

# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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## INTRODUCTION

Thomas Estley is a highly successful mainstream 11-16 Community College serving the villages of Broughton Astley, Cosby and Whetstone. We are the lead school in Success Academy Trust.

The college has a strong tradition of innovative curriculum planning and its curriculum has been a national case study and aspects of it have been adopted by a number of schools locally and nationally. Our aim at Thomas Estley is to ensure that every child, whatever their individual needs, has access to the full curriculum and that provision is made to help young people feel that they are in every way a part of the college life.

The college has inclusion at the centre of its mission statement;

“At Thomas Estley we care. To do this we include everyone in what is good, we don't put anyone down or make their life difficult. We aim for a better living and a better way of life for everyone. We value every person and every opportunity. We always aim for the best”

At the heart of our ethos is inclusion in its purist form. At Thomas Estley we celebrate that we are all different and all included, that we all have qualities that are to be admired and rewarded.

The progress of every child with Special Educational Needs is monitored by our Assistant Principal for Inclusion/SENCO. We liaise closely with parents, tutors, teachers and other external agencies, in order to support the most vulnerable pupils.

The college pursues excellence in all it does, placing the learner at the heart of its work. The ethos is a can do, inclusive one. Pupils enjoy all the learning opportunities they are offered and rise to the challenge of the high expectations we have of them.

Thomas Estley is a Teaching School and a National Support School. As a result, the college engages in significant School to School Support and CPD provision. We are also a centre for School Direct placements.

The college is a vibrant, innovative and forward-looking institution, a place which never stands still but constantly seeks improvement.

## Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (July 2014) 3.66 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014)
- School SEN Information Report regulations (2014)
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions April 2014
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document Sept 2013
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Teachers Standards 2012

The process of developing the draft of this policy was initially carried out by the SENCo Leadership Development Group. It was then finalised by the SENCo in consultation with SEN Governor, parents, pupils and staff at the school. Here, and throughout this policy, the term 'parent' includes all those with parental responsibility, including parents and those who care for the child.

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## AIM OF DEVELOPMENT GROUP

We are committed to using our best endeavours to provide an appropriate and high quality education for **all** children at our school which enables them to:

- Achieve their best
- Become confident, independent individuals living fulfilling lives
- Make successful transition to their next phase of education or employment.

We consider every teacher to be a teacher of every child, regardless of needs or disability. We have the highest aspirations and expectations for all children, including those with special educational needs.

We aim to achieve a community where parents, those working in school and specialists have a mutual trust and confidence in each other, created through clear, consistent approaches to communication and collaborative working, to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEND.

We aim to provide all children, regardless of needs or disabilities, with a broad, balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible and ensures they, are included in all aspects of school life and feel equally valued and part of the school community.

## OBJECTIVES |

1. To establish a fully inclusive school, eliminate prejudice and discrimination and create an environment where all children can be happy, flourish and feel safe.
2. To respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied needs and life experiences.
3. To identifying a child's special educational needs at the earliest point and make effective provision.
4. To enable parents to participate as fully as possible in decisions and being provided with information and support necessary to enable this.
5. To support children to participate in discussions, express their views and be fully involved in decisions which affect them, encouraging them to become increasingly effective self-advocates.
6. To work in close partnership with a range of specialists and professionals to enable us to provide effective targeted support.
7. To ensure that teachers fully understand that they are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all children in their class, including where they access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
8. To provide targeted support, advice and training for all staff working with children with special educational needs and disabilities, enabling them to adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all children.
9. Appoint a qualified or suitably experienced Special Educational Needs Coordinator who has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEN, including those who have EHC (Education Health and Care) plans /Statements.

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10. To ensure that all children receive appropriate educational provision through a broad, balanced curriculum that is relevant and differentiated and that demonstrates coherence and progression in learning through quality first teaching.

11. To ensure that children and young people with SEN are able to engage fully in activities alongside children who do not have SEN.

The Head Teacher, SENCo, all staff and the Governing Body will work within the guidance outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 0 -25 (September 2014)

## IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision to be made for them. The SEND 0 – 25 Code of Practice states that a child has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other 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.

This provision is different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. For some children, SEN can be identified at an early age, however, for other children and young people, difficulties become evident only as they develop.

The identification of SEN is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of **all** children. Class teachers will assess each child's skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings. Class teachers make regular assessments of progress for all children identifying in particular where children are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. Where a child's progress is causing concern, this may 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
- widens the attainment gap

It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a child needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs.

