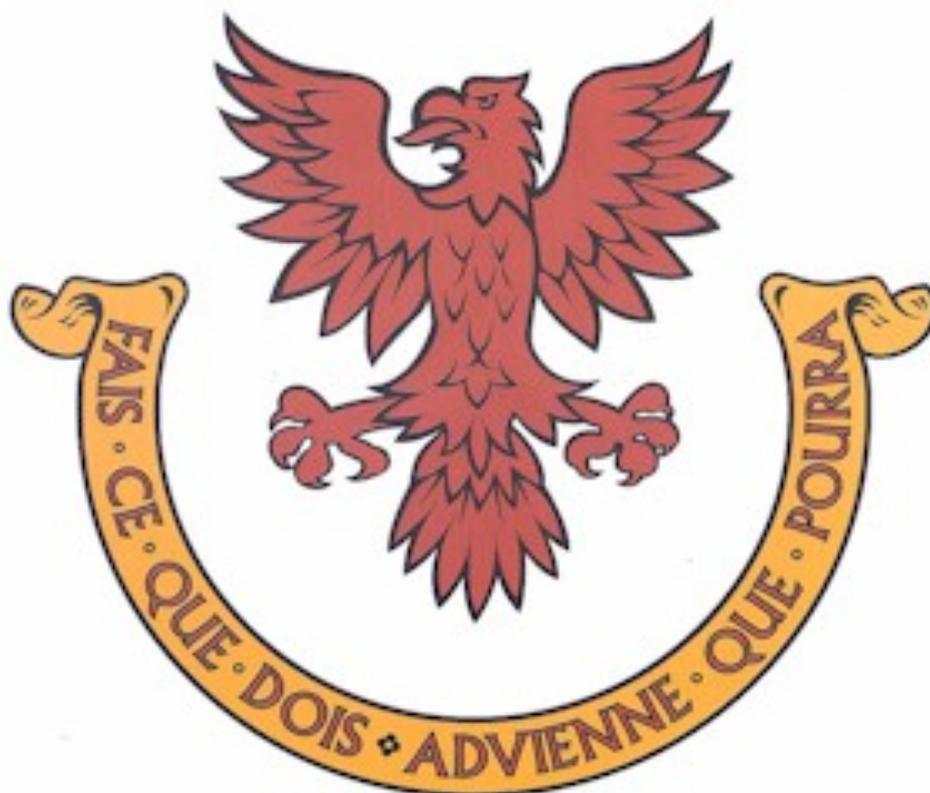


# **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY (Including EYFS)**

*Currently being updated to include the new code of practice and SEN support with new SENCo*



# **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy** **(including EYFS)**

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## Section 1:

### Special Educational Provision

#### • **Aims and Objectives**

At Hall Grove, we expect the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy aim to:

- Help all pupils in its care to access the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, regardless of background, race or abilities.
- Ensure that wherever possible all children are taught in their own class group and only withdrawn from the classroom where additional specialist support is considered essential to provide skills and strategies to enhance their performance.
- Allocate resources that can be used flexibly to support all children's individual needs.
- Provide a staffing structure with clear lines of responsibility for special Educational needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, making sure that all staff training is provided to facilitate the pupil's individual needs.
- Put in place programmes of study (for classes, groups or individuals) that enables all children to make progress.
- Operate systems of record keeping and regular monitoring of each child's progress.
- Find effective ways of informing and consulting with all parents regarding Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities with the school; and for supporting those parents who have children with Special Educational needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities by devising effective lines of communication between all involved: staff, tutors, therapists, parents and external agencies.
- Involving and working closely alongside the school matrons who have the overview of children with Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health issues and who are aware of those on our Special Needs list.

At Hall Grove we receive funding from Surrey County Council for the EYFS and therefore this policy has regard to the Special Educational needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years, 2015, the Children's and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. We plan for the four EYFS areas of need, namely Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

**“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her”**

#### **A Special Educational Need is where**

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,

Or

- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age. (Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014)

Children must not be regarded as having a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. These are regarded as pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

#### **Special educational provision means:**

- (a) **Children of two years of age or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area**
- (b) **For children under two years of age, educational provision of any kind. (Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014)**

**A child is disabled** if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from a mental disorder of any kind or is substantially or permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed.

