

RMET GUIDANCE AND POLICIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Leadership Group Responsibility:	Assistant Headteacher/SENCo
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Reviewed:	September 2021

Background

As early as 1978, the Warnock Committee recommended that the majority of children with special educational needs (SEN) should be educated in mainstream schooling and the Education Act 1981 started to put this recommendation into practice. The Education Act 1993 took this principle further by enabling the Education Secretary to issue a code of practice for SEN. The code sets out guidance on all the aspects of SEN provision in mainstream and special schools, including the responsibilities of governing boards. Subsequent updates of the code have set the context for educating children with SEN firmly within mainstream education. Today it is believed that every child needs to fulfil their potential and that this must apply just as much to children with SEN as to everyone else. This principle is now enshrined throughout our educational system. Standards of attainment have risen across all groups of learners, including those with SEN. However, the gap in attainment between children with SEN and their peers is still too large.

In 2008, the then DCSF established a committee of enquiry under the chairmanship of Brian Lamb. After a thorough investigation, recommendations were made for change in four key areas:

- Children's outcomes at the heart of the system.
- A stronger voice for parents.
- A system with a greater focus on children's needs.
- A more accountable system that delivers better services.

These recommendations were accepted in full and led to new guidance being issued by the then DCSF in March 2010. Increasingly, particularly since an extended definition of the term 'disability' was enshrined in legislation, the needs of children with SEN are coupled with those of disabled children.

In March 2011, the coalition government issued an SEN and disability green paper entitled 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability'. The green paper proposed wide-ranging reforms and revision of existing SEN legislation and practice. This was followed by a major consultation exercise with a large range of interested parties. At the same time, a number of 'pathfinder' schools tested some of the proposals in the green paper.

An evaluation report of the pathfinders' experiences was published in 2013 and the outcomes of these findings have been incorporated into legislation. The Children and Families Act was passed in April 2014 and part three of that Act deals specifically with special educational needs. A new code of practice for special educational needs and disabilities came into force on 1 September 2014.

Key features of the SEN regulations and the SEN code of practice 2014 and accompanying guidance 2014 (as amended in January 2015)

Under the SEN code of practice 2014:

- Local authorities (LAs) must publish a local offer describing the facilities and support available in the area for children with SEN and disabilities.
- LAs must involve children, young people and their parents in developing SEN provision.
- A single assessment process has been introduced which is more streamlined, quicker, and which involves children, young people and families much more fully. This means replacing the previous system of statements and learning difficulty assessments (LDAs)

by a '0 to 25' Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) which extends the rights and protection of children and young people with SEN through their early years, primary, secondary and further education and beyond into adult life. Since April 2015, EHC plans are also extended to include children and young people under any form of statutory detention who have SEN or disabilities.

- The LAs can authorise an EHC plan assessment for children or young people referred to it and then draws up and puts in place the EHC plan.
- The intention is that there will be improved co-operation between all the various services available to and dealing with children and young people with SEN, and very specifically between educational, health care and social care agencies.
- There is an offer of a personal budget for families that have a child or children who have an EHC plan. This does not usually mean that there is money for the family to spend but rather that the LA draws up an individual SEN budget plan for that child, tailored to their needs, by which the school at which that child is educated will try to meet his/her specific requirements. However, if the decision has been taken, for whatever reason, that the child is to be home educated, then an arrangement is in place under the Children and Families Act 2014 by which direct payment may be made to the family.

The intended effect of the code of practice is to ensure that:

- Children's special educational needs are picked up early and support is routinely put in place quickly.
- Staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to provide the right support for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, wherever they are.
- Parents know they can reasonably expect their local school, college and LA to provide support, either through an in-school SEN support programme or through an EHC plan. Parents are more closely involved in decisions about services and have greater control over the services they and their family use:
 - Every family with an EHC plan has the right to a personal budget for their support.
 - Parents whose children have an EHC plan have the right to seek a place at any state-funded school, whether that is a maintained school or special school, an academy, free school or special academy.
 - Parents may also request a place at an institution operated by independent providers of special needs education.

Guidance

The January 2015 guidance is a long and comprehensive document of 287 pages.

The main headings contained within it are as follows:

- Principles.
- Impartial information, advice and support.
- Working together across education, health and care for joint outcomes.
- The local offer.
- Early years providers.
- Schools.
- Further education.
- Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years.
- EHC needs assessments and plans.
- Children and young people in specific circumstances.
- Resolving disagreements.
- Annex A – mental capacity.
- Annex B – improving practice and staff training in educational settings.

