



## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY**

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<b>Owner</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>

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## Statement of intent and the school's values

Heath Farm School believes that all students are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood.

This policy outlines the framework the school will use in meeting its duties, obligations and principal equality values in providing an appropriate high-quality education for students with SEND.

Through successful implementation of this policy, the school aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

The school will work with the LA, or equivalent, in ensuring that the following principles underpin this policy:

- The involvement of students and their parents in decision-making.
- The early identification of students' needs and early intervention to support them.
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High-quality provision to meet the needs of students with SEND.
- Greater choice and control for students and their parents over their support.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of this policy, a student is defined as having SEND if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.
- A disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age in mainstream settings.
- Special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream settings.

### **1. How does the school know when a young person needs extra help?**

Heath Farm School offers a unique and stimulating environment where every student is able to make outstanding progress in their personal development and enjoy success in their education.

With modern, well-resourced classroom pods, the expertise of the dedicated staff team ensures that each child can put past failures behind them in a calm and settled atmosphere.

Each student is motivated through a personalised curriculum and clear targets.

Heath Farm lies in a spacious rural setting near Ashford, and attracts students from across Kent, neighbouring counties and parts of London, because of its growing reputation for success.

### **How does the school know when a young person needs extra help?**

Heath Farm School provides education for students of primary, secondary and Post 16 school age that are identified as having a range of special educational needs. A high number of students attend the school because of their social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. All students who attend Heath Farm School have an Education, Health and Care Plan that sets out each child's individual needs. These plans outline the support we must make in order to meet each child's needs.

In addition to this, the school undertakes a broad range of formal and informal assessments to enable us to constantly review the needs of our students and respond accordingly. We have excellent systems in place to discuss and share progress with parents and carers and this allows any issues to be discussed promptly and, where necessary, change support or plans within the school.

### **How will the school staff support my young person?**

Class sizes are small in comparison to mainstream schools with a maximum of eight students who are supported by a tutor team of a teacher, a teaching assistant and a varying number of learning support assistants. This allows for a high level of support for learning within the classroom. The tutor team is responsible for each child's individual learning plan; personal learning and behaviour targets are set and reviewed regularly throughout the year. A member of the tutor team will contact parents and carers on a regular basis.

Staff formally assess student progress ongoing throughout the term and Individual Education Plans are updated termly, three times a year. If required, and in consultation with the school's senior leadership team, arrangements are made for additional support or other methods to help students overcome their barriers to learning. The school's proprietor, Acorn Education and Care, is actively involved in the life of the school and receives reports on all aspects of student progress and whole school performance through the governance cycle.

### **How will the curriculum be matched to my young person's needs?**

The curriculum is based on the vision statement of 'A place of love, commitment and opportunity'.

*Heath Farm Curriculum Model*



'Love' represents the unconditional love that is provided through the well-being support provided to all students resulting in them being able to overcome and manage their differing needs.

**'Commitment'** represents the commitment to providing our students with a purposeful and engaging academic curriculum resulting in them gaining relevant accreditation so that they leave with a world of opportunity at their feet.

**'Opportunity'** represents the life skills that we will develop in the students resulting in them leaving school fully prepared for adulthood and their working life.

It is key that each of these are of equal importance and in fact all support each other equally:

- a. Develop a child's well-being and you improve their chances of achieving academically. They will also develop the confidence to tackle and understand those key life skills for success.
- b. Prove to a child that they can be successful academically and you will do wonders for their well-being. They will also be better able to reflect on and develop those key life skills.
- c. Give children the skills to be successful in life and again their well-being will rise significantly. They will also grow in confidence within their academic subjects and value and appreciate the importance of academia more readily.

Provision of a rich, inclusive, holistic learning environment where every learner is empowered to progress and achieve at the highest level, is fundamental to the philosophy at Heath Farm School.

The curriculum is the whole learning experience offered by the school, including the therapeutic, well-being and Positive Behaviour and Reinforcement system (PBRs) aspects of the school ethos.

How students learn is as important as what they learn. Students are learning all the time and it is our responsibility to optimise learning opportunities throughout the school day, in curriculum time, during Well-being sessions and at social times. Within our established ethos and person centred values, students will gain confidence in making positive, healthy choices and increase their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

All teachers and professionals engaged in teaching and learning activities will be partners in learning and continuously develop their skills and competencies for providing an appropriate range of strategies to inspire all of our learners.

