

# THE ASTLEY COOPER SCHOOL



## SEND SCHOOL POLICY

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## **Introduction**

*Aspiration, Determination and Integrity.*

At The Astley Cooper School (ACS) we welcome and value all students. We continually adapt our systems and structures: curriculum, building, attitudes and values, in order to make the school an inclusive, welcoming environment. We strive to deliver a fully accessible social and academic curriculum.

The policy is in keeping with the school's aims, its teaching and learning policies and policies on equal opportunity and behaviour. ACS is committed to a policy of inclusion, one in which the teaching, learning achievements, attitudes and well-being of all students matter – including those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND students). The culture, practice, management and deployment of the school's resources are designed to ensure all students' needs are met.

The Governing Board expects that all students, regardless of ability and behaviour, are valued equally at The Astley Cooper School. SEND students are viewed as part of a whole school approach. Different students' needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision throughout the curriculum.

## **Objectives and Guiding Principles of the SEND Inclusion Policy**

We recognise that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in our society

We seek to:

- Value all students and staff equally
- Provide an inclusive education whereby all students' needs are identified and appropriate action taken to ensure maximum access to the curriculum for all students, recognising the social background of each individual
- Offer students with SEND the same experiences as their peers, or experiences that are appropriately and/or reasonably adjusted to ensure that all students make adequate progress to reach their personal potential
- Differentiate work in pace, style, challenge and content according to each student's age, gender, experience and identified learning needs
- Ensure early identification and assessment of individual learning needs using assessment procedures and through discussion with colleagues and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)
- Encourage and support all staff to take responsibility for meeting the learning needs of all students in their care
- Work with the student, parents/caregivers to create an Inclusion Profile (IP), including with agreed strategies for supporting each student
- Work in partnership with parents/caregivers, keeping them fully informed of each student's progress and encouraging their full involvement
- Oversee individual Education, Health and Care plans in line with the SEND Code of Practice. These are reviewed at least three times per year
- Adopt a consistent approach to SEND throughout the school in accordance with this policy
- Develop the skills of staff in SEND issues and initiatives: prepare and provide strategies for staff to support students with EHCPs

## **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

### **Definitions of Special Educational Needs taken from section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (enacted September 2014)**

- 1) A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
- 2) A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she
  - a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
  - b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- 3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age (or would be likely, if no special educational provision were made).
- 4) A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

A new Special Educational Needs Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2015) accompanies the above legislation. More details can be found on the Department for Education's website [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

## **EHC Plan Pathways**

Schools and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported by the local authority's (Hertfordshire County Council) Integrated Services for Learning (ISL), Children's Services. Professionals in this service offer specialist advice and support for families whose child has an Education, Health and Care Plan and for those who do not have a plan but whose child still experiences a special educational need.

The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education, health and social care, as well as services provided by private, voluntary and community sectors. Further information can be found online by accessing the Hertfordshire County Council website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education/education.aspx>

## Learning Challenges

### Students may need support if they have:

- A cognitive disadvantage which affects their ability to learn at the same rate as the majority of their peers
- A specific disability which may or may not be linked to a cognitive disability
- A speech and language impairment affecting their ability to comprehend
- A behavioural impairment affecting their ability to concentrate and therefore to learn effectively
- A sensory impairment
- A physical disability
- An emotional disability which can affect their ability to learn
- A syndrome which limits the extent to which they can access the curriculum as easily as their peers
- An extended period of absence. This could occur for a variety of reasons
- Students who speak English as their second language. Learning in a second language is not a special need *per se* unless a student has an identified learning difficulty (see above). However some students for whom English is not their first language might require language support to access the curriculum in English.

## Admissions and Inclusions

Students with SEND will be admitted in line with procedures adopted by Hertfordshire County Council and the school's admissions policy. Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be admitted where this is in accordance with the parents/caregivers' preference and where this is compatible with the efficient education of other children.

The right to a mainstream place for students with disabilities has been strengthened following the introduction of the Single Equality Scheme in April 2012. Should a place for a student with a disability be requested, s/he cannot be refused a place on the grounds of disability, unless the Governing Board gives specific reasons why it cannot make reasonable adjustments for the student.