References

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, Part 4 Education (DDA and SENDA), Section 175 Health Safety and Welfare Education Act 2002, The Children Act 2004; The SEN strategy 2004; The Disability Discrimination Act 2005; The Equality Act 2010.

- The Education Act 1996; The National Curriculum 2000 with The Education Act 2002 enabling greater flexibility in disapplication; and provision for vocational training (2004) as amended in the new National Curriculum 2014.
- The Green Paper DFE 2011.
- The Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014.
- Special Educational Needs (detained persons) Regulations 2015.
- DFE guidance January 2015
- Funding for SEN and high needs students and young people March 2017.

RMET SEN POLICY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant appendix setting out more detail of the application of the policy in each school in RMET.

This policy is based on the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN code of practice plus accompanying regulations 2014.

Introduction

Children come to school with a variety of needs. Each child has a right to have those needs recognised and met. By taking account of those needs and differentiating our resources and practice, we provide an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils, whatever their disabilities. Not all learners with disabilities have special educational needs (SEN) and not all learners with SEN meet the official definition of disability, but this policy covers all of these learners.

Pupils have SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires additional support, that is, more than is normally offered in a classroom.

We are aware of the need for parental involvement in the support of our pupils and seek fully to involve parents and carers in the SEN process and provision. All of the children on the SEN register are integrated fully into mainstream classes and supported as appropriate by all staff members.

Objectives

The specific objectives of our SEN policy are as follows:

- To identify learners with SEN and disabilities and ensure that their needs are met.
- To ensure that parents are informed of their child's special needs and that there is effective communication between parents and school.
- To identify, assess, record and regularly review pupils' progress.
- To use the criteria identified by the Rochford report in order to record and reward pupil progress.
- To ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress and grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- To ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have equal opportunities to join in with all the activities of the school.
- To ensure that pupils express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnerships and successfully liaise with and involve outside agencies to act together jointly in the best interests of the child.
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To meet these objectives:

- Children with SEN will be identified as soon as is possible – we follow the approach outlined in the code of practice.
- According to their identified needs, children will be designated as needing:
 - SEN support within school as expressed in a school Individual Education Plan (IEP).
 - SEN provision supported by an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, drawn up by the local authority (LA) in liaison with local education, health care and social care providers who have contact with the family.
- The SEN register, which contains the names of all of the children with SEN, will be updated at least once a term.
- IEPs will be reviewed at least once a year with teachers, parents and carers, and involved agencies in attendance.
- Parents and carers will be kept informed at all times.
- Clear and up-to-date records will be kept at every stage.
- The LA has the responsibility to make EHC assessments and draw up EHC plans.
- The LA must work within prescribed time limits to produce an EHC plan (a maximum of 20 weeks).

- An annual review of the in-house SEN support or the EHC plan is arranged for the child and targets are updated and monitored.

Roles of the trustees, governors and staff

The success of the school's SEN policy will be judged against the objectives set out above. Annual success criteria will be reviewed, and the governing board will report annually on the efficacy of the policy and the effectiveness of the provision.

The designated SEN governor is named in the appendix for each school. This governor will keep an overview of the SEN provision being made. The governing board, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the school's general policy and approach to provision for SEN children, including the allocation of resources.

The headteacher is the designated responsible person in overall charge of the management of SEN provision and its funding. The headteacher works closely with the SEN co-ordinator. The SEN co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the provision and is named in the appendix for each school. The SEN co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Liaising with and advising colleagues.
- Co-ordinating the provision for children with SEN, whether with or without an EHC plan.
- Maintaining the SEN register.
- Overseeing the records of pupils with SEN.
- Liaising with parents and carers of children with SEN.
- Dealing with SEN/EHC administration.
- Liaising with and co-ordinating the other external agencies involved with SEN and EHC planning.
- Managing the teaching assistants and individual support assistants.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.

The class teacher has a responsibility towards the children with SEN in their class. The class teacher has responsibility for:

- Planning and delivering a differentiated curriculum and collecting and gathering information.
- Liaising with parents and carers as well as external agencies, teaching assistants, other support staff and colleagues, where necessary.
- Planning, monitoring and evaluating IEP and EHC plan targets.
- Evaluating progress of IEP and EHC plan pupils.
- Attending INSET and training sessions.

Teaching assistants (TAs) who are directly involved with a child or group of children will liaise with the class teacher, parents/carers and SEN co-ordinator in order to plan for, and meet, the needs of that child. Regular support and monitoring will be provided by the SEN co-ordinator. The school provides, wherever possible, TAs to support children with IEP and EHC plans in the classroom.