**We aim to ensure that the curriculum:**

2. Is broad, balanced and relevant focusing on demonstrable positive impact upon all aspects of the individual needs of each student, including their SEMH needs.
3. Will encourage all students to reach their full potential.
4. Is flexible enough to meet the needs of the diverse population within the school and matched to the individual needs of the student at the current point in their development.
5. Builds on students' existing knowledge, skills and understanding.
6. Recognises that students often enter the school with low academic and well-being starting points and provides individualized support to close the gaps and overcome barriers to learning.
7. Reflects the multicultural nature of society and builds on Fundamental British Values.
8. Develops confidence, resilience, high self-esteem and independence.
9. Develops a respect for themselves, other people and the environment.

10. Prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life including all aspects of the Skills Builder curriculum from KS1 through to Post 16.
11. Enables students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations including preparation of adult life.
12. Supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
13. Supports students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and encourages them to be active.
14. Ensures equal access to learning, with high expectations for every student and appropriate levels of challenge and support.
15. Provides subject choices that support students' learning and progression, and enables them to work towards achieving their goals.
16. Develops students' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment.

Teachers plan their lessons to enable all learners to make good progress and to be challenged. This includes planning different tasks for students of differing abilities, allocating increasing amounts of support or setting open ended tasks and allowing students to respond according to their level of understanding. In the primary phase, there is an emphasis on nurture and preparing children for learning, at all phases Literacy and Numeracy are threads that are evident within a broad range of activities.

While much of the curriculum is compulsory for all students, there is an element of increasing choice as students move through the school. College, work experience and other vocational pathways ensure that the curriculum, as far as possible, matches to the student's needs, strengthens and interests. Students can access a range of vocational courses which are facilitated through partnerships in the community.

### **What support will there be for my young person's overall well-being?**

Heath Farm School has a very strong ethos, based on our core values of Love, Commitment and Opportunity. We have strong pastoral systems in place and we promote self-belief and encourage aspirational personal achievements. Most students attending Heath Farm School have experienced difficulties in their previous mainstream education, resulting in fixed and sometimes permanent exclusions. Here at Heath Farm School, students can access a very high level of support to improve behaviour.

Expectations are high and students have targets set that relate to their behaviour, well-being and learning. These are graded each lesson and during breaks and then monitored by the tutor teams. Students are taught to take responsibility for their behaviour and there are clear consequences if behaviour is detrimental to their own learning or that of other students. If this happens students must complete work missed in their own time, privileges may be withdrawn or students may be asked to work away from peers. We have a rewards system that is tailored, whenever possible, to individual interests.

Students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and consider alternative strategies to better manage themselves when they are challenged by set tasks and social situations. We aim to support students to return to learning with their peers as quickly as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, students start afresh each day.

All non-attendance is followed up on a daily basis and we work very closely with our students, parents and carers to ensure high attendance is maintained and celebrated and that any attendance issues are dealt with promptly.

The student voice is represented through the active school council which meets on a regular basis. They annually conduct whole school student surveys, the results of which are published on the school website.

### **Nurture Provision**

Nurture groups were established at Heath Farm School in 2006, with the underlying philosophy that children who are exhibiting SEMH behaviour are experiencing emotions and behaviours that are rooted in earlier developmental stages and are inappropriate for their chronological age. Furthermore, the lack of developmentally necessary experience means that the social and psychological foundations for learning are not laid down. The main theory underpinning our Nurture Groups is that of Attachment Theory. This refers to the dynamic relationship between children and their caregivers. Inadequate or disrupted relationships have left the young people stuck at an earlier developmental stage.

In general, young people taken into the groups do not engage successfully with people and/or events. They tend to fall under one or more of the following broad headings:

- Isolated and withdrawn from others.
- Craving affection, and making indiscriminate and short lived attachments.
- Pre-nursery behavioural features and immature dependent relationships.
- Limited or under-developed play/language/motor development etc.
- Under developed social relationships; can't share; resists control; interfering and disruptive; poor tolerance for frustration, disappointment or failure; may have temper tantrums.
- Resistive, manipulative and/or explosive behaviour in children who are in other ways underdeveloped and show features of dependency.
- Problems of attention to and concentration on age appropriate activities in general.