Should the need arise Governors will make every effort to accommodate a student's particular needs and work with the Local Authority (LA) to improve facilities.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Key Individuals:

Headteacher (the responsible person under the Code of Practice)  
Assistant Headteacher in role as Head of Inclusion  
Heads of Year  
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)  
Link Governor for the SEND department  
Pastoral support team  
Subject teachers and tutors  
Teaching Assistants  
Outside agencies

### **The SENDCo is responsible for:**

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Coordinating provision for students with special educational needs/disabilities
- Liaising with and advising colleagues
- Liaising with pastoral colleagues and achievement mentors concerning issues of behaviour management
- Managing a team of Teaching Assistants
- Overseeing the records of all students with SEND and monitoring their individual academic performance and progress over time
- Liaising with parents and caregivers of students with SEND
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff and encouraging staff development
- Liaising with external agencies including the LA's support and psychology services, health, social services and voluntary bodies
- Making suitable arrangements for access to exams
- Reporting progress against set targets to Headteacher/Line manager

### **Procedures for Graduated Response (Assess, Plan, Do and Review)**

The school adopts a graduated approach: 'Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEND'. Quality First Teaching is recognised as 'the baseline of learning for *all* students'.

#### **Identification (see earlier definition of Special Educational Needs)**

1. Any student who is falling significantly outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators and grade boundaries will be monitored.
2. Once a student has been identified as *possibly* having SEND s/he will be closely monitored by staff in order to gauge her/his level of learning and possible difficulties.
3. Subject teachers will take steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities that will aid the student's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that need to be applied.
4. The SENDCo will be consulted as needed for support and advice. The SENDCo may wish to observe a student in a lesson.
6. If a student has recently been removed from the SEND register, s/he may continue to require the above level of monitoring to ensure progress is sustained.
7. Parents and caregivers will be informed fully of every stage of their child's development and the circumstances in which the child is being monitored. They are encouraged to share information and raise queries with the school.
8. A student may be monitored if concern is raised by a parent or caregiver or a teacher however close monitoring does not automatically place the student on the school's SEND register. Concerns are discussed between parties and recorded by the school as an aid to further progression and for future reference.
9. Student progress meetings, academic tutorials and parent evenings are used to monitor and assess the progress made by all students. The frequency of such meetings is dependent on individual progress.

#### **SEN Support**

Where it is determined that a student does have SEND, parents/caregivers will be advised of this before inclusion of the individual on the school's SEN register. The aim of formal

identification of SEND is to help the school ensure that effective provision is put in place and so remove barriers to learning.

Support consists of the following four actions: Assess, Plan, Do and Review. These form an ongoing cycle to enable provision to be refined and revised as understanding of the individual grows. The cycle enables identification of those interventions most effective in supporting the student to achieve good progress and outcomes.

### **Assess**

In identifying a student as needing SEND support, subject teachers, together with the SENDCo, should conduct a comprehensive analysis of the individual's needs. This should draw on subject assessments, teacher observations and details of previous progress and attainment, comparisons with peers and national data and the views and experiences of parents/caregivers.

The opinion and feelings of the individual involved and advice from external support services will also be considered. Any parental/caregiver concerns will be recorded and compared with the school's information and assessment data on how the student is progressing.

A student joining ACS from primary school with special needs already identified has a starting point or 'benchmark' against which future progress can be measured. This information is gained from primary school prior to the student entering The ACS. Students with SEND will have agreed targets to support them in making adequate progress.

Progress is tracked and monitored as noted above and using any/some of the methods below

- Group targets
- Value added data
- National Curriculum targets
- Reading and spelling assessments
- Literacy and numeracy targets
- MIDYIS testing used to assess students aged 11-14, in key cognitive areas, vocabulary, non-verbal, maths and skills.

This analysis requires regular review to ensure that support and intervention is matched to current needs, barriers to learning are clearly identified and challenged and that existing interventions are developing and evolving as required. The work of any external support staff will help inform the assessment of needs. In cases where no support has been provided, external support staff may be contacted if it is deemed appropriate following discussion and agreement with parents/caregivers.