Admissions arrangements

We are legally obliged to admit any child whose EHC plan specifically names this school. One of the categories of the school's admissions policy also gives priority to children whose parents have not specifically named the school, but who may have particular physical, social or emotional needs, if it can be shown that the school's SEN support would have a beneficial effect on these children. The school still only has limited access for children with mobility problems, but has wheelchair access to most facilities.

Before admission, parents, carers and children visit the school and they are encouraged to voice any concerns they might have about their child's integration into school. Our current admissions form requests that parents or carers state any special needs that their child has.

Identification, assessment and provision

The school currently uses an internal system of base-line screening with all new children in the reception class. This is an early years literacy and numeracy screening programme that has proved successful in improving focus on children's literacy and numeracy skills.

When they are introduced in 2020, the school will also use the new DFE baseline tests. Our internal screening and intervention programme will be continued with the year 1 pupils at least until the new government programme is activated in 2021 and we may continue to use its results in tandem with the government tests. The information gathered from the screenings is further updated by the year 1 phonics screening, year 2 teacher assessments and by further teacher assessments in the years 3 to 5. These assessments are invaluable in highlighting needs and informing planning.

Education, health and care plans

If, at any stage, it is felt that a pupil is performing below the expected level for his/her age, we initiate an IEP, which often is sufficient extra SEN support. However, if in-school intervention programmes (SEN support) have not helped the pupil to make sufficient progress, then the school will liaise with parents and approach the LA to ask for an EHC assessment. The LA will decide as a result of the assessment whether an EHC plan is required. The plan is then drawn up in accordance with the facilities provided by the LA. (The LA has to produce a document called the 'Local Offer' which describes the support and facilities available.) Parents see a draft of the proposed plan. They have the right to state, if they wish, at which school they wish their child to receive their education. LAs are obliged to provide a place at the nominated school unless there are very good reasons not to do so.

Children's in-school IEPs or EHC plans are reviewed at least yearly by means of a consultation between class teachers, SEN co-ordinators, TAs, the LA plus any involved agencies, and parents and carers. Provision is also made for pupils to attend. Targets are reviewed and extended or updated as necessary. Informal monitoring of targets is on-going throughout the year.

The school discipline policy for pupils and its consistent approach and methods of recording concerns makes it an invaluable tool in highlighting individual emotional and behavioural problems.

Secondary transfer arrangements

- SEN records including details of EHC plans are transferred following agreed procedures.
- There are opportunities for all learners to visit their prospective secondary school.
- Learners with SEN are given additional visits to secondary providers if required, so that they can feel confident about the new situation with which they will be faced.
- Representatives from local secondary schools are available for consultation before the time of transfer, and may visit pupils at primary phase.
- The learner's IEP or EHC plan will be reviewed shortly before transfer to secondary school and amended if appropriate.
- The SEN co-ordinator from the receiving school often attends a final review meeting if that school has been specifically named in a child's EHC plan.

Evaluating success

The criteria for success of the SEN provision are as follows:

- SEN register to be updated at least once a term.
- IEP and EHC meetings to be held at least annually and all action highlighted implemented. All associated data or paperwork to be forwarded to parents and carers, involved agencies and safely stored online or in SEN files.
- Parents and carers to be kept regularly informed and involved.
- Parents and carers to be invited to IEP/EHC reviews at least once a year.
- Children themselves to be involved as much as possible, but also as appropriate.
- Relevant SEN data or paperwork to be stored or filed in a secure central system.

- External agencies to be involved as indicated in the EHC plan.
- Agencies to be managed effectively by the SEN co-ordinators.
- INSET/SEN updates passed on to colleagues where appropriate.
- TA monitoring sheets implemented by senior TA and passed on to the SEN co-ordinator.

The headteacher and governors use these success criteria to determine the success of the SEN provision.

SEN in-service training for staff

The SEN co-ordinator attends regular in-service training sessions held by the LA and additional courses and conferences as appropriate. Staff and governors are encouraged to attend all relevant INSET. INSET is provided for in the school's budget and school development plan.

In addition, the SEN co-ordinator holds INSET for teaching staff and their teaching assistants. Topics have included:

- The role of the TA.
- Listening to children read.
- Synthetic phonic work.
- Assessment and monitoring.
- Individual training sessions on children's IEPs or EHC plans.
- Precision teaching strategies.
- Basic skills.

