

# Thornhill Primary School

## Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy



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## **Thornhill Primary School**

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy**

Thornhill Primary School is an inclusive school. We take safeguarding very seriously and all of our policies are developed with a high priority on children's safety and in the light of our safeguarding policy. All of our school policies are interlinked and should be read and informed by all other policies. In particular, the SEND policy is linked to behaviour, anti-bullying, medical and curriculum policies.

This SEND policy is written to comply with the 2014 Children and Families Act and its SEN Code of Practice together with the Equality Act 2010.

Inquiries about an individual child's progress should be addressed at first to the class teacher since he or she is the person who knows the child best. Other enquiries can be addressed to

Samantha Overfield - SENCo

Please make an appointment with the school office if you wish to speak to the SENCo.

#### **Headlines from the 2014 Code of Practice.** From September 2014

No more statements will be issued by the Local Authority. Statements have been replaced by Education, Health and Care plans (EHC Plans) which can be used to support children from birth-25 years.

School Action and School Action Plus have been replaced by one school based category of Need known as 'Special Education Needs Support' (SENS). All children are closely monitored, and their progress tracked each term. Those

at SENS are additionally tracked by the SENCo. There are four broad categories of SEN:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- physical and sensory.

We are working more closely with parents and children to ensure that take into account the child's own views and aspirations and the parents' experience of, and hopes for, their child. Parents are invited to be involved at every stage of planning and reviewing SEN provision for their child.

All children benefit from 'Quality First Teaching': this means that teachers expect to assess, plan and teach all children at the level which allows them to make progress with their learning. In addition, we implement some focused interventions to target particular skills.

We have high expectations of all our children. Children on our SEN register make progress which compares well with the progress made by other children in school.

## Defining SEN

The 2014 Code of Practice says that:

A person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. At compulsory school age this means he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or, has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. Taken from 2014 SEN Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (Introduction xiii and xiv)

## SEN at Thornhill Primary School

Our objectives are:

To identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, barriers to learning and participation for pupils with SEND;

To ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and achieves to the highest possible standard ;

To enable all children to participate in lessons fully and effectively

To value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the school

To work in partnership with parents

To work with the Governing Body to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role with regard to the Policy Statement for SEND

To work closely with external support agencies, where appropriate, to support the need of individual pupils

To ensure that all staff have access to training and advice to support quality teaching and learning for all pupils

## Identifying children at SENS (SEN Support)

Children with SEN are identified by one of three assessment routes all of which are part of the overall approach to monitoring progress of all pupils:

The progress of every child is monitored at termly pupil progress meetings. Where children are identified as not making progress in spite of Quality First Teaching they are discussed with the SENCo and a plan of action is agreed.

Class teachers are continually aware of children's learning. If they observe that a child, as recommended by the 2014 Code of Practice, is making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances, they will seek to identify a

cause. This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
  - fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
  - fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Parents sometimes ask us to look more closely at their child's learning. We take all parental requests seriously and investigate them all. Frequently, the concern can be addressed by Quality First Teaching or some parental support. Otherwise, the child is placed at SEN on our SEN register.

Although the school can identify special educational needs, and make provision to meet

those needs, we do not offer diagnoses. We would refer to the appropriate organisation for specialist advice.

### Working with Parents and Children

We aim to have good and informative relationships with all of our parents. If a child is experiencing difficulties, parents will be informed either at parents' meetings (autumn and spring terms) or during informal meetings to discuss the child's progress.

Once a child has been identified as having SEN, the class teacher will invite the parents to a meeting to:

- formally let them know that their child is being placed at SENS
- discuss assessments that have been completed
- agree a plan and provision for the next term.

This is part of the graduated approach cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' required in the Code of Practice.

Depending on their age, and their interest, the child may be invited to attend all or part of the meeting.

Records are kept of these meetings and copies are available to parents.

Thereafter, parents – and children- are invited to a meeting at least each term to review progress made, set targets and agree provision for the next term. In the summer term, there is an annual review of the child's progress.

### Paperwork for children at SEN (SEN support)

Once a child has been identified as needing SENS the following paperwork is completed:

- Termly - at parent's evening - an Individual Support Plan is produced and/or reviewed. The plan records specific and challenging targets for the child to achieve in a term, together with the personalised provision (which may be 1-1 or in a small group) put in place to enable the child to achieve these targets.
- Weekly – identified in teacher's planning.

### Moving to an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)

If children fail to make progress, in spite of high quality, targeted support at SEN, we may apply for the child to be assessed for an EHC Plan. Generally, we apply for an EHC Plan if:

- The child has a disability which is lifelong and which means that they will always need support to learn effectively
- The child's achievements are so far below their peers that we think it likely that the child may at some point benefit from special school provision.

Children, who we think will manage in mainstream schools, albeit with support, are less often assessed for EHC Plans. Having a diagnosis (e.g. of ASD, ADHD or dyslexia) does not mean that a child needs an EHC Plan.

