'They will soar on wings like eagles …'

Isaiah 40:31

collaborate | enrich | trust | innovate | aspire | nurture

Multi Academy Trust Policy

Common Trust Policy, Use as Published

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

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Aquila's values towards inclusion

Aquila strives to ensure that all schools in the Trust work inclusively. All our schools are places where children, families and staff with special educational needs and disabilities can work, play and thrive alongside their peers. Inclusion is where reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the individual learning needs of everyone, and is not just focussed on those with identified special education needs and disabilities (SEND) but includes children with English as an Additional Language, Pupil Premium, Armed Forces and those in the care system or post adoption. All Aquila Schools are places where those with a wide variety of learning, social and emotional and physical/sensory needs have a sense of belonging and connection to others in their community.

The policy below has been written with our core values at its heart, but more specifically our values of collaborate, nurture and enrich and aims to promote a culture of inclusion in each school. This policy outlines our commitment to being places of inclusion and in the case of our schools with a Christian Foundation, places of distinctiveness with God's love and the teachings of Jesus at the heart of all they do.

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Romans 15:7

Inclusion is:

- where children are educated in their community and with their peers and where children's rights to choices are listened to and accepted
- where everyone's wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society is valued
- a continuous process to help eliminate barriers and to promote reform in the culture, policy and practice in all of the Trust's schools
- where children with disabilities and other barriers to learning alongside their peers

In Aquila we firmly believe in the evidence that teaching inclusively increases the social and academic opportunities for all children, with or without SEND. Aquila wants all children in the Trust to develop a love for learning, to hold high aspirations for their own future and achieve excellent outcomes in adulthood.

Aquila supports all schools in the Trust to develop their inclusive practices through:

- developing close collaboration through school-to school partnerships enhancing the quality to education for all children.
- engaging in regular peer-to-peer inclusion reviews, involving senior leaders and teaching staff to identify areas to develop their inclusive provision and to help embed evidence-based practices.
- SENDCos attending cluster-based review meetings where they share practices, ideas and solutions.
- a regular SENDCo forum to help share best practice and offer support to one another using our existing knowledge base.
- the Inclusive Support Services, consisting of an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist and an Assistant Educational Psychologist, who offer assessments to help identify children's learning needs.
- a central offer Welcome to Aquila The Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust which schools and parents can use to identify the support available to children in the Trust.

This policy has been written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Schools Admissions Code 2021

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, which can be found on the school's or Trust's website:

- Aquila's inclusion principles
- Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Policy and objectives
- Accessibility Plan

SEN Policy Approach

Introduction

This policy sets out our approach to supporting children/young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). For more information about how we support children with SEND please also see our SEND information report that is updated annually and can be found on our school website: Guston Church of England School: Policies

There is information about the support that the Local Authority and other services provide in the Kent Local Offer for SEND https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs

1. Leadership and Management of SEND

The SENDCo

In our school, our SENDCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including overseeing the implementation of the Mainstream Core Standards. This includes those who have EHC plans. Our SENDCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents, the Trust and other agencies. Our SENDCO is aware of the provision in the Local Offer and works with professionals providing a supporting role to families to ensure that our pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching. (SEND Code of Practice (COP): 6.88, 6.89)

Our SENDCO is: Caroline Lampard-Shedden

They hold a nationally recognised award in special educational needs and disabilities: The National SENCo Award and MA SEN and Inclusion.

In addition to the SENDCO, there is a team that provide support to children with SEN comprising of:

Miss. Johnson – Blue Room Lead
Miss. Pearce – SEN Teaching Assistant
Mrs. Powell – Sensory Champion
Miss. Lawrence – Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead

The Trust Board and Local Governors

The Aquila Trust board holds ultimate statutory responsibility for the overview of SEND for all schools in Aquila. The responsibility for this oversight is delegated to the schools Local Governing Body (LGB) in line with the Aquila Scheme of Delegation.