Partnership with parents and carers

Arrangements for including parents and carers of children with SEN follow the procedures outlined in this policy:

- Parents and carers are kept informed, both formally and informally, through IEP/EHC plan meetings, parent surgeries, report evenings, phone calls, emails, letters and by word of mouth.
- The school encourages parents and carers to discuss any concerns regarding their children. This can be done through the class teacher or SEN co-ordinator (by arranging a meeting). Interpreters can be arranged for those parents and carers who would like it.
- Updated IEP/EHC plans to be sent to parents and carers at least once a year.
- Each year the governing board will include the following information on their school website:
 - The success of the SEN policy.
 - Any significant changes to the policy.
 - Any consultation with the LA and other schools and units.
 - How resources have been allocated for SEN provision, including the use of the pupil premium where relevant.

External agencies

A wide variety of agencies are available to support children with SEN and if the child has an EHC plan, the agencies involved (health care and social care) are required by legislation to work jointly in forming and carrying out that plan. The school liaises closely with a wide range of other colleagues and works with them as they provide therapy within the school. The school refers and liaises regularly with the following services:

- The school doctor/nurse.
- The educational psychologist.
- Attendance Advisory Service.
- The speech and language service.
- Occupational therapy service.
- Visually and hearing impaired support service.
- Child and family psychiatry service.
- Autism outreach service.

We would seek to co-operate and liaise with other mainstream and special schools in whatever way appropriate and necessary, particularly at any transfer stage.

Arrangements for complaints

Any complaints regarding SEN provision should initially be discussed with the class teacher or the SEN co-ordinator. If this fails to provide a satisfactory answer, the issue should then be raised with the headteacher. If this fails to resolve the complaint, a group of three governors, including the governor who has oversight of the school's SEN provision and who will act as chair, will hear the complaint with the headteacher and the SEN co-ordinator giving their case. Where a child has an EHC plan, the LA is obliged to have in place processes for dealing with complaints, disagreements and mediation, which are described in its Local Offer.

RMET SEN POLICY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This policy is based on the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEN code of practice and regulations 2014 and the accompanying DFE guidance 2015.

At our school, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to secure the best possible progress for all pupils whatever their needs or abilities. This policy is intended to address students with special educational needs (SEN) and students who have disabilities.

Basic information about our SEN provision

The legal definition of special educational provision for children aged two or over is as follows: *'Educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in school (other than special schools).'*

At our school, we interpret this to be:

'Students have SEN if they have a learning or behavioural difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.'

'Students with a disability have SEN if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them that is anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in school.'

Objectives

The specific objectives of our SEN policy are:

- To identify students with SEN and disabilities and ensure that their needs are met.
- To ensure that parents are informed of their child's special needs and that there is effective communication between parents and school.
- To ensure that all students make the best possible progress.
- To ensure that students with SEN and disabilities join in with all the activities of the school.
- To ensure that students express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnership and successfully liaise with outside agencies, especially in the cases of students who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan with health and social care providers.
- To ensure that progress made by our SEN pupils is recognised and recorded. A new system for doing this follows the Rochford report and is being developed by the DFE.

Role of Governors

The efficacy of the school's SEN policy and practice is judged against the objectives set out above. The following procedures take place at least annually:

- Success criteria will be reviewed annually.
- Where appropriate, new success criteria will be determined by the headteacher and governing board.
- The governing board will report annually on the successful implementation of the policy.
- The governing board will report annually on the effectiveness of the provision made.
- The governing board will ensure that appropriate special educational provision is made for all pupils identified as in need of it.
- The governing board will ensure provision maps detail the range of support made in the school each year in response to identified needs.

The governing board co-operates fully with the local authority (LA) admissions criteria. The governors' admission policy has due regard for the guidance in the code of practice.

SEN leadership

The SEN co-ordinator and inclusion manager for the school are named in the relevant appendix to this policy.

The member of the governing board who takes a special interest in SEN is named in the relevant appendix to this policy.

The governing board as a whole is responsible for the provision for pupils with SEN.

Specific responsibilities of SEN leadership include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for all students with SEN.
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers.
- Managing teaching assistants.
- Overseeing the records of all students with SEN.
- Liaising with parents.
- Contributing to in-service training of staff.
- Liaising with the LA in initiating and supporting students who already have or are in need of an EHC plan.

Admission arrangements

We welcome students with SEN with an EHC plan in our mainstream school. We fully support the inclusivity principles underpinning the code of practice.

Applications from parents of students with SEN but no EHC plan will be considered on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria. We have a carefully constructed programme of SEN support in place for these students, each of whom will have an individual education plan (IEP).

Identification and assessment of students with SEN

Our school is committed to early identification of SEN and adopts a focused response to meeting special needs in line with the code of practice. It is based on the assumption that students' SEN requirements fall into the following four broad areas:

- Communication and interaction.
- Cognition and learning.
- Emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- Sensory and physical difficulties.

