



**Acorn**  
Education Trust

# **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report 2021**

*Our vision for learners with SEND:*

*We believe that every child in every school should aspire to achieve their potential. We embrace the philosophy of learning for all and strive to prepare the children in our schools for their future in their time.*

## 1. What is a SEND Information Report and why have we written one for the Multi-Academy Trust?

- 1.1 In the SEND Code of Practice 2015, it is stipulated that all schools write a document which outlines how their SEND Policy works in practice. Each of our Trust schools has an individual SEND Information Report which is published on their website. There is no set format though it should be accessible and informative.
- 1.2 This report is intended to provide an overview of how SEND is addressed across Acorn Education Trust. It outlines some common practice and why such practice is implemented. It also is designed to offer an insight into our philosophy around SEND and what we aim to achieve.
- 1.3 See also - <https://www.acorneducationtrust.com/881/send-1>

## 2. What is SEND?

- 2.1 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is defined in the 2015 SEND Code of Practice as below:

*“A child or young person has SEND 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.”*

- 2.2 (DoH and Dfe 2015, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice, p15-16)

## 3. What is our approach to SEND?

- 3.1 Fundamentally, we believe that every child, young person and adult has the right to be included in the community and this encompasses school. We make every effort to include children with SEND in all of our schools and aim to create an inclusive culture. We welcome diversity and feel this is critical to preparing all children for the future.

- 3.2 We believe in progress for all and hold high expectations of all learners regardless of their SEND. We aspire to always learn more about SEND including the latest news and research. We aim to offer high quality provision in order to meet the needs of children and young people in our schools aged from 3 to 19. In adopting this challenging approach, we target the best possible outcomes for all our learners with SEND.
- 3.3 We are members of NASEN and the Whole School SEND Community of Practice.

#### 4. Which SEND do we provide for?

- 4.1 Within our schools, we cater for learners with a wide variety of SEND. Within this, we can support children in the four broad areas of SEND as outlined in the Code of Practice:
- Communication and interaction, for example, Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
  - Cognition and learning including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and moderate learning difficulties.
  - Social, emotional and mental health difficulties including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, attachment disorders, depression, anxiety and other MH needs.
  - Sensory and/or physical needs including Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment and those with physical disabilities.

#### 5. How many children have SEND in Acorn Education Trust?

- 5.1 The table below shows the percentage of children and young people identified as having an Education, Health and Care Plan or being supported at SEN Support level for Acorn Education Trust in comparison with national and local figures over the last two years. This is reviewed annually when this data is published and tracked for trends.

		2018/19	2019/20
England	EHC plans/Statements of SEN (percent)	3.1	3.3
	SEN support (percent)	11.9	12.1
Wiltshire	EHC plans/Statements of SEN (percent)	3.3	3.7
	SEN support (percent)	12.2	12.9
South West	EHC plans/Statements of SEN (percent)	3.0	3.3
	SEN support (percent)	12.7	13.1

Acorn	EHC plans/Statements of SEN (percent)	3.5	3.5
	SEN support (percent)	10.3	9.9

## 6. How do we identify SEND?

- 6.1 Our Acorn Education Trust flowchart outlines our broad approach to identifying SEND in our schools. A copy is available in the appendix to this report. However, the exact approach may vary slightly from school to school within the Trust. Broadly speaking, class teachers are usually first to notice SEND in their classrooms. All schools also have a whole-school system to assess pupils in line with the national curriculum. Where pupils are not progressing or persistently not meeting age related expectations despite intervention from the class teacher, it is expected that the teacher would consult with the SENCo and/or Headteacher of the school to raise a concern. All schools hold Pupil Progress Meetings where the progress of individuals is analysed and discussed.
- 6.2 Within the Trust, we have a number of assessments available in order to gain as full a picture as possible of a child's learning and development. This may involve a more in-depth look at reading, spelling or numeracy or indeed a different assessment. This is personalised to the child's need. Many of these assessments can be carried out by the individual school. At times, a member of the SEND team at Trust level may be involved to undertake a more specialist assessment, for example, an individual Thrive assessment.

