



# The Holt School

## Special Educational Needs Policy

**June 2019**

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## **Purpose of this document**

This document sets out how The Holt School provides support to ensure that children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can access an education which is inclusive and responsive to their individual needs. It describes our graduated response to providing support which will enable all our pupils to succeed and have high aspirations.

This document describes the national requirements introduced by The Children and Families Act 2014 and how The Holt School will meet the requirements through the funding made available to us through our budget and through other funding streams. It also sets out under what circumstances we would refer to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

## **The link between special educational needs and disability**

Many children and young people who have special educational needs may also have a disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. In this context 'long term' means over a year and 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer and sensory impairments. Many children and young people who have these medical/health conditions will not have special educational needs and their safe and full access to learning and progress will be covered by the duties set out in The Equality Act, including the requirement on all public bodies to make reasonable adjustments.

This means that, where a child or young person has a disability, the way in which their needs are met will depend on the impact the disability has on their access to education. If, with the appropriate non-discriminatory practices and reasonable adjustments, they can access education and make progress commensurate with their peers by accessing the resources 'normally available' to their educational setting, there will not be a need for them to be protected by an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC). Some of these children and young people with long term health conditions should have a Health Plan which addresses their safety, health and wellbeing whilst in the early years, school or college setting. The Department for Education (DfE) have published new guidance, 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions' which can be found at on the school website.

<http://www.holtschool.co.uk/school-life/school-policies>

## 1. Meeting special educational needs at The Holt School

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. The Code of Practice (2014) has the following definitions in paragraphs xiii to xvi

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

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv when they reach compulsory school age, or would do if special educational provision was not made for them

The Code of Practice defines special educational provision in paragraph xv as:

Special educational provision for children aged two and over is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally available for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, and mainstream post 16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

Although the needs of children and young people often cross more than one 'area of need', the COP uses four main categories of need

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

At The Holt school we will ensure that we meet the needs of all our pupils through the provision we have available and the advice and support of other specialist professionals and practitioners.

## 2. How we identify pupils who are having difficulties with learning and/or special educational needs

It is the responsibility of all schools to provide good teaching and holistic support for **all** students. We believe that it is particularly important that students who have most difficulty with their learning are taught by good quality teachers and in our school we believe that all teachers are teachers of pupils who have special educational needs.

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they: achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and; make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENCO should consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This should include high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials. For higher levels of need, schools should have arrangements in place to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals

Code of Practice 6.38

On entry to The Holt School all students complete a cognitive ability test. Where our assessment has identified that a pupil is experiencing difficulties we follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review' which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them. This is known as the 'graduated response' and we ensure that:

- the class teachers are made aware of the students' needs and are supported by the school's SENCO to analyse the areas of need
- the analysis includes data on progress, attainment and approaches to learning and the views of the pupil and their parent/carers and advice from any other support staff
- where behaviour is an area of concern The Holt School will draw upon analysis of Antecedents, Behaviour and Consequences
- we plan provision which can remove the barriers to learning for the pupil using evidence based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions
- we provide support which may include differentiation, additional programmes, small group and/or individual support
- the class teacher retains the responsibility for the learning of the pupil even if the pupil is receiving support away from the rest of the class, for example, in a small group
- we review the pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to be made in consultation with the pupil and their parent/carers

- where progress is limited we take advice from external specialists /practitioners and discuss their input, advice and support with parents and all staff involved
- where assessment indicates that specialist services are required, we make referrals promptly

The SENCO is :- Mrs Elizabeth Griffiths

Contact details :- Learninglink@holt.wokingham.sch.uk

The Senior Leadership Link is:- Mrs A Kennedy (Co-Headteacher )

### 3. Involving parents in their child's education

Parents are key partners in their children's education. At The Holt School we will:

- always discuss any concerns we have with the pupil's parents at the earliest point
- listen and hear what parents say
- identify the outcomes that we wish to achieve
- plan any interventions with parents
- meet with parents to review their child's interventions and progress
- offer honesty, openness and transparency about what we can deliver
- make sure parents know who to contact if they have any concerns

Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, the parents **must** be formally notified, although parents should have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above. The teacher and the SENCO should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.

Code of Practice 6.48

Where children and young people are 'looked after' by the local authority we have an additional role as we are all corporate parents.