## Broad areas of need as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2014)

These four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that the school plans for and not to fit a child into a category. In practice, individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time.

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical needs

The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a child into a category. In our school, the needs of the *whole* child will always be considered in this process.

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There are other factors that may impact on progress and attainment that are not considered SEN:

- Disability
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- English as an additional language
- Being in receipt of pupil premium grant
- Being a looked after child
- Being a child of a serviceman or service woman

Any concerns relating to a child's behaviour may be an underlying response to a need which the school would work with parents to identify.

## THE GRADUATED APPROACH TO SEN SUPPORT

### Identification and Assessment of SEN

Identifying a child's educational needs and adapting teaching to meet those needs, is a process that is in place for all children in our school. The school has a rigorous and regular system, through termly data input and class teacher monitoring, to identify where a child is not making expected progress or working below national expectations. Class teachers will put in place if necessary, relevant and timely interventions, through quality first teaching and appropriate differentiation aimed at closing the gap or raising attainment. The class teacher and/or tutor, in conjunction with the Assistant Principal for Inclusion will also talk with parents to ensure there is a shared understanding of the child's needs and gain parental perspective on any areas of strength and emerging barriers to learning.

Where a child's needs are persistent, the class teacher will complete an initial concerns checklist and arrange to meet with the Assistant Principal for Inclusion/ SENCo. At this meeting, the need for additional assessments will be discussed. The parents and child's views will be sought as part of this process. A decision will then be made to decide if different and additional provision is required to meet the child's needs. Appropriate staff along with the Assistant Principal for Inclusion/SENCo will then meet with parents to discuss the need for special educational provision and possible placement on the school's SEN record at **SEN Support**.

### Planning and Implementing SEN Support

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual children is always seen as the first step in responding to those who may have SEN.

Working together, the SENCo, child's teachers, parents and child will discuss the type of SEN Support needed to meet the outcomes identified for the child. This will be delivered by staff with appropriate skills and knowledge. The subject teacher remains responsible and accountable at all times for the progress and development of all children in their class, even where a child may be receiving support from a teaching assistant. This SEN support will take the form of a four part cycle (assess - plan - do - review) through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child's needs and of what supports the child in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the Graduated Approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, termly reviews and where appropriate, more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of a child.

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## Reviewing SEN Support

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the child's progress will be reviewed each term. The review process, led by the Inclusion department, will include an evaluation of the impact and quality of the support and intervention and the views of the child and their parents. This review will then feed back into the analysis of the child's needs. The Assistant Principal for Inclusion/SENCO, will revise the support in light of the child's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and child.

The school can request specialist involvement, regardless of whether a child is on the SEN Record, for advice regarding early identification and effective support. The school will consider involving specialists, where, for example, a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite additional provision targeted at their area of need. Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists along with the child's teacher and in appropriate cases, the child them self. It is the SENCo's role to contact any specialists and ensure that what was discussed or agreed is recorded, shared and understood by parents and staff who teach and support the child.

## Examples of specialists that can be accessed by the school

- LA Educational Psychologists
- School Nurse
- LA Specialist Teaching Service
  - VI team
  - HI Team
  - Learning Support Team
  - Autism Outreach
  - Early Years SEN Inclusion Team
  - Advisory Teacher for Supporting Pupils with Physical Difficulties
- Speech and Language therapists
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists
- Referral by EP or School Nurse to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Support of referral to Paediatrician

In some cases, there is a charge for accessing specialist agency support; funding for which comes the school's notional SEN budget and will be monitored by the Assistant Principal/SENCOs. Where pupils are made subject to an EHC plan or Statement of SEN, the school will work in close partnership with any specialist named.

## The LA SEN Support Plan and Education Health and Care Plan process

Where the special educational provision required to meet the child's needs cannot reasonably be provided from within the resources normally available, the school in consultation with parents, will consider requesting a LA SEN Support Plan *or* EHC plan integrated assessment from the Local Authority. Very few children at SEN Support will require an LA SEN Support Plan. To inform this decision, the SENCO will have close regard to the Local Authority's criteria for funding through an LA SEN Support Plan or for an EHC Plan. This can be found on the Leicestershire Local Offer web site along with information on the EHC plan integrated assessment process. This will be shared in full with parents to ensure they are confident and clear about what the process and how they will be involved in it.