## 7. What is our response to identification of SEND?

- 7.1 All schools in Acorn Education Trust adopt a graduated response to SEND which is also encompassed in our flow chart. This system involves a process of:
- Assess
  - Plan
  - Do
  - Review
- 7.2 Following assessment of need from either the individual school or involvement from personnel within the Trust, a plan is put in place to support a learner by the school. This may involve some new strategies and approaches within high-quality teaching in the classroom or a block of intervention. At this stage, a child may or may not be placed on the SEND register of the school. This plan is then executed by the school and a

review is undertaken following a period of intervention. The cycle then begins again.

- 7.3 Trust primary schools use an SEN Passport document to monitor the graduated response system for individual pupils. The SEN Passport tracks a child for the time for which they remain at SEN Support level on the SEND register and can include their whole primary education.
- 7.4 At Kingdown School and The Clarendon Academy, alternative paperwork is employed, but remains in line with the graduated response to SEND. Both schools have a “yellow book” containing SEND information for staff so that they are aware of the needs of the children who they teach.

## 8. What should parents/carers do if they have a concern about their child’s learning?

- 8.1 We wholeheartedly embrace joint working with parents and carers and value input from the people who know their children best. Should a parent or carer have a concern, they should raise this with their child’s class teacher or tutor as most issues can be resolved or addressed at this level.
- 8.2 It may be that a child’s teacher or parent/carer contacts the school’s SENCo if concerns are persisting or for additional advice.
- 8.3 A plethora of information is available on the internet linked to SEND. Here are a few useful websites:
- <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/local-offer>
  - [www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk](http://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk)
  - [www.nasen.org](http://www.nasen.org)
  - [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)
  - [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)
  - [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)
  - [www.adhdfoundation.org.uk](http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk)
  - [www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)
  - [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)
  - [www.partsight.co.uk](http://www.partsight.co.uk)
  - [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)
  - <https://kooth.com>
  - [www.youngminds.co.uk](http://www.youngminds.co.uk)
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>
  - [www.cerebralpalsy.org.uk](http://www.cerebralpalsy.org.uk)

## 9. How do we monitor the progress of children with SEND?

- 9.1 Children with SEND are monitored in line with all other children in schools in the Acorn Education Trust. Each SENCo will monitor their own SEND children and report on their progress to their Headteacher, to the Academy Council for the school and to the SEND Director.
- 9.2 Class teachers are responsible for reviewing SEND documentation with parents at least three times a year. A key member of staff at a secondary school would undertake this role. Children with a My Support Plan have their progress reviewed regularly by the SENCo of the school in collaboration with the class teacher and/or other staff in the school. Children with an EHCP are also monitored closely and have a formal annual review of progress towards the outcomes stated in their EHCP.
- 9.3 Occasionally, the SEND Director for the Trust may be invited to a review meeting.

## 10. What provision do we have for learners with SEND?

- 10.1 Provision varies from school to school depending on the SEND profile of the school and particular cohorts of children. It is important to contact individual schools for information on what they offer for your child. This is often set out in the School's SEND Information Report which is published on the school's website.
- 10.2 With the intention of improving outcomes for our SEND learners within the Trust, we are in the process of enhancing opportunities at MAT level for SEND. Such developments include our forest schools programme, Link 2, Behaviour Support Assistant and secondary ASD and SEMH provisions.
- 10.3 **Forest School**  
Acorn Forest School runs every Friday during term time and is currently offered to 8-10 children within the Trust. It is based in a large wooded area attached to Kingdown School but away from the main site. The SEND Director has oversight of the project but it is run by the Sports Leader for the Trust, Mr Widger who is an accredited level 3 forest schools practitioner. He is supported every week by one of the specialist PE staff. Forest school aims to increase self-confidence, self-awareness and team work alongside stimulating outdoor learning. Feedback to schools is provided every week.
- 10.4 **Link 2**  
Link 2 has now been open for two years and is catering for the needs of students with SEND who are at risk of exclusion due to difficulties with social and emotional needs. Link 2 aims to educate children away from their home school for a period of time and furnish them with new skills to

manage their learning and behaviour as they re-integrate to their home school with support. Much emphasis is therefore placed on securing ways to learn about and manage emotional difficulties alongside continuing to hone literacy and numeracy skills. Link 2 is open to primary age children upon application and approval of their programme between Acorn Education Trust and the home school. Feedback to home and schools is provided every week.