At Heath Farm School students in the Nurture Groups are taught in small groups with a high level of staff support. Initially established for younger students, the provision has been developed and extended and, while all classes promote and engage with nurture approaches, currently there are five specialised nurture groups; three for primary age students; one for KS3 students; and one for students in Years 10 and 11. Each has a slightly different approach.

Primary age students are taught in a formal Nurture Group style; the aim is to support their reintegration into the main school groups within a time frame that is suitable for the individual child. Students in this group will offer distinct behavioural and educational challenges and much focus is put on education through social interaction, play and experiential learning, using personalised programmes of study. While they make progress in core subjects and enjoy thematically delivered studies, they learn social skills; turn taking; sharing; how to play formally and informally; etc. They enjoy a wide range of visits to support their studies, as well as learning to enjoy listening to stories, art and craft, gardening etc.

In Lower Secondary we support students from Year 7-9 who are taught using a primary model, with a high level of personalised programming around their specific interests and needs, and use again of social

interaction, problem solving and experiential learning to support their progress. Our Upper Secondary Nurture group are taught at an individual level suitable for them but using the principles as outlined above. Within our Secondary Nurture groups, the vast majority of their lessons are delivered by the same teaching team who expertly know and understand their complex needs and are able to better support them throughout all learning opportunities.

Academically there is particular focus on core subjects; a synthetic phonics programme supports reading and a structured maths scheme offers personalised learning. They have a wide programme of educational visits to enhance their learning experience, enjoy drama and storytelling from Dickens to Dahl, and take part in practical activities such as gardening, construction, cookery and sports. A key focus remains the development of their self-esteem and sense of personal well-being.

Students with a wide range of needs, including social and emotional issues, learning difficulties, mental health problems and associated conditions, are able to enjoy extraordinary outcomes and be happy at school.

From its nurturing approach for primary students through to the relaxed working environment of the specialist 6th Form Centre, all students are encouraged to reach high standards in every aspect of their lives. Students move on from Heath Farm to college courses, apprenticeships and jobs, confident they can lead happy and meaningful adult lives.

### **The Thrive Approach as a whole school support intervention**

The Thrive Approach is grounded in the current scientific developments in neuroscience. The field of neuroscience has undergone rapid advances in recent years, prompted by significant innovations in brain imaging. These have yielded important insights about how the brain and nervous system function and develop. In particular, scientists have discovered that the neural pathways of the brain and wider nervous system are relatively unformed at birth, undergoing much of their development during the first three years of life in response to relational experiences with primary care-givers. A key development during this period is the establishment of the body's stress-response system. This lays the foundation for our social and emotional development throughout life, affecting our capacity to relate, love, learn and manage stress in healthy ways. However, research has also revealed the inherent 'plasticity' of the brain – its capacity to forge new neural connections in response to experience. The fact that the brain retains this property to a greater or lesser degree throughout life means that where brain development has been less than optimal, it remains possible to intervene at a later stage to fill the gaps.

In the Thrive Approach we use a developmental model to help us understand how we develop socially and emotionally from birth through to adulthood. This model gives us a framework for understanding what healthy child development looks like in terms of behaviour and learning and clarifies what the role of adults should be in facilitating a child's development at each of the different stages. In addition, the model gives us a lens through which to look at and interpret children's behaviour, enabling us to identify the particular developmental needs being signalled by their behaviour and to choose appropriate, targeted interventions designed to meet those needs.

The emotional regulation system in all of us is made up of three levels. These three levels are shaped in our early experience in our closest relationships. They are addressed within the Thrive model: Being, Doing and Thinking. The good news is that with loving attention and repeated experiences we can reshape these three levels - or fill in any gaps - at any time if we are in a positive significant relationship. The Thrive Approach shows us how.



Because our emotional state has such an impact on the way we think and act, it profoundly affects our behaviour choices. Our behaviour in turn helps us to get on with others and to be able to settle to learning. We can develop resilience rather than false fixed strength. We can feel empowered and confident to work with life rather than needing to have power over others or events. We can care about others as well as ourselves. We can be empathetic and compassionate rather than fearful and grasping. We can have dreams and ambition.