**A person has a disability** for the purpose of the Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Equality Act 2010**

#### **Definitions of Impairment, Disability and Handicap**

***Impairment:*** any loss of normal functions, however small.

***Disability:*** factors which cause an individual to be unable to carry out certain ordinary activities in a given family or social context.

***Handicap:*** impairing factors that not only prevent individuals leading a normal life but also lead to disadvantage or significant handicap.

- **The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The SEN Co-ordinator plays a key role in determining the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school in order to raise the achievement of children with SEN.

The SENCo takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN policy and co-ordination of the provision made for individual children with SEN, working closely with staff, the school matrons, parents, guardians, carers and other agencies. The SENCo also provides related professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with SEN/LDD.

The SENCo, with the support of the head teacher and colleagues, seeks to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching through the analysis and assessment of children's needs, by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of pupil's achievements and by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of pupils achievements by setting targets for improvement. The SENCo should collaborate with Heads of Faculties and Section Heads so that the learning for all children is given equal priority and available resources are used to maximum effect.

There are four key areas of co-ordination:

1. Strategic direction and development
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Leading and managing staff
4. Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources

To provide the continuity of administration and liaison, the SENCo has time in which to monitor and evaluate Special Educational Needs provision throughout the school. The SENCo assists in the planning of Individual Targets. The SENCo will also be involved in progress reviews regarding children who have SEN and have an Education, Health and Care Plan within the Code of Practice. An important part of the SENCo's role will be discussing the needs of particular children with class teachers and keeping close positive contact with all parents, guardians and carers concerned.

***The SENCo is charged with:***

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities policy
- Managing some learning support assistants
- Overseeing the records of all children with learning difficulties or disabilities including Individual and/or Personal Targets and Individual Learning Profiles
- Working with Form and Study Tutors to set Personal Targets for children with identified needs
- Identifying and contributing to the in-service training of the staff
- Chairing the Annual Reviews for children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- Liaising with any external agencies.
- Maintaining a central record and overseeing the records of all children with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
- Attending relevant training courses and conferences
- Supporting the tracking of pupils to identify any new pupils at risk
- Liaising with parents of children with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.
- Liaising with staff and supporting the monitoring of SEN pupils to ensure progress is being made

## ***Teachers***

The progress of pupils with SEN is every teacher's responsibility. Teachers shall be charged with:

- Identifying and assessing children causing concern
- Setting personal targets for each pupil
- Monitoring pupils' progress
- Ensuring the right of all pupils to access to the curriculum
- Planning differentiation
- Initiating 'graduated response'
- Liaising with SENCo and TA's
- Referral to SENCo
- Liaising with parents and pupils
- Developing, reviewing and delivering Individual/Personal Targets
- Liaising with external agencies
- Involvement with policy development
- Being responsible for their own development via INSET

## ***Teaching Assistants (TA's) and Non-Teaching Staff***

These colleagues often play a crucial role in the lives of the pupils. We expect and encourage our staff to contribute and participate in discussions about pupils experiencing learning difficulties. They are included in our training events.

## ***Parents/Guardians***

The parents/guardians are charged with the responsibility of:

- Informing the school about any specific needs their child may have upon entering school.
- Making themselves aware of the Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Policy of the school.
- Seeking out who the SENCo at school is
- Striving to achieve a partnership with school with regard to projects and homework
- Having knowledge of the relevant outside agencies
- Requesting assessment as they feel to be necessary
- Expressing a preference for which school they would like their child to apply.

## ***Involving Pupils***

We aim to involve all children in their own education. Pupils are involved with setting their Personal/Individual Targets. Pupils are also given an opportunity to share work and achievements with other children and adults. Their work is frequently on display. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their needs and feelings with staff.

### **• Admission Arrangements for Pupils with SEN**

The Early Years and Pre-Prep section (Nursery – Year 2) is largely non selective, although children with substantial learning or behavioural difficulties would not be admitted if it were deemed to be in their best interests to attend a school where greater support may be provided.

The main additional resource comes from the employment of a team of support staff who underpin the work of the classroom teachers.