Link 2 is staffed by a primary teacher and two TAs.

#### 10.5 Behaviour Support

Mrs Whitehouse is the Behaviour Support Assistant for Acorn Education Trust. She is an experienced TA, ELSA and licensed Thrive practitioner who has skills in managing and meeting the needs of children who are struggling to manage their behaviour for a variety of reasons. Mrs Whitehouse will usually carry out an observation of a child or group of children, discuss with the school and report back with recommendations. She can carry out individual Thrive assessments and support schools to implement an action plan. She can also undertake blocks of work with children or groups running programmes such as Garden of Dreams, lego therapy or the Alert Programme. Some children require something more bespoke which is planned individually. Mrs Whitehouse also supports staff in schools to implement strategies in class to help to include the child and further their learning and behaviour. At the end of a period of work, Mrs Whitehouse completes a report summarising the progress and next steps. Schools have received this support very positively.

#### 10.6 The House and Aspire

Following the success of Link 2, we identified a further need in our secondary schools to offer provision for those students struggling to cope in mainstream. In September 2019, we opened "The House" based at Clarendon Academy and "Aspire" situated at Kingdown. The House is a newly refurbished provision catering for students with SEMH difficulties. It offers the chance for students to work in a nurturing environment alongside pursuing qualifications in English, Maths and a wide range of other programmes and opportunities. Students at The House may have part-time provision at college or work experience as well. Aspire will meet the needs of students with ASD who require further support to access learning. It provides students with structure, routine and a calm, quiet atmosphere in order that they feel more comfortable to engage in learning. Both provisions are staffed by well-trained teachers who have a special interest in those areas and are well supported by TAs. Some students will have full-time places either at The House or Aspire and others may access lessons on main site as part of their bespoke package.

#### 10.7 Further information on these provisions is available on request.

##### Educational Psychology

From September 2020, we are pleased to welcome Dr Linda Mallory to the Acorn SEND team. Linda is an experienced Educational Psychologist who

offers a pro-active approach so that schools can seek early help for children and young people where needed. Schools are able to refer children to the SEND Director who will then allocate time for Linda to visit the school and meet the child and staff. Having a consultation approach to this provision means that we are able to adopt a flexible and collaborative approach. We are very excited about working with Linda.

#### 10.8 Complex Needs Resource Bases

We are proud to have two Resource Bases as part of our Trust. One is situated at The Avenue Primary School and the other at Wansdyke Primary School. These are integral to the ethos and culture of the schools concerned and the Trust as a whole. Places here are allocated by Wiltshire Local Authority.

#### 10.9 Virtual lego club

During the Covid-19 pandemic, we established a virtual lego club across the primary schools in the Trust. This is coordinated by two excellent TAs at Kingdown School. Each week, there is a new challenge for our children to tackle and they receive certificates in acknowledgement of their creativity and builds. This is open to all children, but is actively encouraged for those with SEND who may benefit in terms of confidence, self-expression and fine motor skills by engaging with this club. When we are able, we hope to expand this provision further.

### 11. How do we evaluate provision to ensure that it is effective?

11.1 We have responsibility to ensure that we are delivering high-quality provision to the individuals in our care in order that we prepare children effectively for the future. Schools seek ways to measure the success of interventions. This could be through the use of standardised testing, use of behaviour and social/emotional tools, use of low-stakes testing or analysing progress related to National Curriculum standards.

11.2 We believe that should an intervention not prove effective in meeting a child's needs, a change in approach may be required and as such the assess, plan, do, review approach is valuable in addressing this.