A range of evidence is collated through teacher assessment and monitoring and consultation with the SEN co-ordinator/area inclusion co-ordinator, to decide whether additional and/or different provision is necessary or if an EHC assessment is needed.

Allocation of resources to and amongst students with SEN

- We recognise the legal duty on governors to inform parents when special educational provision is being made at school for a student.
- We inform parents/carers when special educational support is being made through face-to-face meetings with the SEN co-ordinator/inclusion manager. If such meetings are not possible, then alternative arrangements are made including electronic conferencing.
- We encourage parents/carers to contribute their knowledge and understanding of their child, and to raise any concerns they may have about their child's needs and the provision which is being made for them as part of our continuing dialogue.
- We ensure that the significance of individual education plans (IEPs) and EHC plans is carefully explained to parents and students.
- We allot additional resources from the pupil premium funding to any SEN student who is eligible.
- We make our best endeavours to provide for students with SEN by drawing up an IEP for each student. We adopt a graduated response in order to help students with SEN, recognising that there is a continuum of special educational needs.
- Where students' progress is not adequate, we confer with the student, parents and staff to request the LA for an EHC assessment. An EHC plan is then drawn up and jointly agreed. We then work with the other plan commissioners to ensure that it is followed, monitored and reviewed.

Arrangements for providing access for students with SEN

We take full account of the Equality Act 2010 and other linked legislation in describing arrangements for providing access for students with SEN and vulnerable or disabled students to a balanced and broadly based curriculum.

(See accessibility plans.)

Criteria/methods for evaluating success of education provided for students with SEN

Our policy provides clear and comprehensive evaluation criteria, which include:

- Successful integration of students at points of transition.
- Parental comments and feedback.
- Successful collaboration with external agencies for students with or without an EHC plan.
- The maintenance of accurate, up-to-date records by the SEN co-ordinator/area inclusion co-ordinator and other staff.
- Evidence from monitoring classroom practice by the school's senior management/ SEN co-ordinator/area inclusion co-ordinator.
- Analysis of student tracking data and test results (for individuals and groups of students).
- Value added data for students on the school's SEN record of action (for example, to show a link between financial input and student outcomes, especially if the student receives the pupil premium).
- Monitoring of procedures and practice by the designated SEN Governor.
- School's self-evaluation.
- Evidence from Ofsted inspection reports.
- School improvement plan.
- Bespoke progress methods following the recommendations of the Rochford report.

Complaints procedure

Our school's complaint procedures are set out on the school website. Each child's form tutor/year head works closely with parents at all stages in his/her education and should always be the first port of call in case of any difficulty.

Parents/carers of students with SEN or disabilities, whose concerns cannot be resolved by the usual school procedures, can request independent resolution. Any student with an EHC plan is entitled under the LA's Local Offer to receive information on action to take concerning complaints, disagreements and how to access mediation if needed. The school can make further information about the process available on request.

In-service training/continuous professional development (CPD)

Our school makes an annual audit of the needs for all staff taking into account school priorities as well as individual professional needs. The school uses funding each year to meet identified training needs. Particular support is given to NQTs and other new members of staff. Our SEN co-ordinator/inclusion manager has responsibility for prioritising the training needs of staff.

Arrangements for partnership with parents of students with SEN

We recognise how essential it is to actively seek to work with parents and value the contribution they make in terms of their unique strengths, knowledge and experience.

Our school works closely with the parent partnership service. Information about this service is always available from the SEN co-ordinator/area inclusion co-ordinator.

Parents of any student identified with SEN, whether they have an EHC plan or not, may contact the parent partnership service for independent support and advice.

Student welfare

We endeavour to show sensitivity, honesty and mutual respect in encouraging students to share concerns, discuss strategies and see themselves as equal partners with the school. This reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We ensure that all students have a mechanism for expressing their views through the school council/student voice.

The Trust are aware that students with SEN can sometimes be more vulnerable in terms of safeguarding. If you wish to seek further information, please refer to The Government guidelines 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' and our RMET safeguarding policy. Please see links below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf

<https://www.rmet.org/page/?title=Policies&pid=17>

Links with other services such as health, social care and voluntary agencies etc

We work jointly with health and social care professionals in supporting all our students with EHC plans. But we also liaise with these and other agencies as appropriate for all our students with SEN.