SEN children are normally accepted into the Middle School (Years 3 – 5) on the clear understanding that they may reasonably aspire to a minimum standard at aged 11 within an academic environment. Weaker children are sometimes admitted if they can demonstrate that they have other strengths (sport, music, art etc) and show that they can apply themselves without disruption to the academic ethos of the school. Very occasionally parents may be advised that Hall Grove is not an appropriate setting for a child and he/she may move to a school with a specialist SEN unit.

Our experience is that children of this age are best helped by splitting teaching groups for some or all of the Core Subjects (Maths, English and Science) into graded sets according to ability and need. We also provide specialist tuition for French, Music, P.E./Games, Dance and Drama which takes pressure off the classroom teacher in delivering the full curriculum.

Some children will receive regular individual tuition (in or outside of school) with a Speech and Language or Occupational Therapist for which the parents are required to pay.

Children are accepted into the Upper School (Years 6 – 8) on the basis of clear evidence that they will find a course of study leading to Common Entrance at 13 to be satisfying and achievable, at the level of attainment that is appropriate to them. Parents are advised carefully about the suitability of senior schools, bearing in mind that the Independent Senior School sector provides for the full academic range, and families are encouraged to set realistic targets. The school provides, at no EXTRA cost to the parents, additional study classes for potential scholars and CE candidates, and there are special tutorials in study skills in preparation of final exams.

Some children will also receive individual specialist tuition for which the parents pay. Occasionally pupils in Upper School will also receive extra reading practice or support in lessons provided by the school.

The following action is taken to ensure that the needs of a child with SEND joining Hall Grove are met:

- Headmaster and/or SENCo meet the parents and pupil
- if appropriate the SENCo and/or class teacher may contact the previous setting to discuss the child's SEND with previous teachers/practitioners/others
- Written information is requested from the past setting/school and acted upon
- All relevant information is shared with the new class teacher so that he/she is aware of the child's needs
- SENCo advises class teacher of any assessments that may need to be carried out
- Individual/Personal Targets are set and shared with parents
- Child is added to SEND register

## **Specialist Provision**

Relevant courses and conferences designed to develop knowledge and understanding of special needs, new legislation and current good practice will be attended by the SENCo. All

teachers and Teaching Assistants will be advised and guided by the SENCo and will also attend any relevant out of school courses if it will be of benefit to the pupils they are supporting.

As part of our commitment to helping all the children in the most appropriate way, in-service staff training has recently covered literacy across the curriculum, updates and guidelines with regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2014. Staff are aware of differentiation techniques and are encouraged to employ a variety of methods within the classroom to address the needs and varied learning styles of all of the children.

## **Facilities for SEND Pupils**

There is a teaching room located in the main building however most support is given within the classroom or class setting except for group sessions and external specialist staff leading a 1:1 session to target specific needs such as Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy. There are currently no other designated facilities at Hall Grove that are specifically for pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.

## **Allocation of SEND Resources**

*Education, Health and Care Plans*

*Surrey County Council - Local Offer*

<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/our-local-offer-support-and-advice-for-children-and-young-people-with-send>

[http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/16850/Guide-to-Surrey-SEND.pdf](http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/16850/Guide-to-Surrey-SEND.pdf)

### ***Children with Special Educational Needs.***

There are no specific resources or funding available for pupils with SEND who do not have an EHCP. However, small classes and sets, full-time Teaching Assistants in Early Years and Pre-Prep enables individual children, who have been identified as having a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability to be provided with an appropriate amount of support. If parents request it, the SENCo can assist in organising individual tuition for some pupils by an external specialist, but funding for this is provided by the parents of the pupils involved.

## **Section 2:**

### **Identification, Assessment and Review**

- **Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.**

The early identification of pupils with special educational needs is of the utmost importance. Action can then be taken immediately, when a child is likely to be most responsive, and when special provision is less likely to cause disruption to the child's learning and to that of other members of the class.

A list of the areas in which a child may be initially identified as having Special Educational Needs is given below. It is followed by more specific checkpoints that may disclose particular learning difficulties.

