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The Willows Way

Additional Learning Needs Policy

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Background

Definition of Special Educational Needs:

"Pupils have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them."

"Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making full use of the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in school within the area of the local authority (LA); and
- c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

In relation to EAL pupils who may also have ALN needs, the Code of Practice states:

"Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught."

Special educational provision means:

- for pupils of two 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 LA, other than special schools, in the area
- for children under two, educational provision of any kind

All mainstream schools must appoint a designated teacher to be the special educational needs co-ordinator (ALNCo), who will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's ALN policy. He or she will co-ordinate provision for pupils with ALN, maintain the ALN register, and liaise with parents, staff and external agencies. Willows High School's ALNCo is Simon Thomas, who has overall responsibility for Additional Learning Needs within the school.

Introduction

Willows High School is situated within an area of high deprivation. There are currently (March 2017) 658 full time pupils on role, of the total number of pupils on roll, 40% are considered to have special educational needs. Of the pupils with ALN status 62% are at school action, 27% are at school action plus and 11% have varying statements.

The school has a policy of establishing links with both parents and children before admission. Parents of new entrants are invited to school prior to admission and children are encouraged to visit to familiarise themselves with their new environment. The school has good relationships with feeder primaries and transition work is well established.

Aims

At Willows High School we:

- enable every pupil to experience success
- promote individual confidence and a positive attitude
- ensure that *all* pupils, whatever their special educational needs, receive appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant and differentiated, and that demonstrates coherence and progression in learning
- give pupils with ALN equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the school's provision, as far as is appropriate
- identify, assess, record and regularly review pupils' progress and needs
- involve parents/carers in planning and supporting at all stages of their children's development
- work collaboratively with parents, other professionals and support services
- ensure that the responsibility held by all staff and governors for ALN is implemented and maintained.

Relationship to other policies

This policy also relates to the policies on Teaching and Learning, Curriculum and the Equalities Policy. The Accessibility Plan is also pertinent to this policy.

Objectives

- At Willows High School staff cater fully for the learning needs of all pupils in their classes and ensure equality of opportunity in fulfilling their responsibilities as class teachers.
- The needs of pupils will be met through a Graduated Response to provision for all pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs
- Class teachers will differentiate classroom tasks, resources and materials and match work to pupil need. This is reflected in all levels of planning
- All pupils, where appropriate, participate fully in Assessment for Learning (AfL) through self-assessment and personal target setting
- ILPs (Combined IEPs/IBPs) are in place to support individual need and provide attainable targets for children with ALN
- Effective support will be provided by named Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- All staff are provided with opportunities to access training to develop the skills required to promote effective learning

This policy aims to outline the procedures and strategies used to identify, assess, monitor and review ALN pupils in the school. It aims to ensure that:

- every child is provided with opportunities to help them achieve their full potential in a pleasurable, happy and supportive environment
- an environment is created that meets the special educational needs of each child
- that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for
- the expectations of all partners in the process – staff, parents or carers, external agencies and the child are made clear

- the roles and the responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational need are clearly defined
- all children are enabled to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum
- differentiation in the classroom takes into account the individual pupil's ALN in relation to grouping, pace of work, clear teaching and effective learning
- targets and resources adopt a 'small steps' approach where appropriate which is reflected in the Schemes of Work and all levels of planning
- parents are regularly informed of their child's level of attainment
- resources associated with ALN are developed and audited as appropriate
- liaison with ALNCO and Primary Cluster Schools is developed
- reports and/or records received and maintained from previous settings and external professionals are considered

Inclusion

'Children with special educational needs should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for; the efficient education of other children and the efficient use of resources'

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children with speech, language and communication, literacy and numeracy and social skills difficulties
- planning to develop children's understanding through a variety of strategies for learning
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning safely and effectively
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, in order to participate in effective learning

Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that impact on effective learning and call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Schools are statutorily instructed to distinguish between the different stages of assessment. The revised Code of Practice (2002) has identified School Action as the school based stage and School Action Plus and Statement as multi professional assessment stages which require the support and expertise of outside agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities of Headteacher, Staff and Governors

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. It is each teacher's responsibility to provide for pupils with ALN in his or her class, and to be aware that these needs may be present in different learning situations. All staff are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs and for following the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision to meet those needs.

The Governing Body, in co-operation with the Headteacher, has a legal responsibility for determining the policy and provision for pupils with ALN. It maintains a general overview and has appointed a representative governor, the ALN governor, who takes particular interest in this aspect of the school.

The **Headteacher** has overall responsibility for

- the management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for pupils with ALN
- informing the Governing body about ALN issues
- working closely with the ALN personnel within the school
- ensuring that the implementation of this policy and the effects of inclusion policies on the school as a whole are monitored and reported to governors.

The above can be delegated to Senior Managers as appropriate.