## Removing pupils from the SEN record

In consultation with parents, the child will be considered for removal from the SEN record where he / she have made sustained, good progress that:

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- betters the previous rate of progress and has sufficiently closed the attainment gap between the child and their peers of the same age,
- or where a child's wider development and /or social needs have improved and progress in the targeted area is considered to be sustained
- and additional SEN provision is no longer required to ensure this progress is sustained.

## **SUPPORTING PARENTS/CARERS OF CHILDREN WITH SEN**

The school is fully committed to a meaningful partnership with parents of children with special educational needs where they can be as fully involved as possible in decisions and are provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

The school will do this in the following ways:

- Always making parents feel welcome and actively listening to their concerns, wishes and aspirations for their child, instilling confidence and building effective partnerships.
- Providing information for parents in an accessible way
- Publishing how the school implements the SEN Policy on the school web site following the information set out in the SEN information Report (Regulation 3) (2014) and as part of the school's contribution to the Local Offer.
- Teachers meeting with parents, in addition to parent evening appointments, to discuss concerns regarding a child's progress at the earliest opportunity, rose either by the class teacher or the parents themselves, and discussing this fully with the Inclusion Department.
- The Assistant Principal/SENCo being available for a meeting by appointment through e.g. *the school office or by email.*
- Support and guide parents in ways that they can help with their child's learning and development at home.
- Signposting parents to wider support, information and services pertinent to their child's SEN by ensuring they know how to access the Local Offer and the LA's Parent Partnership Service.
- Consulting with a representative group of parents of children with SEND when reviewing the school's SEN Information Report (see school web site) and the SEND policy. A paper copy will be made available to parents on request.
- Building on positive relationships with parents, additional support and guidance will be available to parents at key times, for example, when considering and making a referral for an EHC plan or at times of transition.
- Making use of media such as email to contact parents and for parents to contact school. Seeking parents' views and opinions and considering adjustments to practice in the light of findings.

## **SUPPORTING PUPIL VOICE**

The school recognises that all pupils have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice. We aim to develop pupils' self-advocacy skills to support them in successfully transferring to their next phase of education. We will support pupils in developing their confidence to effectively communicate their own interests, aspirations, needs and rights, enabling them to make informed decisions about their learning and take responsibility for those decisions.

The school will do this in the following ways:

- Self-knowledge is the first step towards effective self –advocacy. With parents, we will support pupils in understanding their strengths, needs and successful approaches to their learning and also have the confidence to voice their concerns, hopes and aspirations.

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- Wherever possible and in an age appropriate manner, pupils with SEN are involved in monitoring and reviewing their progress. Their views are listened too and shared whilst making decisions about future support and provision.
- All staff will actively listen to and address any concerns raised by pupils themselves.
- Pupils with SEND are encouraged to represent pupil voice at Thomas Estley.
- Planning in additional support for pupils at key times, for example, when considering and making a referral for an integrated assessment for an EHC plan and to ensure smooth and successful transition into the school or to next phase of education.
- Pupils are also provided with additional support to contribute as fully as possible in their Annual Review. This can be, for example, by attending part of the review meeting in person, preparing a statement to be shared at the meeting, using a peer advocate to support them in the meeting or by preparing a recorded presentation to share at the meeting.
- Seeking pupils' views through regular questionnaires / group interview activities undertaken by the SENCOs and / or SEN Governor, considering adjustments to keep in the light of analysis.

## **SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be appropriately supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or EHC plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision where the SEN Code of Practice (2014) is followed. Arrangements in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions are detailed within the school's policy for Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions. Please see Administration of Medicines Policy.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEN**

The school regularly and carefully monitors and evaluates the quality and effectiveness of provision for all pupils including those with SEN. This is done through regular scrutiny and analysis of data related to the achievement of pupils with SEN, learning walks, work scrutiny, observation and sampling of parent and pupil questionnaires. The SEN Governor also has a role in scrutinising the school's self-evaluation of the achievement of pupils with SEN as part of the Governing body's duty to monitor the effectiveness of the school's SEN Policy in practice.

## **TRAINING**

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching, learning and provision to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils, all staff are encouraged to undertake training and development. Training needs of staff are identified through the school's self-evaluation process.

All teachers and support staff on taking up a post are made aware of the school's SEN policy. New staff will meet with the SENCo who will explain the school's practice and procedures regarding SEND and will discuss the needs of individual pupils.