11.3 Continually assessing impact, we make every effort to offer value for money and high quality to all of our stakeholders in Acorn Education Trust. Link 2, forest school, The House and Aspire measure progress on a weekly basis and this is analysed by the SEND Director to ensure the provision is effective.

## 12. How well do children with SEND in Acorn Education Trust schools achieve?

- 12.1 Achievement for children with SEND is not only measured in raw numbers. We consider each child holistically and reflect upon their outcomes across a range of measures. The vast majority of children in Trust primary schools go on to make an effective transition to mainstream secondary schools which is very positive. We aim to ensure that no child is Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at the end of Year 11.

Published progress data can be found on school websites.

## 13. How do we promote inclusion of children with SEND?

- 13.1 As stated earlier, Acorn Education Trust is committed to providing an inclusive education for our children and young people and this is reflected in the Trust's core values. All pupils in our schools are part of a class and any pastoral system (for example a house) in schools. Children are offered all activities which are usually available to all pupils albeit that on occasion adjustments are required for participation to be safe.

- 13.2 Rarely, a child is excluded from school. This is always the last resort. A plan for re-integration and inclusion is made upon the child's return to school in all cases. Sometimes, the SENCo may be involved in this meeting in order to provide advice and expertise. Should a child be externally excluded more than once, an Acorn form must be completed by the school in order to monitor support in place.

## 14. What training do we provide?

- 14.1 We offer training packages to all TAs in the Trust. During 19-20, all TAs attended a joint Acorn TA training day in October. Furthermore, secondary TAs had three compulsory training sessions during the year focussing on improving outcomes in the Basics for students with SEND. Also, there were three sessions for TAs in primary schools to choose from over the year including improving practice in the classroom, reading and ADHD. This will help to ensure that staff are aware of the needs of children and young people with SEND and thus help children and young people to access to the curriculum and all that school has to offer.

- 14.2 All teachers have the opportunity to engage in CPD for SEND throughout the school year. The secondary schools received training on SEND and typical behaviours (provided by Emma Rossiter at Rowdeford School) in order for us to embed a culture of inclusion in our schools. Primary school

teachers are trained by their SENCOs as the need arises. Last academic year, all teachers in primary schools were trained on the graduated approach to SEND and the SEN Passports. Schools may request training from the Trust in an area of need. For example, a session on dyslexia was held at Heytesbury Primary school for their staff and opened up to all teachers and TAs within the Trust.

14.3 In addition, we have funded the training of five members of staff across the Trust to gain the National Award for SENCO over the course of 19-20. This requires a significant commitment on behalf of the teacher, their school and the Trust. It enables us to have a high level of SEND knowledge and expertise in our schools. A further two will train over this academic year.

14.4 Training is also provided for SENCOs through the MAT SEND meetings which take place five times per year. Previous years have seen us develop an aligned methodology to the graduated approach to SEN support, improve our tracking systems for children and young people with SEND and access CPD on being vocabulary aware amongst other things. During 2019-20, we adopted an approach to reviewing the quality of provision and systems for SEND in schools in order to ensure that we are rigorous in our approach. We also looked at assessment and how this can be used for SEND in schools. During the latter part of the year, we focussed on ensuring that our children and young people with SEND were safe, happy and learning during lockdown.

15. What steps have been taken to ensure that children and young people with SEND have been supported during the Covid 19 pandemic?

15.1 All schools carried out a risk assessment at the start of lockdown to assess whether a child or young person with an EHCP was safe to learn from home. This information was shared with Wiltshire Council. During this early part of lockdown, SENCOs and/or class teachers or TAs telephoned the parents of students with EHCPs and some identified as vulnerable on SEN Support on a weekly basis as a minimum. This helped us to support parents and carers and ensure that children were happy and safe and to give advice and support where children were struggling.

15.2 As Term 5 went on, we actively encouraged all children with EHCPs to return to some provision on site at their school. Recognising that a transition back to school may prove challenging, each parent/carer and child were offered bespoke timetables. Some children required additional risk assessments to keep themselves safe at school too. By Term 6, many children at primary school were accessing school again including those with SEND.