APPENDIX A – RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL – Reviewed September 2021

Aims

Riverside Primary School is proud to be recognised as a 'Flagship' school under the Inclusion Quality Mark scheme. We are committed to ensuring that all children, regardless of their level of need, can access the curriculum with a suitable level of challenge, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. We aim to promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference within all children, ensuring that everyone in the Riverside community feels included, safe, valued and respected. We expect that all children and adults are treated as individuals and are not discriminated against on the basis of academic ability, culture, race, religion, disability, social background, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other characteristic. We acknowledge the school's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (see also Equality policy).

Identification of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

According to the 2015 SEND Code of Practice (DfE/DoH 2015), "A pupil has SEN 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." (Para 6.15.) Children will be placed on the school SEND Register if they require this sort of provision due to a diagnosed condition (eg. ASD), because they are accessing additional support services such as Speech and Language Therapy, or because they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age. Criteria for identification of a pupil's difficulties could include lack of progress in the curriculum, continued emotional or behavioural difficulties including mental health needs, or medical and physical problems which require support.

The Code categorises four broad areas of need:

- ~ Communication and Interaction
- ~ Cognition and Learning
- ~ Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- ~ Physical and Sensory

It is recognised that many children will have needs which fall into more than one of these areas.

The Code of Practice states that "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." (Para 6.36.) However, teachers will liaise with the Inclusion Manager regarding suitable intervention programmes for supporting children with additional needs. If it is felt that a child's needs are such that s/he should be identified as having SEND, the Inclusion Manager will consult with staff, parents/carers and the child themselves if appropriate, to identify the child's strengths and areas for development, and make decisions about extra support that can be offered. This support will take the form of the 'graduated approach', whereby teachers work with the child and their parents to assess what the needs of the child are, plan the interventions that will be put into place, carry these out and then review the impact of these on the child before adapting them as necessary.

Children on the SEND register will fall into one of two categories: those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and those receiving school SEN Support. Children in the first category will have EHCPs setting out their needs, the support required and the outcomes that should be a focus for all staff working with the child, both short and long term. These may include targets which are set and assessed by external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists. Children in the second category may also have plans and/or targets from external professionals, or may be working on targets set by us in school. In

some cases, these children may have a School SEN Support Agreement in place, setting out their targets and the means by which pupils may achieve them. If such an agreement is deemed necessary, parents/carers will be involved in deciding and reviewing the relevant targets. If a child requires substantial support at a higher level, a School-Based Plan may be drawn up, which looks in more detail at a child's needs and draws together advice from the different professionals involved. A provision map may be used to detail and cost the support being received, particularly if the support is at a high enough level to require an application for additional 'top-up' funding from the Local Authority.

The impact of any interventions used at all levels of SEND will be analysed by assessing the child's starting points, tracking their progress against the targets and evaluating outcomes to establish the effectiveness of the intervention. Should an intervention prove ineffective, it will be revised or replaced.

If a child receiving school SEN Support continues to make limited progress for an extended period, or demonstrates significant needs that cannot be reasonably provided for from the resources available to the school, we may apply for him/her to be formally assessed with a view to providing him/her with an EHCP. Parents also have the right to apply to the local authority for this assessment. The decision to carry out Statutory Assessment and/or issue an EHCP rests with the Medway SEN Panel.

Each class has its own SEND file which contains information about children's needs and their current plans/targets, which all adults working in the class should have access to.

Provision for pupils with SEND

We aim to identify and remove barriers in every aspect of school life. Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate teaching strategies are in place to meet the needs of all learners, including the gifted and talented, and for reviewing these strategies on a regular basis. Good practice will include:

- carefully adapted learning tasks
- flexible grouping of children
- access to special resources/modified equipment where needed
- use of alternative means of recording eg. laptops or use of scribe
- additional adult support for specific activities and/or to deliver interventions, both in and out of class.

A Teaching Assistant's primary role is to support learning, encouraging and enabling children to make progress and facilitating independence. It is not ideal for children to be supported on a 1:1 basis for prolonged periods, and it is not our policy to provide such support, but we do consider using this as a possible strategy in extenuating circumstances where the child's level of need requires it. The aim is always to equip children with the skills and confidence to be able to work without 1:1 support and be more independent in the long run.

Class teachers are responsible for directing Teaching Assistants to support learning. They should ensure that TAs are aware of what children will be expected to learn in each lesson and liaise with them to consider how the needs of individuals can be met. TAs should be involved in assessing the learning outcomes to help evaluate pupil progress, and their observations should feed into future planning. They may support individuals or groups, both in class during normal lessons and out of class in the delivery of specific intervention programmes. The impact of any interventions will be carefully tracked and evaluated by the adults involved.