The **Governing Body** must ensure that:

- the necessary provision is made for any pupil with ALN
- all staff are aware of the need to identify and provide for pupils with ALN
- pupils with ALN join in school activities alongside other pupils, as far as is reasonably practical and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of other pupils
- they report to parents on the implementation of the school's ALN policy through the annual report to parents
- they have regard to the requirements of the *ALN Revised Code of Practice (2002)*
- parents are notified if the school decides to make special educational provision for their child
- they are fully informed about ALN issues, so that they can play a major part in school self-review
- they set up appropriate staffing and funding arrangements, and oversee the school's work for pupils with ALN
- they, and the school as a whole, are involved in the development and monitoring of this policy
- ALN provision is an integral part of the school improvement plan
- the quality of ALN provision is regularly monitored.

The **Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator** (ALNCo) is responsible for:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy
- co-ordinating the provision for and managing the responses to children's special needs
- ensuring that an agreed, consistent approach is adopted

- liaising with and advising other staff
- working in partnership with class teachers to identify and support pupils with ALN
- contributing to the development of joint and detailed assessments and observations of pupils with specific learning problems
- managing the records of all children with special educational needs
- supporting class teachers in devising strategies, drawing up Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), setting targets appropriate to the needs of the pupils, and advising on appropriate resources and materials for use with pupils with ALN and on the effective use of materials and personnel in the classroom
- liaising closely with parents of pupils with ALN, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process
- liaising with outside agencies, arranging meetings, completing documentation and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers and parents
- maintaining the school's ALN register and records
- assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils with ALN through the use of existing school assessment information, e.g. class-based assessments/records, end of year TA and standardised tests
- contributing to the in-service training of staff and presentations to governors
- managing learning support staff/teaching assistants
- liaising with the ALNCOs in the cluster feeder primary schools to ensure high quality transition arrangements

Class teachers are responsible for:

- including pupils with ALN in the classroom, and for providing an appropriately differentiated curriculum. They can draw on the ALNCO for advice on assessment and strategies to support inclusion
- making themselves aware of this policy and procedures for identification, monitoring and supporting pupils with ALN
- giving feedback to parents of pupils with ALN

Teaching Assistants (who provide support for ALN pupils) are responsible for:

- ensuring that they are fully aware of this policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with ALN
- using the school's procedures for giving feedback to teachers about pupils' responses to tasks and strategies
- supporting children with special educational needs in all areas of the curriculum
- supporting a pupil with a specific difficulty to enable him or her to access the curriculum
- working with individual children under the direction of the teacher
- working with groups of children under the direction of the teacher
- assisting in the production of differentiated materials

Admission Arrangements

In line with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Wales (2002), the admission arrangements for pupils with ALN are the same as for all other pupils.

Allocation of resources

- Provision is mapped and costed to ensure efficient and effective use of resources
- The ALNCo is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including coordinating the provision for children with statements of special educational needs.
- The headteacher consults with the governing body of how the funding is best deployed to support special educational needs.

Appropriate resources for children with additional learning needs support all areas of the curriculum.

Assessment

- Early identification is vital. The ALNCo informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation to support learning.
- The class teachers and the ALNCo assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices.
- The ALNCo works closely with parents and teachers, TAs and external professionals (as appropriate) to plan a programme of intervention and support.
- The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school.

Assessment resources

- County Guidance Criteria
- Field Notes and summative assessments made by class teachers
- Cardiff County Baseline Assessment
- KS3 Teacher Assessment
- CATs data
- NFER tests

There is, of course, ongoing assessment for all children throughout the school year. Any child presenting with difficulties, either as a result of data analysis or due to lack of adequate progress, would be further assessed and monitored carefully by the ALNCo, class teachers and/ or Teaching Assistants, together with external professionals, as and when appropriate. An IEP is written and reviewed twice yearly.

School Action

A child might be moved to School Action as a result of:

- performance monitored by teachers as part of ongoing observation and assessment
- outcomes from baseline assessment results
- lack of progress in literacy or numeracy
- standardised screening or assessment tools
- Behavioural, Social or Emotional Difficulties etc

The ALNCo will:

- seek further advice if needed
- draw up and implement Individual Learning Plan collaboratively with parents, having regard for the views of the child
- monitor progress
- ensure parents are aware of any changes in provision
- liaise with external agencies as appropriate

The IEP sets out the nature of the child's difficulties, any special provision, resources involved, frequency and type of support, nature of parental involvement, targets to be achieved, success criteria and a date for review.

Support may be individual or group withdrawal, or in-class support, or monitoring (particularly in cases of BESD).

School Action Plus

At this level of need, the class teacher and the ALNCo are supported by outside agency involvement. The child's attainment at School Action level is monitored and reviewed. If the child continues to make little or no progress, has difficulties in acquiring key skills and concepts, has emotional or behavioural difficulties which regularly interfere with child's own learning or that of peers, has sensory or physical needs requiring specialist input and resources, has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties which impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning; the ALNCo, after consultation with class teachers and parents, may call in external specialist support to assess the needs of the child and provide appropriate support and advice.

The ALNCo provides, with parental permission, external specialists with all relevant information on the child. Advice from support services is shared with parents and may be used to draw up a new ILP. Support may again be individual or group support, withdrawn or in-class support.