## **Checkpoints for the Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities**

### ***Early Years:***

- New admission form
- Information from parents
- Information/records from Playgroups/Nurseries/Pre-Schools
- Information from outside agencies
- Class teacher concern
- Termly class teacher assessments/on-going teacher observations
- Learning Journey/Portfolio of work/Assessment folder
- Foundation Stage Profile
- Annual school reports
- PIPS

### ***Key Stage 1, 2 and 3***

- Information from parents
- New admission form
- Information/records from previous school/class teacher
- Information from outside agencies
- Class teacher concern
- Termly class teacher assessments/on-going teacher observations
- Portfolio of work/Assessment folder
- School report
- Standardised Reading Test and Spelling Test results
- CATs/PIPs scores

Class teachers inform the SENCo of any children who are identified as having a specific learning need. Following discussions between the class teacher and the SENCo, the level of intervention required to support a child's identified need is agreed and the child is then placed on the SEND register at the appropriate level and the relevant action is taken.

## **Curriculum Entitlement**

The school will develop an inclusive curriculum providing a framework of well-defined and achievable aims and objectives. This will include the choice of appropriate teaching methods and learning environments. Through this, opportunities for success will be built into the programmes of study in order to nurture positive attitudes and inspire confidence in the children with regard to their own abilities. The programmes of study undergo continuous evaluation. The aims of these programmes are discussed and shared with pupils, teachers and parents each term. Personal Targets are discussed and shared and from Y3 upwards, kept in the child's school diary. Should a child require an Individual Education Plan, these are kept in the central staff SEND file and shared with parents and pupils. When staff plan their lessons, they should consider the appropriate differentiation for their children with Special Educational

Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities. Their individual needs should be met both within the framework of the wider curriculum and also via more specific tasks.

## **Planning and Delivering the Curriculum**

All teachers are considered Educational Support teachers, as all are required to differentiate in their planning and delivery so that all children gain access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum. Differentiation is also necessary in the wider academic and social curriculum.

## **Educational Support**

The school places an emphasis on Inclusion and prides itself in catering for all needs for all children. Some children with complex Special Educational Needs or experiencing severe difficulties may require a modification of the curriculum.

## **Assessment**

The pupil will be given a screening assessment as soon as possible to determine the child's areas of strengths and weaknesses, cognitive ability and attainments. This is usually carried out by the SENCo, discussed with the form teacher and parents before formulating a plan of action. There is also a need for school based assessment and these tests need to reflect the work covered in the differentiated programmes designed to meet the needs of all its pupils and matching objectives to the wide range of abilities. These tests monitor progress and may be used for future teacher planning – assessment for learning.

LEA Statutory Assessment, based on the requirements of the 1996 Education Act enables the LEA to decide whether or not to undertake an assessment that may or may not lead to an Education, Health and Care Plan specifying provision for the child. During this process the LEA will seek educational, parental, medical and psychological advice as part of the assessment procedure. Class/Form teachers will be asked to contribute to this advice. Formal assessment of this kind tends to be instigated by the school however parents can ask the LEA to carry out formal assessment. The LEA must consider the request based on evidence and may comply, unless they consider the request to be unreasonable.

## **Recording Individual Needs**

A SEND list highlights the children who are a concern or who have or have had Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities. This list highlights formal assessments and outcomes as well as tutors, therapists, exam provision and staff supporting the child within school. A copy of this list is kept both in the staffroom and in the central staff drive.

Teachers have full access to the pupil 'Portfolios' both on the staff drive and within Hall Grove Manager. This is where copies of external assessments reports and support are kept; they include recommendations for school and home support. All staff are alerted to children requiring additional support at the beginning of each term.

## **Access and Integration**

All pupils have access to the full curriculum. Adaptation may be made in presentation (some children may be allowed to use laptops), content and context to complete a task. The school recognises that people have different learning styles, so a multi-sensory approach is used

whenever appropriate. To improve access to exams, pupils may be offered extra time, readers and scribes. Evidence has to be given and permission granted if this is to happen.

## **Graduated Response to Learning Difficulties**

To support children who have Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, we endeavour to offer, as recommended in the SEN Code of Practice, a 'graduated response' that included a range of strategies.

