulties). All statements must be converted or ceased by 1 April 2018.

2. Statement of Special Educational Needs – the transition to EHCP (September 2014 onwards)

Transfer of the Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) must be initiated by the local authority in the form of a 'transfer review'. This should replace the usual annual review of the child's statement at the relevant time.

Parents, carers and young people must be invited to the transfer review. An EHC needs assessment must be conducted as part of this, although there is no need for the local authority to seek additional advice for the assessment if there is already up-to-date and relevant information available.

Once the transfer process is completed parents/carers have the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) under the new Act (The Children and Families Act 2014).

3. Existing (non-statutory) EHCP

If a child already has an EHCP as they live in a Pathfinder local authority, it will be possible to request an EHC needs assessment at any time.

The local authority should treat a non-statutory EHCP issued before 1 September 2014 as a statutory document, so that the child's plan should be reviewed within 12 months of issue, or of the previous review.

Assuming that the information in the plan remains relevant, transfer to the new system should be quite straightforward.

4. Learning difficulty assessments (LDAs)

Under the new system, young people over 16 years have the right to request an education and health care needs assessment in their own right.

To help ensure young people continue to receive appropriate support at the end of the transition period, local authorities must consider whether an EHCP needs assessment is needed for young people who are likely to continue to receive further education or training beyond 31 August 2024. Existing information within the LDA should contribute to the EHCP needs assessment.

The legal test of when a child or young person requires an EHCP remains the same as that for a statement under the Education Act 1996. Therefore, it is expected that all those who have a statement and who would have continued to have one under the current system, will be transferred to an EHCP – no-one should lose their statement and not have it replaced with an EHCP simply because the system is changing.

Similarly, local authorities have undertaken LDAs for young people either because they had a statement at school or because, in the opinion of the local authority, they are likely to need additional support as part of their further education or training and would benefit from a LDA to identify their learning needs and the provision required to meet those needs. Therefore, the expectation is that young people who are currently

receiving support as a result of a LDA and remain in further education or training during the transition period, who request and need an EHCP, will be issued with one.

5. Definitions

Abbot's Way School identifies pupils as having *Special Educational Needs* if they meet the definition as set out in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice' (DfE & DoH, Sept 2014):

"A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

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 facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions"*

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is "*...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.*"

The school provides special educational provision for pupils who require:

"Special educational provision, that is provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age."

The school provides for pupils whose special educational needs are characterised by the diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty and fall broadly into one or more of the following areas:

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

6. Objectives of Abbot's Way School's SEN policy

We will ensure that a child or young person with SEN will have their needs met through a rigorous programme of identification, assessment, planning, support and regular review. This is a cyclical process that monitors provision and progress.

To achieve this:

- the child will always be at the centre of our thought process and the views of the pupil will be sought and taken into account
- our parents and carers have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education

- our pupils with SEN will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum
- the school will manage its resources to ensure all pupils' needs are met
- A pupil's special educational needs (or additional needs) will be identified at the earliest time
- provision and progress for our SEN pupils will be monitored and reviewed regularly
- the school will involve outside agencies when appropriate
- Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) or Statements of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) will be reviewed regularly in line with regulations
- appropriate training will be provided for those involved in the implementation of the policy

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of all groups of learners including:

- girls and boys
- minority ethnic and faith groups
- learners who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- learners with special educational needs
- learners who are disabled or have long term illness
- those who are gifted and talented
- those who are looked after by the local authority
- any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- different socioeconomic backgrounds e.g. pupil premium

Where a SEN is identified (or has been previously identified), the school will put appropriate evidence-based interventions in place. These will be provided as part of a graduated response, which includes regular review of the progress made and adaptations to the support provided, as required.

The effectiveness and appropriateness of the policy will be continuously monitored by the Joint Heads in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or the nominated representative in conjunction with the teaching staff using the criteria listed elsewhere. The use of resources, identification, programme planning, effectiveness and quality of individual planning, pupil progress, pupil participation, parents as partners, statutory reviews, referrals for statutory assessment, the identification of training needs and the use made of support services will be monitored and evaluated regularly.

In addition, the school will annually undertake a self-evaluation of the policy in order to both update the policy and to plan further improvements and development.

7. Co-ordination of the provision

The SENCO has an important role to play with the Joint Heads and teachers in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school. The SENCO is part of the school leadership team at Abbot's Way School and the SENCO advises the school leadership team on all related matters.

For further information on the roles and responsibilities of the **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)** see Appendix 1.

8. Others responsible

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.

Teachers are responsible for high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils. This is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEN.

Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Abbot's Way School will regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.

At Abbot's Way School we have an agreed approach to the identification and assessment of SEN taking into account the nature of the special needs.