At The Holt School we:

- Regularly monitor the progress of the student
- have an up to date Personal Education Plan which is easily understood by everyone involved
- ensure close working with the specialist services who support looked after children
- normalise life experience wherever possible
- ensure our looked after children, especially those with SEN are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities

#### **4. Arrangements for consulting children and young people with SEN and involving them in their education**

The Children and Families Act is clear that:

- all children and young people need to be supported to develop aspirations for their future lives as active members of their community
- all children and young people have the right to have their voice heard
- children and young people should be involved in discussions about their learning, progress and how provision is made

For students who have special educational needs we ensure that:

- All students are encouraged and supported to make their views known. Strategies we use may include, written comments, talking to a preferred adult, friend or mentor
- any interventions or strategies will be explained and discussed with students
- all students will be encouraged to monitor and judge their own progress in a positive and supportive environment
- reviews of progress are 'person centred' i.e. they will have the pupil, their aspirations and needs at the centre of the review
- reviews are always outcome focussed outcomes reflect what is important to, and for, the pupil

#### **5. How we assess and review progress**

Class teachers regularly complete review grades for every student in their class. This is closely monitored by the Head of Year and SENCo who are able to quickly identify areas of difficulty and work with the class teacher to ensure appropriate and timely interventions are put into place.

The Holt School runs an alternative curriculum for students who enter year 7 working below national average age expectations. Students are withdrawn from humanities subjects to allow an intensive literacy programme to be delivered. Progress in reading and writing is reviewed on a half termly basis. Computer based assessment tools allow us to identify areas of concern and tailor the provision to the individual student's needs.

## 6. Preparing for transition

Transition is ever present in our planning for pupils as we are constantly aware of the skills pupils will need in order to access the next part of their learning.

When students are transferring from year 6 to year 7, key staff visit the primary school setting to answer questions that students may have. Students are then invited to attend an induction day to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. Additional visits can be arranged for vulnerable and anxious students.

For students with complex learning needs the transition progress can start from year 4 onwards. The Holt School are happy to meet with teachers, parents and students to ensure that all provision is correct and in place ready for the student's arrival.

The transition from key stage 3 to 4 encourages students to consider their future career choices. An options evening is held, where students and parents are given the opportunity to discuss this. If the students had a statement/ EHCP a careers adviser will be invited to attend the annual review. The school has an on-site careers adviser.

Students are well prepared for the transition beyond key stage 4 by attendance at whole school events and personalised support and guidance about future options. The school strives to ensure that all students are happy in their chosen post 16 destination.

## 7. The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN and how adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment

To support children, young people and their families the Children and Families Act requires all local authorities to set out a local offer. The Local Offer is a description of support and services which are available to children and young people who have SEND, and their families, how services can be accessed and any criteria for accessing them. It is the opportunity to bring together in one place, information about provision, including how this can be accessed from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers including voluntary organisations. Wokingham's Local Offer can be accessed on <http://info.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/info/home.page> The Holts School's local offer is displayed on the school website.

Wokingham Local Authority has set out what it expects should be available in all mainstream settings to meet the needs of children and young people without recourse to a statutory EHC needs assessment. This document, 'SEN Support: what Wokingham expects can be reasonably provided by education settings from the funding available to them' can be found on the Local Offer page.

The Holt School has a dedicated Learning Support department staffed by the SENCO, two specialist SEN teachers, a HLTA and a team of Learning Support



Assistants. All students have different needs and therefore adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment are tailored to the individual's needs.

In Key Stage 3 and 4 Learning Support Assistants are deployed to ensure that students are able to access and participate in mainstream subjects. Priority is given to students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). LSAs are trained to encourage independence and promote a love of learning and curiosity in our students.

In Key Stage 3 students working on or below national age expectations in English follow an alternative curriculum. Students are withdrawn from humanities subjects to follow an intensive literacy programme. The same curriculum subject content is covered but with a large emphasis being placed on improving literacy levels. Entry to the curriculum is based on year 6 teacher assessments and recommendations. Progress is regularly reviewed with the aim of integrating students back into the mainstream curriculum.

In Key Stage 4 there is a curriculum support option block that delivers additional support for English, maths and science. Students may also opt to study the ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 1 and Level 2. This qualification supports students to develop essential life and employment skills.

Where appropriate, students will be offered a reduced timetable and LSA support.

### **The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist support will be secured**

All staff –

We have access to training through Wokingham School Hub and can access training provided in groups or bespoke training from Wokingham's Educational Psychology Service. We meet with our EP to plan our training needs on a termly basis. Through our school cluster group we can identify training needs and plan training in a cost effective way as well as using our cluster meetings as a professional forum to share expertise across schools.

The role of our SENCO

- The SENCO is a qualified teacher working at the school
- The SENCO holds the postgraduate National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination
- The SENCO holds the Certificate of Competence in Psychometric testing (CPT3A)

Our SENCO has responsibility in school for:

- With the head teacher and governing body, determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school.

- Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies.
- Being aware of the provision in the Local Offer and working with professionals to provide a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
- liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the head teacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

In order to carry out these duties effectively, as a school we ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This includes providing the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within a school.

## 9. Evaluating the effectiveness of our provision

Most children and young people who have SEN respond to quality first teaching. Where individual or different interventions are used these will be evidence based and our progress tracking allows us to verify that the interventions are effective.

Individual pupils respond to different interventions and approaches in different ways. Where we try a different approach or intervention we will measure its value by measuring the outcomes achieved by the pupil and take into account the cost of the intervention.