### **Plan**

Parents/caregivers will be informed when a decision is made to provide a student with SEND support.

Planning will involve consultation between the teacher, Head of Year, SENDCo and parents to agree the adjustments, interventions, and support that are required; the impact on progress, development and/or behaviour that is expected and a clear date for review. Where appropriate, the involvement of parents or caregivers may be sought to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

All those working with the student will be informed of his/her individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies or approaches that are being employed and the outcomes being sought.

## **Do**

The tutor, head of Year and subject teachers remain responsible for working with the student on a daily basis. They will retain responsibility even where interventions may involve group or 1:1 instruction away from mainstream classes. They will work closely with teaching assistants and relevant specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and links with classroom teaching. The SENDCo will provide support for further assessment of a student's strengths and weaknesses, and assist in problem solving and advising to ensure implementation of effective strategies for support.

## **Review**

Reviewing student progress will be made at termly 'Making the Grade' (MTG) academic data checks. The review process will evaluate the quality and impact of the support given and interventions used. In the light of this information the SENDCo will revise or amend support in consultation with parents/caregivers and subject teachers.

## **Referral for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

If a student has lifelong or significant difficulties s/he may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process. This is usually requested by the school but can be requested by a parent/caregiver and will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the student are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need and to planning provision and identifying resources is required.

The decision to make a referral for an EHC plan will be taken at a progress review involving parents/caregivers the SENDCo and Head of Key Stage 3/4 & 5 if applicable.

The application for an EHC Plan will combine information from a variety of sources including this policy document, parents, carers of looked after children, teachers, the SENDCo, social care and health professionals.

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision and a summary of action points taken. The preliminary outcomes of the targets already set form the basis of the profile. A decision as to whether a student is eligible for an EHC plan will be made by a group of people drawn from education, health and social care. Parents/caregivers have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

Further information about EHC Plans can be found via Hertfordshire's SEND Local Offer website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/support/ehc-plan.aspx>

## **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans**

1. Following Statutory Assessment, an EHC plan will be provided by Hertfordshire County Council if it is decided that the needs of an individual are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available. Both staff in school and parents/caregivers will be involved in developing and producing the EHC plan.

2. Parents/caregivers have the right to appeal against the content of the EHC plan. They may also appeal against the school named in the EHC plan if it differs from their preferred choice.

3. Once the plan has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the student's formal record and reviewed at least annually by staff, parents/carers and the student. The

For further information please contact the Head of Inclusion in school.

### **Access to the Curriculum, Information and Associated Services**

Students with SEND will be given access to the curriculum through the specialist SEN provision provided by the school as is necessary, as far as possible, taking into account the wishes of parents/caregivers and the needs of the individual.

Every effort will be made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENDCo will consult with parents/caregivers for other flexible arrangements to be made.

Regular training and learning opportunities for staff on the subject of SEND and SEND teaching are provided both in school and across the partnership of schools. Staff members are encouraged to attend voluntary twilight and INSET training to further develop skills and knowledge.

### **Student Support/Interventions**

*Depending on the evidence gathered and the results of review discussions with parents/caregivers and students, support might include one or more of the following:*

- In class support
- Differentiated learning materials
- Specialist equipment
- Homework Club
- Spelling Group
- Reading Group
- Catch-up classes in extra literacy for students dis-applied form a language
- Touch typing
- Mentoring involving key workers for EHC plan and vulnerable students
- Coursework support (Key Stage 4) specifically for English, Maths and ICT from specialist teachers
- Tuition in small groups with a specialist helper or Sixth Former
- Social skills support
- Behaviour or anger management
- Reduced or tailored personalized curriculum
- Provision of work experience placements

### **Ensuring Access to the Curriculum for Students with SEND**

The SENDCo, Head of Inclusion and Senior Leaders are responsible for:

- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs of any students including sharing progress reports, medical reports and teacher feedback.
- Providing regular training and learning opportunities for staff in all departments on the subject of SEND and SEND training. Ensuring staff are kept up-to-date with teaching methods that will aid the progress of all students including those with SEND

- The Astley Cooper School Special Educational Needs/Disability (SEND) Inclusion Policy.
- The Astley Cooper School SEND Information Report
- In-class provision and support being deployed effectively to ensure that the curriculum is effectively differentiated where necessary.
- Availability of individual or small group tuition where it is believed that such provision would benefit particular students.
- Setting appropriate individual targets that motivate students to do their best and celebrating achievements at all levels.
- Putting in place arrangements to support students with medical conditions.