Identification includes the use of high quality formative assessment, as well as effective tools (e.g. standardised tests) and early assessment materials.

The main source of outside agency support is from the local authority or the school's own commissioned professionals.

This could be from the educational psychologist or health professionals for example speech and language therapists, play therapists, physiotherapists etc. Informed parental permission will be sought before such consultations take place.

Once a pupil has an EHCP or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) naming Abbot's Way School, the Joint Heads of the school will ensure that those teaching or working with the child or young person are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them. The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the course of a year. Formal reviews of the EHC/SSEN plan will take place at least annually.

If a pupil's SEN change, the local authority will be informed and will arrange to hold a review as soon as possible to ensure that provision specified in the EHC/SSEN plan is appropriate.

9. Access to the national curriculum

Abbot's Way School follows the new national curriculum statement on inclusion. We expect our teachers to set high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that our pupils with SEN will be able to study the full national curriculum. Potential areas of difficulty will be identified and addressed at the outset of work.

We make every effort to make adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment to meet the needs of individual pupils, and where appropriate as part of the planning for the pupil we provide access to ancillary aids and assistive technology.

At Abbot's Way School we can work across a variety of SEN. These areas of need will be managed to ensure that each young person can achieve as highly as possible for their individual circumstances.

We therefore encourage our teaching team to work in the following manner:

9.1 Communication and interaction

- Children with speech and language communication needs benefit from education with additional support mechanisms, especially in secondary education.
- A 'sensory' based approach is effective for children with communication and interaction difficulties associated with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Visual aids such as visual timetables, labels with pictures and text, Now and Next boards etc. will be used to reduce anxiety and foster independence.
- Social skills will be an integral part of the curriculum with additional social skills interventions running as necessary.

9.2 Cognition and learning

- The teaching of transferable thinking and learning skills is commonly emphasised in our teaching practice.
- Pupils are seen as individuals with learning activities differentiated accordingly.
- Effective teaching strategies may include the use of 'procedural facilitators' like planning sheets, writing frames, story mapping and teacher modelling of cognitive strategies; although for quality and independence in learning it is crucial to extend these technical aids with elaborated 'higher order' questioning and dialogue between teachers and pupils.
- The classroom is seen as a whole learning environment, including embracing developments in computing skills.
- Explicit, comprehensive and integrated teaching of different aspects of reading linked to spelling and writing is encouraged.
- Responding to individual differences is seen as crucial.
- Teachers will ensure careful and ongoing assessment is linked to planning and teaching.

9.3 Social, emotional and behavioural development

- We recognise the use of peers to be a valuable resource either as part of a behaviour management programme (for example peer-monitoring) or peer-oriented intervention (for example a buddy system).
- Staff will actively encourage children to regulate their behaviour by teaching them that self-monitoring, self-instruction and self-reinforcement skills are effective in producing adaptive behaviour change (i.e. increased on-task behaviour, reductions in anti-social behaviour etc.). Emotional literacy intervention may be a focus for some children.
- Approaches using positive reinforcement are seen as the most effective way of managing most young people in our care (where appropriate behaviour is

immediately rewarded), behaviour reduction strategies (such as reprimands and redirection), and response cost (a form of punishment in which something important is taken away) appear to be effective in increasing on-task behaviour.

- A combination of approaches are more effective in facilitating positive social, emotional and behavioural outcomes than single approaches alone.

9.4 Sensory and/or physical needs

- Strategies emphasising the importance of providing opportunity for developing skills of social interaction and access to the child's local environment, such as participatory/active learning methods, physical education as a means of bridging the therapeutic/educational divide for pupils with physical disabilities and combining emotional and social development with academic and cognitive growth are encouraged
- The school will develop strategies and approaches which provide opportunities for developing the child's independence.
- Systemic strategies and environmental adaptations would be used to increase access to participation and learning.
- The use of technology is seen as particularly useful and is endorsed.

10. Education, Care and Health Plans (EHCP)/Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN)

Once a pupil has an EHCP/SSEN naming Abbot's Way School, the Joint Heads of the school will ensure that those teaching or working with the child or young person are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them. The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the course of a year. Formal reviews of the EHCP/SSEN will take place at least annually. If a pupil's special educational needs change, the local authority will be informed by the Joint Heads and they will arrange with the local authority to hold a review as soon as possible to ensure that provision specified in the EHCP/SSEN plan is appropriate.

11. Preparing for adulthood (transition)

At Abbot's Way School we help our pupils with SEN to start planning for their future adult life as early as possible, and by Year 9 at the latest. Our aim is to support our pupils to go on to achieve the best possible outcomes in employment, independent living and participating in society. This could include, for example:

- Including preparation for adulthood in the planning meetings with pupils and parents/carers at an early stage (and particularly from Year 9)
- Ensuring that careers advice and information provides high aspirations and a wide range of options for pupils with SEN; and
- Helping pupils, parents and carers understand and explore how the support they receive in school will change as they move into different settings, and what support they are likely to need to achieve their ambitions.