We recognise the importance of the relationship between parents of all children, particularly those of children with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities and the school. It is crucial for the success and effectiveness of any school based action.

The following needs may be identified:

- \*Cognition and Learning Difficulties
- \*Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
- \*Sensory and Physical Difficulties

## **Initial Concern**

A class or form teacher's initial concern about a particular child may be concluded that the strategies they are currently using to support the child are not resulting in the pupil learning as effectively as possible. In these circumstances consideration will follow with the SENCo as to what else might be done. Evaluation of the strategies in place may lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires additional help, possibly in-class support or help from the SENCo or outside agency. Consideration will then be given to helping the pupil through the graduated response.

## **Procedure for identification of need and intervention**

Identification of need is usually identified at the initial assessment and dialogue with the parent/s on entry to the school. It is at this stage that provision, if necessary, is identified to support the pupil when starting the school.

During a pupil's time at Hall Grove, it is possible that concerns regarding that child's progress may be raised, mainly by parents and/or the classroom/form/subject teacher. This is met with the graduated response as follows:

1. Teachers/parents in the first instance of concern confer with each other.
2. The teacher will identify need (if possible) and will put into place targets and strategies for that child in the class, which will be monitored. The teacher might well confer with colleagues, for example, a peer teacher, Head of Department, Head of Pastoral Care or, in Early Years and Pre-Prep, Teaching Assistants.
3. The teacher will record their concerns, targets and strategies that have been put in place.
4. Should the child not make sufficient progress with this interventions, the teacher, with permission from the parent/s, will make a referral to the SENCo. This is done during a meeting.
5. The SENCo will then observe and assess the child and consider all evidence.
6. The SENCo will confer with parent/s at this stage about the best possible intervention (e.g. 1:1 tuition, small group sessions, IEP/welfare plan)
7. It may be necessary to seek other agencies for example Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Children and Adult Mental Health services (CAMHs), GP.
8. Should the SENCo find that no further action is necessary at the time, the child will be placed on the SEND overview 'to monitor'.

## **Further Action**

As an independent school, parents are in a strong position to seek additional specialist support sooner than it would be suggested in the state system, as all additional 1:1 support is funded by parents (unless the child has an Education, Health and Care Plan). This means that an intervention is likely to occur sooner than in the state sector. Children may have independent educational psychologist's assessments but the degree of need may be minimal.

A child may be at this level of intervention because of his/her difficulties in accessing the school curriculum:

- \*is at a significant level of need or/and
- \*the widening gap between attainment and ability, despite previous intervention
- \*concern as to whether the school is able to give appropriate /sufficient support to meet a pupil's needs:
  - i. Inadequate resources in the school
  - ii. Emotional/behavioural difficulties impeding progress
  - iii. Significant physical or sensory problems requiring additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by specialist services.
  - iv. Communication and/or interaction difficulties which cause barriers to learning despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum and specialist support.
  - v. More/continual specialist support required i.e. a special school

Other outside specialists are also used as consultants. Further assessments may be administered and advice given on effective provision designed to prevent the development of more significant needs. All these specialists are a valuable source for in-service training on learning behaviour management strategies for all teachers. Individual Education Plans and Personal Targets are drawn up at this stage to ensure consistent and most effective support. We have a commitment to improving the management and alternative arrangements for all children with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities. With the help of outside agencies, health professionals, appropriate equipment and teaching materials, a child's specific learning need can be considerably reduced.

## **Children who may need referral for Statutory Assessment**

In most cases the school will have assessed a child's learning difficulties and will have made additional provision to meet the child/s needs. However, on occasion children may demonstrate such significant difficulties that the school may consider they have insufficient sources to meet his/her needs. The school may consider a need for additional funding from the LEA or more specialist provision.

A child will be brought to the LEA's attention as possibly requiring a Statutory Assessment through:

- \*A request by the child's school
- \*A request from a parent
- \*A referral by another agency

To support a referral the school will provide the following evidence:

- \*The views of the parents
- \*The ascertainable views of the child
- \*Copies of Personal Targets, programmes of study and/or IEP's
- \*Evidence of progress over time including assessment data
- \*copies of advice, where provided, from health and social services
- \*Evidence of the involvement and views of professionals with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise outside the norm of most schools.
- \*Evidence of the extent to which the school has followed the advice provided by professionals with relevant specialist knowledge.