The LGB fulfils its duty towards children with SEND in accordance with the guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice. In particular, the LGB ensures:

- arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions
- SEND information report is published annually
- there is a qualified teacher designated as a SENDCO for the school.

Our LGB works with the SENDCO and Head Teacher/Head of School and the Trust in determining the strategic development of the schools SEND provision, including establishing a clear picture of the resources available in the school and their impact. The LGB also ensures that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to admissions, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements and publishes information about this that includes specific and measurable objectives.

In fulfilling its duties, the LGB will appoint a governor to take an overview of the SEND provision in the school. They will liaise directly with the SENDCO and the SEND team to understand the school's approach and will:

- help to raise awareness of SEN issues at governing board meetings
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the LGB on this
- work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school

2. The Kinds of Special Educational Needs That Are Provided For In Our School

The areas of need that are described in the SEND Code of Practice are:

- Communication and interaction – this includes children/young people with speech language and communication needs (SLCN) and those with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Cognition and learning – this includes children with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD). This also includes children/young people with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties – social, emotional and mental health difficulties may manifest themselves in many ways including becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. Other children/young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.
- Sensory and/or physical needs - this includes children/young people with Visual Impairment (VI), Hearing Impairment (HI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) and Physical Disability (PD).

Children with any of these needs can be included in our school community.

3. Identification and Assessment of SEND

A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. We will assess each pupil's current skills and level of attainment on entry to the school. We will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These will seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This is 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 less than expected progress will always be high quality teaching targeted at the pupil's area of weakness. In identifying a child as needing SEND support, the class teacher, working with the SENDCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs including the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND. Equally, attainment in line with chronological age does not necessarily mean that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND.

We are alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age. However, for other children difficulties become evident only as they develop. We recognise that parents/carers know their children best and listen and understand when parents/carers express concerns about their child's development. We also listen and address any concerns raised by children/young people themselves. Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEND support the decision will be recorded in school records and we will formally notify parents.

We are required to make data on the levels and types of SEND within the school available to the Local Authority. This data collected through the School Census, is also required to produce the national SEND information report.

SEND support will be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes.

Schools in the Trust are required to use early years/school SEND provision plans when despite the appropriate targeted support, a child/young person continues to make little or no progress or to work at levels considerably below those of their peers. Many of these children are likely to be receiving support from other agencies. Where, despite taking relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND needs of the child, the child/young person has not made expected progress, consideration will be given to requesting an Education, Health and Care assessment. This request can be made by the school or by parents/carers.

In considering whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary, the Local Authority will consider the evidence of the action already being taken by the school to meet the child's SEND needs. An EHC needs assessment will not always lead to an EHC plan.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child/young person, to secure improved outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. The EHC plan also specifies the arrangements for setting shorter-term targets at school level.

4. Working in partnership with parents/carers

We hold the relationship with parents/carers as a crucial to the success of our approach to children with SEND. We are committed to:

- having regard to the views, wishes and feelings of parents/carers.
- provide parents/carers with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making.
- support parents/carers in order to facilitate the development of their child to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.
- meet with the parents/carers of children at least three times each year.
- provide an annual report for parents/carers on their child's progress. If there are any disagreements with parents about SEND support for their child, we will work with them to try to resolve these. If parents have a complaint, they can use the school's complaints procedure. Details about this are available from the school office or on the school website: Guston Church of England School: Policies

5. Involving Children/Young People

We are committed to involving children with SEND in decisions about their learning. We will:

- have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of children.
- provide children with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making.
- support children to support their development and help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

6. Assessing and Reviewing Outcomes

We record evidence of pupil progress, with a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEND support provided. We record details of additional or different provision made under SEND support. This forms part of regular discussions with parents/carers about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps.

SEND support takes the form of a four-part cycle: assess, plan, do and review. 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.

Clear dates for reviewing progress are agreed and the parent/carer, pupil and teaching staff will be clear about how they will help the pupil reach the expected outcomes. The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with agreed dates.