### **Inclusion of students with SEND**

The Headteacher, Mr E Gaynor, oversees the Special Educational Needs/Disability (SEND) Inclusion Policy and is responsible for ensuring that it is implemented effectively throughout the school.

The school curriculum is regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that it promotes the inclusion of all students. This includes learning outside the classroom and off-site provision.

The school will seek advice where appropriate concerning individual students, from external support services. Where a behavioural incident warrants exclusion the relevant Head of Year, pastoral leader and members of the Senior Leadership Team will consider the incident in line with The Astley Cooper School's Exclusion Policy. Every attempt is made to avoid excluding SEND students.

### **Evaluating the Success of Provision**

In order to make consistent continuous provision in relation to SEND provision the school encourages feedback from staff, parents/caregivers and students during the academic year. All are given an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of provision by means of a questionnaire.

Student progress will be monitored on a termly basis in line with the SEND Code of Practice. Robust systems are in place for tracking recording progress of all students at RPS and tracking interventions.

The Learning Support Department offer an *Open Door* policy where students can access the SENDCo and TA's without appointment or prior arrangement. This option is NOT for parents and caregivers. Parents/caregivers can access the SENDCo by phone/email or directly by prior appointment. Further feedback from parents/caregivers can be given via email contact available on the school website.

A formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's SEND provision and policy culminates in a SEND information report. Information is gathered from different sources such as student and parent/caregiver surveys, staff surveys, consultations evenings, report feedback forms. The SEND information report is collated and published annually by the Governing Board of an academy school in accordance with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

## **Working in Partnership with Parents and Caregivers**

The Astley Cooper School believes that a close working relationship with parents/caregivers is vital in order to ensure:

- Early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND leading to the correct intervention and provision
- Continuing social and academic progress of children with SEND to enable personal success
- Views of parents and caregivers are considered and valued.
- The SENDCo provides support to teaching staff throughout the academic process and will attend meetings with parents/caregivers on request.

Where necessary more frequent regular contact with parents/caregivers will be arranged based on a student's individual needs. The SENDCo may also signpost parents/caregivers of students with SEND to the local authority Parent Partnership service in cases where specific advice, guidance and support may be required.

If an assessment or referral indicates that a student has additional learning needs the parents/caregivers and student will always be consulted regarding future provision. They are invited to attend meetings with external agencies regarding their child and are kept up to date and consulted on any points of action regarding further provision for their child. The schools SEND link governor may be contacted via email through the school in relation to SEND matters.

## **Staff Development and Funding**

We aim to provide opportunities for all staff to develop their ability to meet students' individual needs. The financial provision for SEND will be monitored by the SENDCo, Senior Leadership team and Governors and will be reviewed in the School Improvement Plan and annual budget.

A Meeting Individual Needs 'Link' group has been developed. One member of staff from each subject area is invited to attend two meetings per term. Any current issues relating to SEND and regular INSET are given to staff at these sessions. The 'Link' person is then responsible for relaying information back to her/his individual department.

Staff are kept fully informed about Local Authority, national and regional training courses, seminars and networks which relate to inclusive educational practice. Staff attending any courses are expected to disseminate and share their knowledge with other staff in school. Staff are encouraged to observe good inclusive practice in their own and other schools.

## **Complaints Procedure**

We aim to prevent formal complaints arising through our policy of involving parents/caregivers at all stages of action relating to a student with SEND. Should a complaint about the school's SEND provision arise it will be dealt with in three stages:

- Through initial discussion of concerns with the Headteacher
- Formal complaint in writing to the Governing Board
- Formal complaint in writing to the Local Authority

The Governing Board will regularly review the provision for students identified with SEND and consider the effectiveness and impact of work of the work done by the school. This policy will be reviewed every two years as part of the school's self-evaluation policy.