Children with SEND will often receive support in addition to that which is provided through quality first teaching, curriculum differentiation and classroom based support.

Examples of this might include:

- Speech and Language programmes

- Occupational Therapy, physiotherapy or motor skills programmes
- Social Skills groups
- Emotional wellbeing support or therapeutic work.

The majority of this support will be provided 'in-house' by school staff, but where required the school may seek advice or buy in services from outside agencies, including:

- Medway Educational Psychology Service
- Health Services
- Physical and Sensory Service
- Children's therapy services (Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy)
- Medway Young People's Wellbeing Service (NELFT, formerly CAMHS)
- Outreach from other schools eg. Marlborough Centre, Bradfields
- Kent Association for the Blind
- Attendance (ASSAA)
- EAL – English as an Additional Language – team
- Traveller Education

Further information regarding support services can be found in the school's SEN Information Report and the Medway Local Offer, which is available at:

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/localoffer>

All staff undertake regular training with regard to SEND, which may be delivered by the Inclusion Manager or by external professionals. All staff have particular expertise in working with children who have ASD and there are specialists within the TA team who have additional qualifications in specific areas of SEND, such as supporting Visual Impairment or Speech and Language. We liaise with the other services listed above to procure specialist training for other specific needs that may arise.

Children with additional needs are able to access the 'Rainbow Room' environment, which is designed to offer opportunities for sensory stimulation and regulation whilst also providing a safe space where children can cool down at times when their anxieties are impacting on learning, or creating a risk to themselves or their peers. Children can use the Rainbow Room facility while they return to the calm, alert state required to take part in lessons with their class. Rainbow Room and its attached outside space can also be accessed at play and lunch times by any children who find the busy nature of the main playground overwhelming or distressing. When appropriate, children are allowed to choose a suitable buddy to accompany them while in these environments. We also offer 'Sunshine Room' – a small, nurture-style environment which provides the opportunity for children who are not coping in their mainstream classroom to complete learning activities in a smaller, less busy space. It is important to note that the use of Sunshine Room is always intended to be a short-term strategy, with the aim of enabling the child to return to learning in their mainstream class for the majority of the time. We are also in the process of developing 'Starlight Room', which will provide an immersive sensory space connected to an outdoor sensory garden.

Special Provisions

Riverside has a provision for children with EHCPs where their primary need has been identified as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (see Riverside ASD Provision Admissions Criteria). These children are educated in mainstream classes, alongside their peers, and have access to a wide range of resources and support from members of staff who are trained to work with autistic learners. (See Appendix 1 for policy regarding transition into the provision.)

Riverside also has a provision for children who have EHCPs where their primary need has been identified as Visual Impairment (see Riverside VI Provision Admissions Criteria.) These children are educated in mainstream classes, alongside their peers, and have access to support from staff who are trained to work with visually impaired learners, including the use of Braille. Additionally, the children are provided with specialist equipment and assistive

technology as appropriate, to enable them to access the curriculum. This provision is supported by the VI Advisory Teachers from the Physical and Sensory Service.

Transition

Children joining the school in Year R: The Inclusion Manager and/or FS Lead will liaise with parents/carers, pre-school settings and external services where applicable, to ensure that all relevant information is shared prior to the child starting school. This may include visits to pre-school settings to observe children and discuss the support they will require on entry. Enhanced transition packages are put in place where necessary.

Children transferring to secondary school: We will complete the Medway transition forms and the Inclusion Manager will liaise with parents/carers and colleagues in secondary schools to share relevant information. Where children have EHCPs, secondary SENCOs are invited to attend their Year 6 annual review meeting. Enhanced transition packages are put in place where necessary.

Children transferring to or from other schools at other times: The Inclusion Manager will liaise with her counterpart in the transferring or receiving school to share the relevant initial information. Office staff will ensure that all hard copy information, including the child's SEND records, is passed on.

Gifted and Talented

A child who is capable of functioning at a level significantly beyond that expected for their age group may be defined as gifted or talented. The term 'gifted' is generally used to refer to ability in academic subjects, whilst 'talented' is applied to children who excel at creative or physical activities. If a child is so advanced in their learning that they require challenges significantly over and above those of their peers, class teachers will provide these opportunities through carefully adapted tasks. Through our Multi-Academy Trust we have links with Rainham Mark Grammar School, who are able to provide support regarding working with gifted learners. In addition, the school regularly identifies opportunities to provide curricular and extra-curricular challenges for those with particular skills, such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) challenges like the Young Eco-Engineers project.