- 15.3 While children have been at home, each school has provided a remote learning programme for children and young people to complete. Listening to parental feedback was critical and as such some amendments were made to expectations. For example, at Kingdown School, an alternative “timetable” of work which blended more academic studies alongside some activities designed to promote good mental health was created. Some schools also offered online access to intervention.
- 15.4 Link 2 remained open throughout the pandemic to children needing to attend. Aspire re-opened in Term 6 on a part-time basis.
- 15.5 Provision from Mrs Whitehouse (Acorn Behaviour Support) went online and she was able to meet with students within the Trust for virtual sessions. These were bespoke to the individual, but mainly focussed on anxiety related to the situation and the transition following it.

## 16. What provision will be in place this year to ensure that children and young people with SEND are supported in light of the Covid 19 pandemic?

- 16.1 In the event of school closure, children and young people with SEND will be supported via remote learning. Schools will be responsible for developing their own remote curriculum taking into account that needs of students with SEND must be addressed. Additional pastoral and well-being support through telephone or Microsoft Teams “check-ins” will be in place as well. Link 2 have created some video recorded sessions which all children may access with a focus on addressing anxiety, emotions and sensory needs.
- 16.2 Following a safe transition back to school in September 2020, schools will be assessing any learning has not been embedded or is missing for all children. Many children will quickly become accustomed to learning in school again. We recognise that for students with SEND, this may prove more challenging in some cases. Where schools identify that a child needs additional support, this will be actioned.
- 16.3 Both of our secondary schools have created a “safe haven”. This is designed to help students who are struggling to return to school by bridging the gap from home learning to full time lessons.

## 17. What steps are put in place to support transition?

- 17.1 When a child with SEND starts at a new school, records are sought from previous schools. We strongly encourage parents to visit the new school and pass on any information which they feel is relevant. New pupils to

primary schools are generally assigned a buddy who can offer support while the settle in. Some parents may like to meet with the SENCo and class teacher before a child starts or shortly after starting. This can be arranged with individual schools.

17.2 When a primary school knows of a child starting with them at reception, it is possible for the SENCo to attend a transition meeting at a nursery in order to gather information and create a plan of support.

17.3 With the post of SEND Director comes a fantastic link between primary schools and secondary schools. Parents and carers report that they feel reassured that their child's needs will be communicated effectively with a new school.

17.4 Typical extended SEND transition offered by Kingdown School and Clarendon Academy might be:

- A TA visits the child in their primary setting.
- Parents/carers and child come for a tour round and are welcome to take photographs in order to look at these with their child at a later date.
- Parents/carers may meet with the SENCo at the primary or secondary setting.
- Additional short visits may be arranged where appropriate.
- The child may be offered a place on Kingdown School or Clarendon Academy's extended transition programme which involves three additional visits on top of those offered to all children.

18. Which agencies work with Acorn Education Trust in schools?

- Wiltshire Council SEND Service
- Educational Psychology Service for statutory work in the main
- Specialist SEN Service – Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning and Physical and Medical needs
- Hearing Impairment Tem
- Visual Impairment Team
- CAMHS
- Virgin Care Community Paediatricians
- Speech and Language Therapy
- MASH and social care
- Family Support Workers
- School Nursing Team
- Education Welfare Service
- EMAS (in some schools)
- Traveller Education Service
- OnTrack

19. What should a parent or carer do if they are dissatisfied or have a concern about matters relating to SEND?

19.1 All concerns related to SEND should be directed in the first instance to the child's class teacher. Should this not yield a satisfactory conclusion, parents or carers should contact the school's SENCO. If further concern persists, the Headteacher of the school should be approached and the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

19.2 If a parent or carer wishes to contact Mrs Fulbrook, SEND Director for Acorn Education Trust, they may do so via Heather Taylor (Senior SEND Administrator) based at Kingdown School on 01985 215551.

Appendix – Acorn Education Trust’s graduated approach to SEND Support