The following people have a specific right to ask a local authority to conduct an education, health and care needs assessment for a child or young person aged between 0-25:

- \*the child's parent/legal guardian
- \*a young person over the age of 16 but under the age of 25, and
- \*a person acting on behalf of a school or post-16 institution (this should ideally be with the knowledge and agreement of the parent or young person where possible) (Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015)

## **Reviewing Progress and Provision**

All pupils with Education, Health and Care plans have a multidisciplinary Annual review. Children identified and receiving additional support with either the Learning Support Specialist or SENCo is also reviewed termly with their Personal Targets being updated each half-term. Parents along with teaching staff, support staff, tutors and external agencies are involved in all these meetings. The SENCo aims to meet with parents on a termly basis to review support being given, discuss progress and future support. Advice is also given with regards to senior school choices.

### **• Arrangements for Complaints**

By following the procedures set out in the SEND policy, we aim to ensure that a complaint would be rare. Occasionally a particular concern may be raised which would be dealt with as follows:

1. Class/Form teacher – the teacher of the child concerned is the member of staff who retains ultimate responsibility for that child, and it is to him/her that any concerns should be addressed initially. The class teacher will endeavour, with the advice of the SENCo or other members of staff, if deemed appropriate, to resolve the problem.
2. SENCo – if the class/form teacher is unable to resolve the issues raised, then the SENCo may be called upon to intervene and will attempt to resolve the concerns.
3. Head Teacher – if the class teacher or SENCo are unable to satisfy these concerns, then the Head Teacher may be called upon to resolve the issue/s.

## **Evaluation of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy**

Evaluating the success of the SEND policy:

The policy has been developed, revised and agreed upon by the staff; everyone is therefore familiar with it and is able to work effectively with it.

The policy is reviewed regularly (at least annually) and all staff are involved in this process.

evaluating pupil progress will indicate the need or not for revisions to the policy to be made

evaluating parental satisfaction will indicate the need or not for revisions to be made to the policy

Should revisions need to be made, they are discussed with staff and the Head Teacher and then appropriate action is taken and the policy updated.

### **Section 3:**

#### **Staffing Policies and Contact with Outside Agencies**

##### **• In-Service Training**

The SENCo will attend any SEND courses or conferences that are appropriate to further developing SEND knowledge and skills. Other staff, both teaching and non-teaching will be encouraged to attend SEND courses where relevant, and will also be involved in SEND training or guidance from the SENCo in school. If a particular need is identified as requiring training or advice from an outside agency, then training sessions could be arranged with, for example an Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist.

##### **Links with Other Schools**

The majority of pupils at Key Stage 1 transfer onto Key Stage 2 at Hall Grove. It is therefore policy that the teachers in Year 2 pass on all relevant information about children on the SEND register to the Year 3 teachers at the end of the Summer Term. A full history of the children's special educational needs provision or learning difficulties and/or disabilities and progress is provided, along with recommendations for future educational provision and support.

All relevant information in the form of reports, statements and IEP.'s for any SEND children who leave Hall Grove is forwarded to their new school.

There are no links with any specific 'Special' schools, but should the need arise for advice to be sought on a pupil with a particular area of difficulty, then it would be the responsibility of the SENCo and class teacher to make and develop contact with a relevant Special school.

##### **Links with Outside Agencies**

Hall Grove School has links with a number of outside agencies upon whom we are able to call for advice and support. They include:

- \*Speech and Language therapy services
- \*Occupational and Physiotherapy services
- \*School matrons
- \*Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team – Counselling service (CAMHS)

Or through the LEA:

- \*Educational Psychology Department
- \*Authority Support Services

Or via the Independent sector:

- \*Educational Psychologists
- \*Paediatricians

- \*Clinical Psychologists
- \*Occupational Therapists
- \*Behavioural Optometrist
- \*Speech and Language Therapists
- \*Various counselling services

## **Recognising Special Needs/Learning Difficulties and Disabilities**

### **Dyslexia**

If a group of the following symptoms persists beyond the time when the average child has grown out of them they *may* indicate dyslexia and the SENCO should be consulted.