We can be creative and divergent in our thinking. We can aim for excellence without putting others down in the process. We can appreciate diversity and embrace change. We can love life and thrive.

Thrive uses arts and play-based activities with children to support healthy neural development, promote a positive sense of self and build optimal learning capacity. There are many artistic mediums that you can work with in the Thrive Approach, sand play, puppetry, storytelling, music, drama, movement and dance, painting and drawing, each of which has particular benefits and strengths. The Thrive Approach integrates arts and creativity to support children's emotional and social development.

### **Therapeutic Educational Plan (TEP)**

The TEPs at Heath Farm School was established and implemented from September 2019 to meet the needs of three groups of students;

- Those joining the school who, because of period of disrupted attendance, or a significant history of school rejection, or a personal history of disruption and insecurity, could not immediately access full time attendance even at a small school such as ours due to their significant SEMH needs.
- Those undergoing therapeutic or personal crisis who were jeopardising their school and sometimes care placement by their presenting behaviours, and who needed a 'time out' from the social and emotional pressures of school life.
- Those reaching the end of their school placements who rejected formal schooling and were in danger of missing out on education during transition, or failing to gain appropriate accreditation.

Our team develop a bespoke support package for each child, with highly focused one-to-one support, which includes both academic and therapeutic interventions. There is a strong emphasis on helping children who are part of the TEP to build strong, trusting relationships. The majority of students make significant progress and are able to reintegrate into the regular classroom environment at Heath Farm School or mainstream education if this would better meet the individual's needs.

For the majority of students, integration or reintegration into either Heath Farm School or another appropriate school provision is the focus of work. Our TEP approach provides a clear assessment which informs planning, which is supported by regular reporting to, and communication with, parents/carers and other involved professionals. TEP's link closely to our admissions approach and support the EHCP holding authorities to ensure that clear information and support is available to inform planning.

For those joining Heath Farm School, TEP's support personalised integration packages, which may involve: part time attendance; part or full time attendance supported by Well-being team, teachers and mentors; initial attendance at social events etc. Each student therefore re-enters school life at the pace and in the way that best supports success for them as an individual.

The majority of students on TEP's, make significant progress as they attend regularly, complete work and improve their academic standards. As a result, their self-esteem is improved and they become more capable and independent learners. The well-being team is able to work with students throughout their stay at Heath Farm School, and this continuity of care confirms for them the progress they have made.

TEP students join the rest of the school for assemblies where their achievement is celebrated by the whole school community on a termly basis.

**How will both you and I know how my young person's doing and how will you help me to support my young person's needs?**

Support from home is vital in securing the best possible outcomes for children in education. At Heath Farm School we aim to ensure this is achieved through a variety of ways. Parents and carers receive a daily communication from a member of the tutor team and this provides the opportunity to celebrate successes and for matters that may cause concern to be discussed, this allows for any issues to be dealt with promptly. We make judgements about your child's progress based on a range of indicators, including national expectations of progress for children of the same age, your child's prior learning and progress as well as progress made in specific areas requiring additional help and support; this can be in relation to learning or behaviour needs.

Teachers will report on your child's progress both formally and informally. As well as the regular informal communication to parents and carers there are events and more formal subject reports that will record your child's progress against national indicators.

All parents will also have access to our full-time Family Liaison Officer who will be able to meet with you either in school or within the home to discuss any issues or concerns that you may have. They will also be able to provide you with additional supportive ideas to further engage and support your child.

These are some ideas to help you support your child's learning at home:

- Discuss your child's day with them and encourage them to talk about their learning and what is happening at school.
- Praise your child if they are working hard and have achieved something either in school or at home.
- Talk to your child about their strengths and interests.
- Encourage any reading and look for opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills, especially when out in the community
- Encourage them to complete tasks on their own and then for them to explain things to you afterwards.
- In addition, you can contact the school at any time to make an appointment to see your child's tutor, class subject teacher or member of SLT.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Care Act 2022

This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2015) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled students'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Student Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Student Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Careers Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy

- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Accessibility Policy

## 2. Objectives

Heath Farm School is required to identify and address the SEND of the students that they support. Through the implementation of this policy, the school will:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that students with SEND get the support they need to access the school's broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that students with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside students who do not have SEND.
- Ensure there is high-quality provision to meet the needs of students with SEND, with specific focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Fulfil its statutory duties towards students with SEND in light of the SEND code of practice.
- Promote disability equality and equality of opportunity, fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled students.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled students are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision, i.e. the SENCO and Deputy SENCO.
- Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child.
- Review, prepare and publish important information about the school and its implementation of relevant SEND policies, including:
  - Accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access to the curriculum and the physical environment for students with SEND.
  - Information about the admission arrangements for students with SEND and the steps taken to prevent them being treated less favourably than others.
  - A SEN information report about the implementation of the school's policy for students with SEND.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently across the school.
- Ensuring the school meets its duties in relation to supporting students with SEND.
- Ensuring that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with high quality teaching and a positive and enriching educational experience of for all students, including students with SEND.

In enacting this policy, the Headteacher will:

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all students with SEND.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable students with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and SEND of students, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice.
- Work with the governing board to ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.
- Ensure the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Regularly and carefully reviewing the quality of teaching for students at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against students with SEND.

The SENCO and Deputy SENCO will be responsible for:

- Collaborating with the governing board and Headteacher, as part of the SLT, to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- The day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy.
- The coordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND.
- Liaising with the relevant designated teacher for LAC with SEND.
- Advising on a graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively.
- Liaising with the parents of students with SEND.
- Liaising with early year's providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies, as required.
- Being a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services.
- Liaising with the potential future providers of education to ensure that students and their parents are informed about the options, and a smooth transition is planned.
- Working with the relevant governors and the Headteacher to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up-to-date, in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues, and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies.

- Advising on a graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Being familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and being able to work with professionals who are providing a supporting role to the family.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Planning and reviewing support for students with SEND on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO and, where appropriate, the students themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every student and aiming to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.
- Ensuring every student with SEND is able to study the full national curriculum.
- Being accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided to any students with SEND they are working with.
- Understanding and implementing strategies to identify and support vulnerable students with the support of the SENCO.
- Keeping the relevant figures of authority up-to-date with any changes in behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern. The relevant figures of authority include the Headteacher.

#### **4. Identifying SEND**

The school recognises that early identification and effective provision improves long-term outcomes for students. As part of the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all students, it has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND as outlined in the school's SEN Information Report.

With the support of the SLT, classroom teachers will conduct regular progress assessments for all students, with the aim of identifying students who are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.

'Less than expected progress' will be characterised by progress which:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- Does not match or better the student's previous rate of progress.
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers.
- Widens the attainment gap.

The school plans, manages and reviews SEND provision across the following four broad areas of need:

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

## 5. Safeguarding

The school recognises that evidence shows students with SEND are at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment, so will ensure that staff are aware that students with SEND:

- Have the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying.
- May face additional risks online, e.g. from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation.
- Are at greater risk of abuse, including child-on-child abuse, neglect, and sexual violence and harassment.

The school recognises that there are additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of students. These barriers include, but are not limited to:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student's condition without further exploration.
- These students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students.
- The potential for students with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

The Headteacher and governing board will ensure that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that these additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse. When using physical intervention and reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving students with SEND, staff will have due regard for the procedures outlined in the school's Physical Intervention Policy.

Care will be taken by all staff, particularly those who work closely with students with SEND, to notice any changes behaviour or mood, or any injuries, and these indicators will be investigated by the DSL in collaboration with the SENCO.

## 6. SEND support

The school is aware of its statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and recognise that high quality teaching, which is differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEND.

Teachers at the school will:

- Set high expectations for every student.
- Plan stretching work for students whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard.
- Plan lessons for students who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- Plan lessons to ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.

- Be responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

Decisions on whether to make special educational provision for students will be based upon:

- Discussions between the teacher and SENCO.
- Analysis of the student's progress – using internal formative and summative assessments, alongside national data and expectations of progress.
- Discussion with the student and their parent.

Once a student has been identified with SEND, the school will employ a graduated approach to meeting the student's needs. This will be through the adoption of a four-part cycle – **assess, plan, do, review** – whereby earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. The process is as follows:

- **Assess:** establishing a clear assessment of the student's needs.
- **Plan:** agreeing 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.
- **Do:** implementing the agreed interventions and support.
- **Review:** analysing the effectiveness of the interventions and their impact on the student's progress in line with the agreed review date.