The school's Assistant Principal/SENCOs regularly attends Leicestershire's SENCONET meetings and secondary family of schools SEND meeting.

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## FUNDING FOR SEN AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The school's core budget is used to make general provision for all pupils in the school including pupils with SEN. In addition, every school receives an additional amount of money to help make special educational provision to meet children's SEN. This is called the 'notional SEN budget'.

The amount in this budget is based on a formula which is agreed between schools and the local authority. If the school can show that to meet the needs of a pupil with SEN costs more than £6,000, it can apply to the local authority for top-up funding to meet the cost of that provision. Where the local authority agrees that the school's request for top up funding meets the agreed criteria, the additional costs are provided from funding held by the local authority. Schools will be expected to use this funding to make provision for that individual pupil.

The school may use Pupil Premium Funding where a pupil is registered as SEN and is also in receipt of Pupil Premium grant to address the needs of these pupils and enhance learning and achievement.

Each term, the SENCo will map the targeted provision in place for pupils on the SEN record to support identifying how resources are allocated and to monitor the cost of the whole of our SEN provision. This targeted provision is outlined on the school's Provision Map.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### SENCo

The key responsibilities of the SENCO are taken from the SEND 0- 25 Code of Practice (2014) and include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- coordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising a on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the Principal and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

### Governing Body and Head teacher

The Governing Body will, in line with SEN Information Regulations, publish information on the school's website about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN. The information published will be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible.



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A member of the Governing Body is appointed to have specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEN and to ensure that the full governing body is kept informed of how the school is meeting the statutory requirements.

The Principal, SENCO and Governing Body will establish a clear picture of the resources that are available to the school and will consider the strategic approach to meeting SEN in the context of the total resources available, including any resources targeted at particular groups, such as the pupil premium. The Principal, SENCO and governing body monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of how these resources are spent on pupil achievement.

Principal will ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out his / her functions. This will include providing the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

## STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION

All records containing sensitive information relating to the special educational needs or disabilities of pupils in school will be treated as highly confidential and be securely placed in a locked cabinet when not in use.

## REVIEWING THIS POLICY

This policy will be formally reviewed annually. *Representatives of parents of pupils with SEN and pupils themselves will be part of this process.*

## ACCESSIBILITY

The school publishes an accessibility plan (see appendix) which sets out how we will increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and information.

The school's accessibility plan sets out how the Governing Body will promote and improve access to education for disabled pupils through:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the **school curriculum** i.e. *teaching and learning, participation in after-school clubs and school visits.*
- improving the **environment** of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services i.e. *improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education.*
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils **of information** which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled e.g. *handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about school events.*

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed annually.

## DEALING WITH CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

The school is committed to working in close partnership with all members of the school community. The school places great value on the role which parents and careers can play in supporting their child's learning. Staff and governors actively encourage a positive relationship between the school and families.

It is recognised that parents of children with SEN may, from time to time, have particular concerns regarding their child's individual needs. The School acknowledges the difference between a concern and a complaint however, the requirement to have a complaints policy does not undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally. Concerns will be dealt with by school as quickly, sympathetically and effectively as possible.

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The School's Complaints Policy outlines the formal procedures which will be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

### **BULLYING**

We are an inclusive school and work every day to create a safe, secure and happy environment for all children, where everyone is accepted for whom they are and where the differences between us are valued and celebrated.

In our school, bullying is not tolerated. We are aware, however, that some children with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to bullying. In order to mitigate this, we are especially vigilant and plan in opportunities through, for example, assemblies and within lessons, to promote a greater understanding of issues related to SEN and disability. We also find opportunities to positively promote disability through posters, visitors to the school, books and within the curriculum itself.

As part of planning the support and provision for pupil's SEN, we will always look to promoting pupil's independence and resilience and closely monitor pupil's well-being outside as well as within the classroom. Through the school's safeguarding arrangements, we will reinforce the safe use and understanding of social media and, where necessary, provide specific tuition in this area for pupils and parents.

### **Equality Monitoring**

Thomas Estley Community College's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy, via an Equality Impact Assessment, has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, age, disability and avoidance of stereotypes.

Based on the Equality Impact Assessment findings, this policy is judged to be of low impact against the equality strands of Race, Gender, Religion, Disability Sexual Orientation and Age. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment of this policy is available from the Principal's PA.

This Policy is available in alternative formats on request. If you think we can improve the fairness of this Policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.