## 10. Inclusive practice

We ensure that all our pupils, but particularly those with SEN are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities. Every effort where possible is

made to integrate all SEN students in main stream classes and in the wider school community activities.

Attendance of SEN students at school clubs and on school trips is monitored by the curriculum support department.

## 11. The social and emotional development of our pupils

To ensure that the social and emotional needs of SEN students are met we provide:

- Supervised lunch and break clubs
- Social skills lessons as part of the ICA curriculum
- Learning Mentors
- A Learning Support Specialist with responsibility for emotional wellbeing. Courses run by external agencies to reduce exam stress
- Access to a school nurse
- Student support team
- Behaviour support counsellor
- ARC counselling
- A variety of extra-curricular activities organised by different departments.
- Day and residential trips
- Cross curricular day
- Form tutor

## 12. Working with other professionals and practitioners

In some cases, outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. These professionals should liaise with the school to help inform the assessments. Where professionals are not already working with school staff the SENCO should contact them if the parents agree.

Code of Practise 6.47

At The Holt School we are committed to working with other professionals and practitioners to ensure that we maximise the impact of our interventions whilst minimising duplication and disruption for pupils, families and practitioners. In order to do this we

- listen to parents to ensure we know which services they use and are valued by them
- ensure that we contact all practitioners working with our pupils to invite them to relevant meetings and reviews
- use person centred approaches with all our pupils who have SEN to ensure that interventions are coordinated and so add extra value
- value the contribution of all

- engage with local authority services in a timely and professional way
- we meet with our educational psychologist for a termly planning meeting to look at the needs of individual pupils, staff training and effectively tailoring our provision

### **Arrangements for handling complaints about SEN provision**

We know that all parents want the best for their child and we will always seek to resolve any concerns quickly. Where parents have a concern about the provision being made initially they should contact the SENCO. If this does not resolve the situation the school complaints policy can be found on the school website

### **How funding is made available to school to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs at SEN Support stage**

Our school receives funding through a formula basis using indicators agreed by the School Forum. This funding, which is known as elements 1 and 2 allows us to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils who have special educational needs including those who require up to six thousand pounds of individual support. Further information on funding for SEN can be found in the document 'Funding to Support Learners who have Special Educational Needs'.

Whilst elements 1 and 2 will meet the needs of most children and young people with special educational needs in our school, those with the most exceptional needs may require additional funding. This funding stream is called Element 3 or 'top up' and comes from a funding stream which is part of The High Needs Block held by the local authority on behalf of pupils and students in Wokingham aged 0-25. This funding, which provides resources to an Education Health and Care plan can also be accessed through the exceptional needs funding mechanism.

### **Exceptional Needs Funding**

Wokingham has developed an Exceptional Needs funding model which can provide the additional resources to meet learning needs in mainstream settings. The Holt school is part of a cluster of schools who discuss individual cases where the schools feels that the support needs for that pupil are exceptional. We also use our cluster meetings as a professional support forum to share ideas and expertise about how different approaches, provisions and interventions could be used effectively.

We would apply for this funding stream particularly where the learning needs of the child/young person are exceptional but do not require a special school or significant levels of intervention from health or social care. Further information about exceptional needs funding can be found in the document 'Exceptional needs funding: Procedures and guidance'

## When would school 'refer to the Local Authority'?

'Referring a child to the local authority' means that the person who submits the referral believes that the child's needs are so complex that they cannot be met from the resources which are normally available to a school. In the past any child who underwent a statutory assessment may have received a Statement of SEN which set out their needs, the targets they needed to achieve and the resources which would be provided to help them achieve them. The Children and Families Act has replaced Statements of SEN for any new referrals from September 2014 with a new process called Education, Health and Care needs assessments. These needs assessments may result in an Education Health and Care Plan.

Education, Health and Care plans are required by those pupils/students:

- where the resources required to meet their special educational needs, **cannot** reasonably be provided from the resources **normally available** to mainstream providers and
- who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age

Low attainment does not automatically indicate a need for an EHC needs assessment as the progress made may still represent adequate progress relative to the child/young person's ability.

When they receive a referral all local authorities are expected to consider

'-whether there is evidence that, despite the early years, school or post-16 institution has taken relevant and purposeful action to identify and meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress.'

Code of Practice (2014) 9.14

In all circumstances the school will ensure that, prior to submitting a referral to the local authority it has:

- used all the resources available within the last 12 months
- made any appropriate health referrals
- IEPs/provision plans which are relevant to the presenting need. Targets are SMART, reviewed and show progression.
- made provision which is appropriate to the child, young person and specific to them/ their needs
- made provision which has been evidence based and cost effective

- undertaken an assessment of unmet needs where appropriate
- fully and appropriately involved parents
- involved relevant professionals/practitioners have been involved in the last 12 months
- evidenced that their advice/strategies being followed and evaluated