Where higher levels of need are identified, the school will access specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of a student, they have not made expected progress, the school, in consultation with parents, will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

## **EAL**

Heath Farm School is aware that there may be students at the school for whom English is not their first language and appreciates that having EAL is not equated to having learning difficulties. At the same time, when students with EAL make slow progress, it will not be assumed that their language status is the only reason; they may have SEND.

The school will consider the student within the context of their home, culture and community and look carefully at all aspects of a student's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of English or arise from SEND.



## 7. Heath Farm School Admissions

### Objectives

The objectives of the school's admission policy are that:

- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the criteria used in assessing the appropriateness of a placement for individual students at the School.
- All concerned will have a clear understanding of the processes of judging the appropriateness of that placement;
- Parents/carers, each student and representatives of Local Authority, social service departments and other interested professionals have clear understanding of the opportunities on offer at the School.
- Parents/Carers, each student and representatives of Local Authority, social services departments and other interested professionals understand all key aspects of school life at the School and are prepared to play their part in ensuring the success of any placement.

### Admission Criteria

- The student will admit students aged between 5 and 18 years of age.
- The student will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The EHCP will specify that the student has social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) or a diagnosis of autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism (ASC).
- The student will normally have been assessed as within the average ability range of educational functioning. (In some cases, student's levels of ability as measured using psychometric tests may prove difficult. In these cases the school will base its judgements on its ability to meet needs).
- The student may have learning difficulties and/or low attainment that are associated with their SEMH/ASC needs.
- The student may have one or more specific learning difficulties
- The student will express a commitment to the placement.
- The student's parents/carers will express a commitment to the placement.
- For all "Children in Care", there must be permanently named carers and a permanent home base for the student, available at any time throughout the year. The school cannot be the main residence for any child.

### The LA will:

- Provide the school with all current advice and information concerning the student.
- Nominate the School in Section IV of their EHCP.
- Agree contractual arrangements for transporting the student to and from school.
- Make any arrangements for transporting the student to and from school.
- Email confirmation agreeing Core funding and additional funding if specified in the assessment.
- Also provide a signed IPA (Individual Placement Agreement).

The school will ensure it meets its duties set under the DfE's 'School Admissions Code' by:

- Not refusing admission for a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for SEND.
- Not refusing admission for a child that has named the school in their EHC plan.
- Not discriminating against or disadvantaging applicants with SEND.
- Ensuring policies relating to school uniform and trips do not discourage parents of students with SEND from applying for a place.
- Ensuring the school's oversubscription arrangements will not disadvantage children with SEND.
- Ensuring that tests for selection are accessible to children with SEND, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary.

Arrangements for the fair admissions of students with SEND are outlined in the Admissions Policy and will be published on the school website.

## **8. Transition**

The school is aware of the importance of planning and preparing for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life.

Where students have EHC plans, these will be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to a student moving between key phases of education, to allow for planning for and, where necessary, commissioning of support and provision at the new setting.

## **9. Involving students and parents in decision-making**

The school is committed to working in partnership with all parents in the best interests of their child and will provide an annual report for all parents on their child's progress.

Where a student is receiving SEND support, the school will regularly liaise with parents in setting outcomes and reviewing progress. The class teacher, supported by the SENCO and/or deputy SENCO, will meet with the parents two times each year, in addition to the termly educational updated progress reports and the EHCP annual review.

The planning that the school implements will help parents and students with SEND express their needs, wishes and goals, and will:

- Focus on the student as an individual, not allowing their SEND to become a label.
- Be easy for students and their parents to understand by using clear, ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon.
- Highlight the student's strengths and capabilities.
- Enable the student, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future.
- Tailor support to the needs of the individual.

- Organise assessments to minimise demands on parents.
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.

Where the LA or funding LA, provides a student with an EHC plan, the school will involve the parents and or the carers and the student in discussions surrounding how the school can best implement the plan's provisions to help the student thrive in their education, and will discern the expected impact of the provision on the student's progress.

Where necessary, the school will facilitate support from an advocate (FLO) to ensure the parent's views are heard and acknowledged.

## **10. Funding for SEND support**

Where additional student needs are identified the school will use its delegated funding allowance to provide early intervention support for the benefit of students identified with SEND.

