



Acorn
Education Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report 2020

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.

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

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.

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.

See also - <https://www.acorneducationtrust.com/our-services/send>

What is SEND?

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.”*

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

What is our approach to SEND?

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.

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 and 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.

We are members of NASEN.

What SEND do we provide for?

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.

How do we identify SEND?

Our Acorn Education Trust flowchart outlines our broad approach to identifying SEND in our schools. A copy is on our website. 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.

Within the Trust, we are in the process of developing a team of staff who are able to visit primary schools in order to assess children for whom there are concerns raised. 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. This sort of assessment furnishes us with a more detailed picture of the nature of the difficulty and assists in the first part of the graduated response to SEND.

What is our response to identification of SEND?

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

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. 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.

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.

At Kingdown School and The Clarendon Academy, alternative paperwork is employed, but remains in line with the graduated response to SEND.

What should parents/carers do if they have a concern about their child's learning?

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.

It may be that a child's teacher or parent/carer contacts the school's SENCo if concerns are persisting or for additional advice.

A plethora of information is available on the internet linked to SEND. Here are a few useful websites:

- www.wiltshirelocaloffer.org.uk
- www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk
- www.nasen.org
- www.bdadyslexia.org.uk
- www.autism.org.uk
- www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk
- www.adhdfoundation.org.uk
- www.addiss.co.uk
- www.rnib.org.uk
- www.partsight.co.uk
- www.scope.org.uk
- <https://kooth.com>
- www.youngminds.co.uk
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>
- www.cerebralpalsy.org.uk

How do we monitor the progress of children with SEND?

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.

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.

Occasionally, the SEND Director for the Trust may be invited to a review meeting.

What provision do we have for learners with SEND?

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.

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.

Forest School

Acorn Forest School runs every Friday during term time and is currently offered to 8 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.

Link 2

Link 2 has now been open for a year 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.

Link 2 is staffed by a primary teacher, Mrs Stather and a TA, Mrs Braddell.

Behaviour Support

Mrs Whitehouse is the Behaviour Support Assistant for Acorn Education Trust. She is an experienced TA and ELSA 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 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.

Committed as we are at Acorn to seeking ways to support our pupils, Mrs Whitehouse will also be undertaking training to become a licenced Thrive practitioner and as such be able to offer this support in schools too.

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 provision. 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.

Further information on these provisions is available on request.

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

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 management tools or analysing progress related to National Curriculum standards.

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 our programme of assess, plan, do, review is valuable in addressing this.

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.

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

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.

In future, we would hope to publish achievement of children with SEND at KS1 and KS2 SATS and at GCSE for all Trust schools within this document.

How do we promote inclusion of children with SEND?

As stated earlier, Acorn Education Trust is committed to providing an inclusive education for our children and young people. All pupils in our schools are part of mainstream classes 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 in order for participation to be safe.

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.

What training do we provide?

We offer training packages to all TAs in the Trust. During 19-20, all TAs will attend a joint Acorn TA training day in October. Furthermore, secondary TAs have four compulsory training sessions during the year focussing on improving outcomes in the Basics for students with SEND. Also, there will be five sessions for TAs in primary schools to choose from over the year including improving practice in the classroom, reading, ADHD, ASD and Speech, Language and Communication Needs. 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.

All teachers have the opportunity to engage in CPD for SEND throughout the school year. The secondary schools are receiving 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.

In addition, we are funding 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 will enable us to have a high level of SEND knowledge and expertise in our schools.

Training is also provided for SENCos through the MAT SEND meetings which take place five times per year. Last year saw 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. This year will focus on adopting an Acorn SEND review programme with the aim of refining practice for SEND in all of our schools.

SENCos were also able to access training from Rowdeford School over the course of last year. Five workshops were offered throughout the year by this Wiltshire special school and Acorn Education Trust secured two places for SENCos on each course. This excellent training has helped to further build expertise in schools.

What steps are put in place to support transition?

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.

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.

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.

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.

Which agencies work with Acorn Education Trust in schools?

- Wiltshire Council SEND Service
- Educational Psychology Service
- 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

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

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.

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.