Exclusions

The decision to exclude a child from school will only be taken (and authorised) by the Headteacher, and will always take into account the effect of a child's additional needs on their behaviour. Exclusion is a rare event and is only applied on the grounds of behaviour which is of an extremely serious nature. Following exclusion, parents are required to attend a re-integration meeting, where future steps are discussed prior to their child returning to school (see Exclusions Policy).

Roles and responsibilities

The Governors are responsible for maintaining the appropriate staffing and funding for SEND provision and monitoring the implementation of the school's inclusion policy. Mr Peter Aldous is the named Governor for SEND.

The Inclusion Manager is Mrs Zoe Huggett. She attained the National Award for SEN Co-ordination in November 2016.

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the Inclusion Manager, is responsible for the day to day management of all aspects of the school's work including provision for children with SEND.

The Local Authority is responsible for maintaining the EHCPs of children in Medway and should be involved in annual reviews of plans, updating them as necessary.

Concerns and Complaints

If any concerns arise regarding SEND support in school, these should initially be brought to the attention of the class teacher and/or Inclusion Manager. Should these remain unresolved the Complaints Procedure of the Trust details the next steps that should be taken.

Appendix 1 – Transition into the Riverside Special Provisions.

Some children join the Riverside Provisions in September of Year R, in which case their transition is supported alongside that of the mainstream children who are also starting school for the first time. Children entering our ASD Provision other than at the normal entry point in Year R have often struggled to cope in previous mainstream schools, and on some occasions they may have been home educated for a period of time while their EHCP was being finalised.

At whatever point the child joins us, we will carefully plan a transition programme tailored to the individual child and his/her needs, to support them as they join our school and ensure their wellbeing. The programmes are likely to include some/all of the following:

- ~ Inclusion Manager to give a school tour and discuss key needs with child and parents; when placement is confirmed create initial Pupil Profile and brief staff. Information will also be sought from any previous school or nursery.
- ~ Child to visit new classroom; Inclusion Manager to liaise with class teacher to organise specific resources needed (eg. visual timetable, move 'n' sit cushion, First/Then card) and set up individual workstation if required.
- ~ Child to meet key people eg. CT, TAs and be provided with a Social Story regarding these to take home.
- ~ Child to attend on a reduced timetable to begin with if required, gradually building up to being in school for the whole day as appropriate.
- ~ Child to spend time in Rainbow Room if needed to settle each morning, before going to class when ready.
- ~ Child to be added to any required intervention groups, such as Social Skills, OT etc.
- ~ Review of transition at the end of each week to assess how s/he is coping. Inclusion Manager to discuss with parents/carers any concerns and changes needed.

We would hope that after a short induction period (possibly up to a term), the child would be ready to come into school and join their class like everyone else. S/he should be able to work in the mainstream classroom for the vast majority of the time, with the support of resources/ equipment and TAs when required. Should we feel that s/he is still requiring a great deal of additional support, we will draw up a personalised plan. If more than 3 terms should pass and the child is still highly unsettled and not coping, then in consultation with parents/carers we would consider holding an early Annual Review meeting to look at whether the placement is appropriate.

Appendix 2 – Covid-19 Pandemic: Contingency Planning

From September 2021, most of the previous Covid-19 measures that had applied to schools were removed. However the measures outlined below will remain part of our contingency plan in the event of any further outbreak or school closures.

The school will be adhering to any current government guidance regarding the pandemic. We recognise that children with SEND may have more difficulty than other children in following this guidance, for example with regard to social distancing. Their needs may also mean that close contact is required, for example to provide intimate care. Children with a significant level of need will have an individual risk assessment completed with their parents, which details the measures to be taken and any particular strategies to be used to support safe practice.

All endeavours will be made to ensure that the interventions required to meet children's individual needs and targets are provided, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary. However, we recognise that some interventions or support programmes may need to be adapted or, as a last resort, suspended depending on the school's ability to provide adequate staffing. There may also be restrictions on the equipment and resources available, in line with the government guidance (for example, use of certain soft play equipment used for OT may be prohibited). Where children need to work with different adults outside of their main class, including external visitors or therapists, this will be carried out in line with government guidance as far as is reasonably practicable.

In the event of a school closure, children will be provided with home learning appropriate to their level of attainment. Children with EHCPs will have additional risk assessments carried out in line with Local Authority guidance, to assess whether their needs can be safely met at home. The school will maintain contact with parents/carers throughout and offer additional support as needed. We will endeavour to still carry out Annual Reviews within the statutory timescales, using remote communication where possible.

SEN Transport is provided by Medway Council and the contracted taxi company has responsibility for ensuring Covid-safe practices on the vehicles used.