Where students with SEND have been receiving early intervention support but are still not making sufficient progress, the school will consider accessing high needs top-up funding from the LA to provide additional specialist support.

## **11. EHC needs assessments and plans**

The school recognises that, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of a student, some students may not make expected levels of progress. In these cases, the school will consult with parents and consider requesting an EHC needs assessment.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the SEND of the student, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and prepare them for adulthood.

As part of the EHC needs assessment, the school will meet its duty by:

- Responding to any request for information as part of the EHC needs assessment process within six weeks from the date of the request unless special exemptions apply as outlined in the SEND code of practice.
- Providing the LA with any school-specific information and evidence about the student's profile and educational progress.
- Gathering any advice received from relevant professionals regarding their education, health and care needs, desired outcomes, and any special education, health and care provision that may be required to meet their identified needs and achieve desired outcomes.

If, following the assessment, the LA decides not to issue an EHC plan, the school will be provided with written feedback collected during the EHC needs. It will use this information to contribute to the graduated approach

and inform how the outcomes sought for the student can be achieved through further special educational provision made by the school and its partners.

Where the LA decides to issue an EHC plan, it must consult the prospective school by sending a copy of the draft plan and consider their comments before deciding whether to name it in the student's EHC plan. The school will meet its duty to provide views on a draft EHC plan within 15 days.

The school will admit any student that names the school in an EHC plan and will ensure that all those teaching or working with a student named in an EHC plan are aware of the student's needs and that arrangements are in place to meet them.

## **12. Reviewing EHC plans**

The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the student's progress during the year and conduct a formal review of the EHC plan at least annually.

The school will:

- Cooperate with the LA and relevant individuals to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the LA if requested.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the meeting, such as representatives from the LA SEN, social care and health services.
- Seek advice and information about the student prior to the annual review meeting from all parties invited, and send any information gathered to all those invited, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- Ensure that sufficient arrangements are put in place at the school to host the annual review meeting.
- Contribute any relevant information and recommendations about the EHC plan to the LA, keeping parents involved at all times.
- Lead the review of the EHC plan to create the greatest confidence amongst students and their parents.
- Prepare and send a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting, setting out any recommendations and amendments to the EHC plan.
- Clarify to the parents and student that they have the right to appeal the decisions made regarding the EHC plan.
- Where possible for LAC, combine the annual review with one of the reviews in their care plan, in particular the personal education plan (PEP) element.
- Where necessary, provide support from an advocate to ensure the student's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Where necessary, facilitate support from an advocate to ensure the parent's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Review each student's EHC plan to ensure that it includes the statutory sections outlined in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', labelled separately from one another.

If a student's needs significantly change, the school will request a re-assessment of an EHC plan at least six months after an initial assessment. Thereafter, the governing board or Headteacher will request the LA or funding LA to conduct a re-assessment of a student whenever they feel it is necessary.

### **13. Supporting successful preparation for adulthood**

The school is aware that being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for students with SEND. It recognises the importance of starting early, centring on student aspirations, interests and needs, and will ensure that students are supported at developmentally appropriate levels to make a smooth transition to what they will be doing next, e.g. moving on to higher education.

The school will:

- Ensure that the EHC plan review includes a focus on preparing for adulthood, with additional focus on transition and preparing for adulthood from Year 9 onwards.
- Build transition planning into the revised EHC plan to identify appropriate post-16 pathways for higher education and employment, and support preparation for independent living, maintaining good health in adult life and participating in society.
- Seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations, and arts and sports groups, to help children understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.
- Engage with FE providers as necessary to help plan for any transitions.
- Ensure students from Year 8 until Year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance and participate in an individualised interview, with an accessible action plan document.

The school's Careers Policy details how the school will fulfil its statutory duties under section 42 of the Education Act 1997 and work with students with SEND to ensure they are prepared for the workplace.

### **14. Managing complaints**

The school will publish the Complaints Procedure Policy on the school website.

Following a parent's serious complaint or disagreement about the SEND provision being made for their child, the school will contact the LA immediately to seek disagreement resolution advice, regardless of whether an EHC plan is in place.

The school is aware of the formal and informal arrangements for resolving disagreements at a local level and will work with the LA in responding to requests for information as part of procedures for:

- Disagreement resolution.
- Mediation.
- Appeals to the SEND Tribunal.