#### Reading and Spelling:

- confusion of letters similar in shape: for example, d,b, or u,n
- confusion of letters similar in sound: for example, v,f,th; also vowels
- reversals: for example, was - saw
- transposals: for example, left - felt; auction - caution
- omission of word or words or insertion of words
- repetition of word
- or phrase
- Changing word order: she is - is she; squadron-leader Dicey - squadron-Dicey leader.
- confusion of small words: of, for, from

#### Reading

- difficulty in keeping correct place on line
- difficulty in switching from end of line to beginning of next line
- difficulty in pronouncing even familiar words: merians - remains
- no expression, or intonation in wrong place
- difficulty in understanding a passage even if correctly read
- if reader looks away from page he will be slow in finding his place again
- faulty auditory sequency: Roman merains
- mispronouncing some words: for example, 'rember' for remember
- over-dependence on picture/context cues

#### Writing

- foreshortening: rember – remember; fusion of letters; repetition of a word or words
- capitals left out or in wrong places; i's not dotted, t's not crossed, l's crossed
- badly-formed letters or, if shape is correct, formed in unconventional way - even though correct formation has been taught
- difficulty in keeping on the line; each line starting further from the margin
- new paragraph not indented; omission of punctuation
- confusion over punctuation and syntax; errors with syntax
- spells words differently in the same piece of writing

#### Other Indications

- Confusion between right and left; east and west, up and down, etc.
- Difficulty in sequencing: alphabet, months of year, numbers, words in a sentence, etc.
- difficulty in learning tables
- slow in looking up words in a dictionary, or names in a telephone book
- poor concentration, tires quickly; holds pen too tightly so whole arm tires

- Difficulty in interpreting other symbols: figures, notes in music, morse, etc.
- other bad spellers in the family
- left-handedness or mixed laterality in the child or in members of his family
- particular difficulty copying from blackboard
- difficulty generating/detecting rhyme/rhythm
- difficulty with alliteration

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO or with the pupil's English teacher.

### **Dyspraxia**

- Poor organisational skills
- Poor motor skills, e.g. difficulty balancing, walking on toes, on insides or outsides of feet with arms in a 'natural' position, touching end of nose with index finger with eyes closed, jumping with feet together and arms in 'natural' position
- Poor handwriting skills - slow and laborious; difficulty copying from board
- Speech may be slurred; unable to remember and follow instructions
- Appears to ignore instructions (may not filter out background noise)
- May show behavioral difficulties which can cause own work and others in class to suffer
- Appears bright and verbally articulate; difficulty relating to peers

#### *Reading*

Levels are often good, but tone of delivery can be bland and punctuation omitted.

#### *Spelling*

Levels are often weaker than chronological age.

#### *Maths*

Conceptual understanding may be age-appropriate but exhibits difficulties in recording on paper.

#### *Emotional*

Frequently complains of headaches, stomach aches, reluctance to come to school.

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO.

### **AD/HD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)**

There are 15 characteristics of AD/HD. According to the AD/HD Family Support Group UK, a child must have at least eight of these to be diagnosed. He must have shown them for at least six months and must have started showing them before the age of seven.

The 15 characteristics of AD/HD are as follows:-

- Often fidgets with hands or feet, or squirms in seat.
- Has difficulty remaining seated when required doing so?
- Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- Has difficulty waiting turns, in games or group situations.
- Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed.
- Has difficulty following through on instructions from others (not due to oppositional behavior or failure of comprehension).
- Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- Often shifts from one uncompleted activity to another.
- Has difficulty playing quietly.

- Often talks excessively.
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others, e.g. butts into other children's games.
- Often does not seem to listen to what is being said to him or her.
- Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities at school, or at home (e.g. toys, books).
- Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering possible consequences (not for the purpose of thrill-seeking), e.g. running into the street without looking.
- Often has an excellent long-term memory, but a very poor short-term memory.