Abbot's Way School has specific duties to prepare young people with EHCP/SSEN for the transition to adulthood. The review of an EHCP/SSEN in Year 9 builds on previous reviews and existing plans. It will allow time for the commissioning of any necessary provision and support to take place. Planning will build on action that has already been agreed with the pupil and will inform decisions about the next stage of education -

specifically choices about what GCSEs or other relevant qualifications the child will be studying, the range of post-16 options which may be available and the longer term outcomes that the child wants to achieve in their adult life.

12. Arrangements made relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school

Any complaints from parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school should be made through the school's complaint procedures as set out on the school's website and in the prospectus.

13. Arrangements for professional development for all teachers and teaching assistants, in relation to special educational needs

The professional development of all staff involved in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN is ongoing and continuous. A wide range of training opportunities is provided which includes:

- Skill sharing and the demonstration of teaching techniques and strategies organised within the school
- Professional development sessions and one-off sessions on relevant subjects provided by SEN specialists
- Attendance at courses offered by external providers, accredited and non-accredited, as part of the school's performance management process.

14. The role played by the parents of pupils with special educational needs

We work in partnership with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and actively ensure that they:

- recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents/carers and play an active and valued role in their child's education
- have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the SEN framework
- make their views known about how their child is educated
- have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special educational provision.

To make communications effective, staff at Abbot's Way School will:

- acknowledge and draw on parental/carer knowledge and expertise in relation to their child
- focus on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need
- recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents/carers and be aware of their feelings
- ensure that parents/carers understand procedures, are aware of how to access support in preparing their contributions, and are given documents to be discussed well before meetings
- respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints
- respect the differing needs parents/carers themselves may have, such as a disability, or communication and linguistic barriers
- recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings

15. The role played by pupils with special educational needs

We will always seek the pupil's views about their education although, rarely, this may not be through direct discussion with the individual. Pupils will be enabled/encouraged to participate in all decision-making processes in respect of their education, including the setting of learning targets, contributing to personal plans, choices of school, contributions to the assessment of their needs and termly reviews and transition meetings. Learning is most effective when children are engaged with the process, and where children know that they are listened to and that their views are valued.

16. Any links with other schools and the provision made for the transition of pupils with special educational needs between schools or between the school and the next stage of life or education

Priority is given to the successful transition of pupils with SEN. All relevant documentation is shared with schools and colleges prior to transfer. Contact is coordinated by the SENCO or the Joint Heads. Transition arrangements for pupils with SEN either moving into the school or moving on to new schools should also be agreed with the specific officer of the local authority.

17. Safeguarding children with SEND

The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (Dec 2023)' guidance sets out groups of children that are at higher risk of harm than most young people. The groups considered at greater risk include children who:

- are disabled and have specific additional needs
- have special educational needs
- are young carers
- show signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- live in challenging circumstances, for example, adults with issues around poor mental health, substance abuse or domestic violence.

Work by the NSPCC has identified other groups of children that need greater support, such as:

- children living in poverty,
- those with parents who have learning difficulties; and
- 'Looked After Children'.

At Abbots Way, we understand that certain groups of children are more vulnerable when it comes to child protection and safeguarding issues and ensure that monitoring processes are particularly robust for those pupils. An effective partnership between the SENDCO in school, Designated Safeguarding Leads, class teachers and pastoral professionals enable us to identify children and siblings with the highest

risks on intake to the school and over subsequent terms. Please refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further details.

18. Record Keeping

Records belonging to children at Abbots Way are kept updated by the SENCO and teaching staff. These records are stored securely, in line with our Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy, and with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. Pertinent information is shared with teaching staff, and other professionals involved in the child's care and support and with parents in an accessible format. The School uses Provision Map, an online SEND monitoring system, to facilitate good communication between staff, ensuring that all issues relating to children with SEND are shared and actioned appropriately.

APPENDIX 1

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN. It is expected that most, if not all, of the pupils placed at Shapwick School will have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, parents, carers, and other agencies. The SENCO is aware of the provision in the local authority and is able to work with professionals providing a support role to the family to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO are:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy coordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant local authority 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 and carers of pupils with SEN
- liaising with alternative providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- acting as 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/carers are informed about options and to ensure a smooth transition is planned
- working with the Joint Heads and Governing Board 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

The school's provision for pupils with SEN will be coordinated by Anne Baker (The SENCO for the school) and overseen by the Joint Heads.