EHC plans are used to actively monitor children's progress towards their outcomes and longer-term aspirations. They must be reviewed as a minimum every 12-months. Reviews will be undertaken in partnership with the child/young person and their parents/carers, and will take account of their views, wishes and feelings. The review will focus on the child/young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan. The review will also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. Parents/carers, a school representative, and other relevant, external professionals, will be invited to the review meeting. Before the meeting we will:

- give notice to all parties at least two weeks before the meeting and seek advice and information about the child.
- send out any advice or information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks before the meeting.

We will prepare and send out a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting. Where a child is looked after by the Local Authority, we will endeavour to synchronise EHC plan reviews with social care reviews.

7. Transition

The great majority of children with SEND or disabilities, with the right support, can find work, be supported to live independently, and participate in their community as young people and adults. We encourage these ambitions right from the start. Our SEND support includes planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education, key stages, year groups and preparation for adult life. We will agree with parents and pupils the information to be shared as part of this process. We support children so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships, while also being

aware of children who like their own company. This is particularly important when children are transferring from one phase of education to another.

If a child has an EHC plan, this will be reviewed in sufficient time prior to moving between key phases of education. The review should be completed by June in the calendar year prior to the transfer.

8. The Approach to Teaching Children with SEND

We set high expectations for all pupils whatever their prior attainment. We use assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. We deliver high quality teaching that is adapted and personalised and meets the individual needs of the majority of children. Some children/young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this and we use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it.

9. Curriculum and Learning Environment

All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. In the details of the curriculum provided in each year, we include details of how the curriculum is adapted or made accessible for pupils with SEND. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. We do what is necessary to enable children to develop, learn, participate, and achieve the best possible outcomes irrespective of whether that is through reasonable adjustments for a disabled child or special educational provision for a child with SEND.

10. Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Staff

We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes: identifying particular patterns of need in the school, reviewing, and where necessary improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

Where interventions are required, we ensure staff have sufficient skills and knowledge to deliver the intervention effectively.

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEND, and the progress made by pupils, is a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

11. Evaluating the Effectiveness and Impact of SEND Provision

We maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils to provide a basis for monitoring their effectiveness and impact. We use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. This helps us to develop the use of interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so.

We will publish an annual SEND information report on the school website Guston Church of England School: Policies

12. Emotional and Social Development and Well-Being

We support the emotional, mental and social development of all children, including those SEND, by providing extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to their views and implementing measures to prevent bullying. We make provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

13. Involving Specialists

We will always involve a specialist where a child makes little or no progress over a sustained period or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those of pupils at a similar age despite evidence-based SEND support delivered by appropriately trained staff. Parents are always involved in any decision to involve specialists.

We may involve specialists at any point to advise on early identification of SEND and effective support and interventions. We work with parents/carers and agencies to consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions to support the child's progress. Together, we agree on the needs of the child, responsibilities and the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which it is reviewed. Records of involvement of specialists are kept and shared with parents and teaching staff.

Where a child is looked after by Local Authority, we will work closely with other relevant professionals involved in the child's life as a consequence of being looked after.

We work closely with the Local Authority and other providers to agree on the range of local services and clear arrangements for making appropriate requests. Some services may be commissioned directly.

We have an amount identified within our overall school budget, called the notional SEND budget. This is not a ring-fenced amount. We provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of our school budget including any resources targeted at particular groups such as the pupil premium.

Additional funding may be available from the Local Authority, for pupils with more complex needs through the Communities of Schools Approach.

In some circumstances, parents/carers may request a Personal Budget. A Personal Budget is an amount of money identified by the Local Authority to deliver provision set out in an EHC plan where the parent/carer or young person is involved in securing that provision.

14. Data Protection

Education Health Care plans (EHC plans) will be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it. EHC plans will not be disclosed without the consent of the child's parents/carers, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the child.

See our Data Protection policy for more information: Guston Church of England School: Policies