### **Possible indicators of Asperger's Impairment**

(Adapted from Autistic Triad of Impairment)

*NB: The higher the number the more pronounced the handicap.*

- *Social Interaction/Emotional Relationships/Empathy*
  1. Makes social contact but lacks understanding of subtle rules of social behaviour.  
Finds it difficult to sustain friendships.  
Lack of cooperation in groups.
  2. Makes odd one-sided social approaches paying little or not attention to people they approach; bizarre interests e.g. timetables, electrical switches.  
Does not know how to initiate friendships.
  3. Passively accepts social contact/ approaches by others.  
May seek comfort in a stereotyped way.  
May reject physical contact.  
Does not respond to adult direction.
  4. Actively avoids other children.  
Attacks other children when they approach.  
Rejects physical contact.  
Rarely seeks comfort at times of distress.  
Shows physical attachment to well-known adults (often empty clinging) and may approach them for physical needs.
  5. Aloof and indifferent to others; uses people or parts of them impersonally.  
May be unaware of own identity.

#### *Social Communication*

1. Spontaneous but repetitive pedantry, concrete understanding and use of words and gestures.  
Finds it hard to join in a conversation or a game.
2. Replies if approached.  
Talks regardless of response of listeners and doesn't engage in reciprocal conversation. Makes socially inept remarks.
3. Makes factual comments, not part of social exchange and often irrelevant to the social context.  
Poor understanding of gesture, expression, intonation, etc.

Does not respond to questions appropriately.  
Uses stereotyped phrases.

4. Communicates to express own needs.  
Does not exchange greetings.  
Does not use language as a tool to pass information to others.  
Can't talk about feelings or thoughts nor recognise feelings from non-verbal cues.
5. No communication.  
Absence of any desire to communicate with others (may talk at people).  
Lack of non-verbal communication.  
Does not respond to own name.

- *Imagination*

1. Appears to be able to recognise others' feelings but this is learnt rather than empathetic.  
Always on edge of group.  
Limited range of ideas.
2. Repetitive, stereotyped enacting of a role, but without variation or empathy.  
Lack of understanding of the purpose of social play, social conversation, literature.  
Has difficulties with sharing, very possessive of own things.
3. Uses dolls, toys correctly but limited, repetitive, uncreative play.  
Play may seem very complex, but careful observation shows its rigidity and stereotyped nature.  
Resists attempts to intervene in own play.
4. May copy actions of others mechanically, without real understanding of their meaning and purpose.  
Attends to minor or trivial aspects of things in environment rather than the whole, e.g. one earring instead of whole person.
5. Copying and pretend play are absent.  
Actively moves away or responds aggressively to adult-initiated play.

*Restricted, Repetitive and Stereotyped Patterns of Activities, Interests and Behaviour  
(examples are given but the possible variations are endless)*

1. Complex verbal or abstract repetitive activities.  
Fascination with certain topics (e.g. timetables, movement of planets, repetitive questioning and demanding standard answers).
2. Complex routines (e.g. bedtime rituals, repetition of sequences of odd bodily movements).  
Some resistance to maintain sameness.

3. Intense attachment to particular objects for no purpose (e.g. lining up objects, regular repeated patterns of objects, sounds, large collection of objects (e.g. bottles, pebbles, plastic bags)
  4. Simple, object-directed (e.g. taps, scratches surfaces, spins objects, feel textures, switches lights.)
  5. Simple, bodily directed (e.g. flicking fingers, rocking, head banging, face tapping, teeth grinding, body manipulation, self injury, grunting).
- *Anxiety when faced with uncertainty or change*
    1. Frequently asks for reassurance with regularly directed activities.  
Seeks out familiar things when faced with a challenge.  
Often wants to know what is happening next.
    2. Seeks to maintain success.  
Upset by minor changes e.g. detour on route to school.  
Shows comfort habits (e.g. thumb sucking) or benign anxiety response (e.g. hand flapping during transition times.)
    3. Shows distress when faced with minor changes  
Resists change
    4. Hits or bites if unfamiliar adult intervenes.  
Throws tantrum if other than usual helper tries to direct activity.  
Distress over small changes.
    5. Self-injurious when faced with unexpected change.  
Extreme distress over changes in small, non-functional details.

If you identify a cluster of these characteristics in a pupil then discuss the case with the SENCO

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