Reviews are arranged twice per year to monitor targets. Parents and external agencies, as appropriate, are invited to participate in the review, along with the ALNCo and class teachers and TAs.

Formal Assessment

The needs of the majority of children should be met by School Action and School Action Plus. In a small number of cases, however, the LA will need to make a statutory assessment of special education needs and then consider whether or not to issue a statement.

The child may be brought to the LA's attention as possibly requiring an assessment through school request with relevant evidence and assessment data or a request by the parent under Section 328 or 329 of the Education Act 1996 or a referral by another agency.

Statement of Educational Need

A Statement of Educational Need provides additional resources for the child and a precise educational prescription based on an accurate and detailed analysis of needs. Parental involvement and views are encouraged and welcomed. Statements are reviewed annually

with school, parental and multi-agency participation as part of the annual review procedure.

Medical conditions

Willows High School carefully monitors underachievement in relation to medical conditions. We consider that early identification and acknowledgement of concern is vital thus parents are asked to disclose details of any medical conditions on entry to school, regardless of age at entry.

Working in Partnership with Parents

"Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children's education. They have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of the child's needs, and the best ways of supporting them".
(2:2 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales 2002).

It is considered very important, therefore, by the staff and governors of Willows High School, that parents are treated as partners in their children's education and as such are involved and informed as much as possible as soon as a special need is first identified and additional support is being considered. Parents will be invited into school to discuss the problem. Any programmes, whether for learning or behaviour, take into account the knowledge, wishes and feelings of the parent.

Reporting to Parents

The Governors are required by law to include the following information in their annual report to parents:-

- the success of the ALN Policy.
- significant changes in the policy.
- consultations with LEA, Funding Bodies etc.
- how resources have been allocated to and amongst children with special educational needs over the year.

Evaluation of Special Educational Needs Policy

Under the 1993 Education Act it is the duty of the school through the Headteacher, ALNCo and nominated school governor, to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the policy and to report back to the remaining governors and to the parents annually. This evaluation will be done through the following procedures: -

- Reporting on the means of identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs.
- References to examples of previous and current work of special educational needs children.
- The level of attainment achieved by special educational needs children in relation to the general level of attainment for the whole school through assessments, TA results where appropriate and records of achievement.
- Periodic review of progress as detailed in this policy.
- Physical, personal and social development of special educational needs children.

- The number of children who have special educational needs provision, distinguishing between those with and without statements.
- Attendance figures.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of the school's ALN policy and provision is evaluated through:

- analysis of pupil tracking data and test results for individual pupils and for cohorts
- value-added data for pupils on the ALN register
- school self-evaluation
- the governors' annual report to parents, which contains the required information about the implementation and success of the ALN policy
- the school's annual ALN review, which evaluates the success of the policy and sets new targets for development
- the school improvement plan, which is used for monitoring provision in the school
- visits from LA personnel and ESTYN inspection arrangements

Complaints Procedure

If a parent is concerned about the decisions made about his/her child, or the type of support being received then the parent can express those concerns in the first place to the child's Welfare Officer. Further concerns can be expressed to the Special Needs Co-ordinator. In some cases, particularly those where decisions are taken by the LA, there are other agencies who will act on behalf of the parents.

SNAP Cymru,

Coopers Yard, Curran Rd, Cardiff CF10 5NB

Snap Cymru is a registered charity which offers free, independent and confidential advice to families of children and young people who have, or may have, special educational needs.

It also operates a "Named Person Scheme" and will support parents in expressing their views to the LEA, or at appeal tribunals.

Involving the Child

"Children who are capable of forming views have a right to make known and receive information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, maturity and capability of the child." (*Articles 12 and 13, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*).

At Willows High School it is our policy to involve the pupil as much as possible in implementing any individual educational programme. Pupils need training and encouragement to help them participate and become involved in their own decision-making.

ALN In-Service Training

Inset sessions may be arranged where necessary for the staff.

The **Additional Learning Needs** co-ordinator attends the LA ALNCo forums on a termly basis.

Outside Agencies

The school makes full use of outside agencies to support the needs of the children within the school. Some of these outside agencies are provided by the LA Achievement Service, for example specialist teachers, Visual and Hearing Impairment.

The school has also consulted the EWO, Social Services, paediatric medical experts, Educational Psychologist and the School Nurse. The school will continue to consult outside agencies according to the needs of individual children.

Allocation of Funds via the County 'Green Sheet'

Each year funds are delegated into the school's budget from the LA. The Governors, together with the Head teacher and ALNCo are responsible for setting up appropriate funding arrangements. Pupils at School Action and School Action + have their costs partially met from the school's delegated budget. The LA provides funding for pupils at School Action + Plus and for Statemented pupils.

The special educational needs policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and any amendments or additions will be made accordingly.

*The Headteacher is responsible for **monitoring** the policy to ensure that it is applied.*

The policy applies equally to all pupils in the school community regardless of gender, ethnicity, social circumstances and prior attainment.

This policy is freely available to governors, staff and parents.