The school will meet any request to attend a SEND tribunal and explain any departure from its duties and obligations under the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'.

## **15. Staff training and improving practice**

Heath Farm School is committed to the learning and development of all its staff members and training opportunities will be provided and delivered in line with the school's CPD and Training Policy.

The school SENCO and deputy SENCO, will assess staff competencies and ensure that CPD provision allows staff to develop their awareness, skills, and practices in identifying, educating, and assessing students with SEND.

## **16. Use of data and record keeping**

All information about students will be kept in accordance with the school's Records Management Policy and Data Protection Policy.

The school's records will:

- Record details of additional or different provision made under SEND support, with accurate information to evidence the SEND support that has been provided over the student's time in the school, as well as its impact, e.g. through the use of provision maps.
- Include details of SEND, outcomes, action, agreed support, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists, as part of its standard management information system to monitor the progress, behaviour and development of all students.
- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of the provision made for students with SEND.
- Be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it, so far as reasonably practicable.

The school keeps data on the levels and types of need within the school and makes this available to the LA and Ofsted.

### **Confidentiality**

The school will not disclose any EHC plan without the consent of the student's parents, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the student, such as disclosure:

- To a SEND tribunal when parents appeal, and to the Secretary of State under the Education Act 1996.
- On the order of any court for any criminal proceedings.
- For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986, or from the Children Act 1989 relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and LAs.

- To any person in connection with the student's application for students with disabilities allowance in advance of taking up a place in HE.
- To the Headteacher (or equivalent position) of the setting at which the student is intending to start their next phase of education.

The school will adhere to the Student Confidentiality Policy at all times.

## **17. Publishing information**

The school will publish information on the school website about the implementation of this policy.

The information published will be updated **annually** and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible.

The SEN Information Report will be prepared by the governing board and will be published on the school website. It will include all the information outlined in paragraphs 6.79 and 6.83 of the 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25 years'.

## **18. Joint commissioning, planning and delivery**

The school will work closely with local education, health and social care services to ensure students get the right support.

The school will assist the LA in carrying out their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, by ensuring that services work together where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision (Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

The school will draw on the wide range of local data sets about the likely educational needs of students with SEND to forecast future needs, including:

- Population and demographic data.
- Prevalence data for different kinds of SEND among children at the national level.
- Numbers of local children with EHC plans and their main needs.
- The numbers and types of settings locally that work with or educate students with SEND.
- An analysis of local challenges or sources of health inequalities.

The school will plan, deliver and monitor services against how well outcomes have been met, including, but not limited to:

- Improved educational progress and outcomes for students with SEND.
- Increasing the identification of students with SEND prior to school entry.

Where students with SEND also have a medical condition, their provision will be planned and delivered in coordination with the EHC plan.

SEND support will be adapted and/or replaced depending on its effectiveness in achieving the agreed outcomes.

## 19. Local Offer

Heath Farm School and the Acorn Education and Care (AEC) governing board will collaborate with and support the LA or funding LA's at their request, in developing and reviewing the Local Offer, where necessary and appropriate, to ensure that it is:

- **Collaborative:** Where appropriate, the school will work with LAs, parents and students in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. The school will also cooperate with those providing services.
- **Accessible:** The school will collaborate with the LA during development and review to ensure that the LA's Local Offer is easy to understand, factual and jargon-free; is structured in a way that relates to students' and parents' needs, e.g. by broad age group or type of special educational provision; and is well-signposted and -publicised.
- **Comprehensive:** The school will help to ensure that parents and students understand what support can be expected to be available across education, health and social care from age 0 to 25 and how to access it. The school will assist the LA in ensuring that the Local Offer includes eligibility criteria for services, where relevant, and makes it clear where to go for information, advice and support, as well as how to make complaints about provision or appeal against decisions.
- **Up-to-date:** The school will work with the LA to review the Local Offer to ensure that, when parents and students access the Local Offer, the information is up-to-date.

Heath Farm School will provide the LA with information about their existing SEND provision and capabilities to support students with SEND to aid in the drafting of the Local Offer, where required.

## 20. Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an **annual** basis by the Headteacher in conjunction with the governing board; any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff, parents of students with SEND, and relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2023**.