If the application for an EHC Plan is successful, a member of the Local Authority will call a meeting

for parents, the child and the school together with any health or social care professionals who are involved with the family. The meeting will record the child's strengths, their dreams and aspirations as well as the barriers they face. Following the meeting, the LA will produce the EHC Plan which will record the decisions made at the meeting.

### Teaching and Learning

We believe that all children learn best with the rest of their class. Our aim is for all children to be working independently, in class, at the cusp of their potential. Children with SEN and disabilities are entitled to be taught a challenging, inclusive and ambitious curriculum. Teachers aim to spend time each day working with all children with SEN, individually or as part of a group.

When allocating additional support to children, our focus is on outcomes, not hours: we aim to put in sufficient support to enable the child to reach their challenging targets, but without developing a learned dependence on an adult. SEN children are only withdrawn for specialist programmes such as S&L or Occupational Therapy.

The school has a range of interventions available which are listed and costed on a provision map. When considering an intervention, we look first at the child's profile of learning in order that we can select the intervention which is best matched to the child.

Targets for children at SEN are deliberately challenging in the attempt to close the attainment gap between the children and their peers. Interventions are often crucial in closing these gaps, so are monitored closely by both the class teacher- who monitors progress towards the targets during the intervention- and by the SENCo who monitors overall progress after the intervention.

- Interventions are planned over a half term.
- At the end of each block, children's progress towards their targets is assessed and recorded.
- A decision is then made as to whether to continue the intervention, to swap to a new intervention, or to allow a period of consolidation in class.

### Adaptations to the curriculum teaching and Learning Environment

Thornhill Primary School is accessible by wheelchair. We have a disabled toilet with washing facilities.

Other adaptations to the physical environment will be made, as appropriate, to accommodate children with other sensory disabilities.

All of our classrooms are inclusion-friendly. . This is good practice to support all children but is vital for those who particularly need it. All of our children access the full National Curriculum, and we recognise achievement and expertise in all curricular areas. As part of normal class practise, content and ideas can be simplified and made more accessible by using visual, tactile and concrete resources.

Access to extra-curricular activities

All of our children have equal access to before school, lunchtime and after school clubs which

develop engagement with the wider curriculum. Where necessary, we make accommodation and adaptation to meet the physical and learning needs of our children. Class trips are part of our curriculum and we aim for all children to benefit from them. No child is excluded from a trip because of SEN, disability or medical needs.

### Staff Expertise

All of our teachers are trained to work with children with SEN. We have access to advice, information, resources and training to enable them to teach all children effectively. We continue to improve our knowledge and understanding through professional development.

If we identify information we can't access without the aid of additional, more specialist help, the school is able to buy-in additional expertise from the local authority. This includes access to Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers. We have a Speech & Language therapist and an Occupational Therapist who work in the school.

### Children with social, emotional and mental health needs

Behaviour is not classified as an SEN. If a child shows consistent unwanted behaviours, the class teacher will assess the child's needs, taking into account family circumstances and the child's known history of experiences. If the child's behaviour is felt to be a response to trauma or to home-based experiences (e.g. bereavement, parental separation) we will support the family and refer to external agencies if necessary.

If parents and school are concerned that the child may have mental health needs, we encourage parents to ask their GP for a referral to CAMHS. We have links to a Mental Health Worker to support children with anxiety and a successful referral will result in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy with parents.

If the child is felt to have long-term social, emotional or mental health needs- for example with anger management- the school offers a range of social skills or therapeutic interventions.

All children's behaviour is responded to consistently in line with our Behaviour Policy, although reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, especially towards children with SEND and disabilities. We will actively investigate all allegations and, if there is cause, work with both the bully and the victim to improve their social skills.

## Transition Arrangements

### Transition into and within school

We understand how difficult it is for children and parents as they move into a new class or a new school and will do what we can, according to the individual needs of the child, to make transitions between classes- including from the nursery- as smooth as possible. This may include, for example:

Additional meetings for the parents and child with the new teacher

Additional visits to the classroom environment in order to identify where the toilets are, where the pegs are etc.

Opportunities to take photographs of key people and places in order to make a transition booklet if necessary.

### Transition to Secondary School

Transition reviews for Year 6 pupils are held, where possible, in the Summer Term of Year 5 or the Autumn term of Year 6. The secondary school SENCO is invited to Annual Reviews and other review meetings. Additional transition arrangements may be made at these reviews e.g. extra visits, travel training etc.

## Governors

It is the statutory duty of the governors to ensure that the school follows its responsibilities to meet the needs of children with SEND following the requirements of the Code of Practice 2014.

Our SEND governor meets with the SENCO at least termly to discuss actions taken by the school.

## Complaints

The school works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs.

All complaints are taken seriously and are heard through the school's complaints policy and procedure.

## Durham's Local Offer

The purpose of the local offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. It includes provision from birth to 25,

The Durham Local offer is on the County Durham and Families Information Service - <http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info/kb5/durham/fsd/localoffer.page>

### Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability in all aspects of school. We promote self and mutual respect and a caring and non-judgmental attitude throughout the school

### Review Framework

The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance)

Review Date: September 2021