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SEND POLICY

DATE OF APPROVAL: 14.01.2021

REVIEW DATE:

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1.0 Introduction

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014), with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act (2010): advice for schools DfE (2013)
- Statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)
- Safeguarding policy
- Accessibility plan
- Teachers standards

2.0 Aim

Aspire is committed to providing full and appropriate support to students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We work holistically with students, families and professionals in order to meet the needs of each individual and adopt fully inclusive practices with a focus on raising aspirations and improving outcomes.

3.0 Headlines from the Code of Practice

The 2014 Code of Practice came into place in September 2014 and included the following key changes:

- SEN statements were replaced with Education Health Care plans (EHCPs) which support children from 0-25.
- Special Educational Needs were described in four broad categories
 - Communication and Interaction
 - Cognition and Learning
 - Social, emotional and mental health
 - Physical and sensory
- Children and their families are at the heart of discussions and decisions
- Teachers are expected to meet the needs of most children through 'Quality First Teaching'- 'Every teacher is a teacher of SEN'.
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4.0 Defining SEND

The 2014 Code of Practice states that a child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. At compulsory school age this means that he or she has a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age or has a disability that prevents them from making use of facilities or resources of a kind that are generally provided for others in a mainstream school (SEND C of P: 0-25 Years- Introduction xiii and xiv).

5.0 Admissions and referrals

Students may be referred by mainstream schools for short term placements or outreach support. Some may be referred for full time places but remain on the roll of their mainstream school.

Students can also be referred by the Local Authority because of Permanent Exclusion or because it is felt that their SEND can be effectively met by Aspire. When considering the suitability of a placement, the school considers the needs of the student and whether they may have an unmet or undiagnosed SEND and if so, whether these needs can be met within Aspire and whether Aspire is an appropriate placement for the student in question. This means that from the outset any statutory assessments or referrals to outside agencies can be initiated in a timely manner in order to ensure that the student receives the appropriate long term support and provision for their needs. Aspire aims to work in close partnership with mainstream schools and the local authority to support the identification of SEND whether these students are on a short or long term placement.

6.0 Supporting Transition

Students come to us from a wide number of schools and many have had gaps in their learning and development. Aspire ensures that close partnerships are formed with the new students and their families on arrival and each student spends two weeks on our bespoke Transition Programme, which allows for baseline assessments to be undertaken so that we have a full understanding of their academic and SEMH needs.

7.0 SEN provision

In line with the 2014 Code of Practice and the Children and Families Act 2014, Aspire aims to:

- Identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, barriers to learning and participation for all students.
- Ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and achieves to the highest possible standard.
- Ensure that exams access arrangements are in place where needed.
- Enable all students to be involved in decisions that affect their learning.
- Value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the school
- Work in partnerships with parents to ensure that they are aware of their child's SEND and that there is effective communication.
- Collaborate with health and social care services to provide holistic support for students and their families.
- Ensure that all staff have access to training, support, guidance and resources to support quality teaching and learning for all pupils.
- Work with the trustees to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role with regard to SEND.

The SEND team at Aspire also work closely with other key staff to ensure there is a joined up approach with regards to the following, which are not considered SEN but may still impact on progress and attainment of Students with SEND:

- Disabilites and medical conditions
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and wellbeing
- English as an additional language
- Pupil Premium
- Being a Looked after child
- Being a young carer

8.0 SEN Support

Students who are referred to us could be deemed as receiving ‘additional to or different from’ their mainstream peers. As such, they can be considered as having SEN to some degree. Aspire operates a policy of ‘what is good for a student with SEND is good for all’ and so lessons are always planned with SEND strategies in mind. However, if a member of staff feels that inspite of Quality First Teaching and additional short term interventions that a student is still not making expected progress then they are encouraged to discuss these concerns as soon as possible with the SENCO.

Student should be referred if a staff member feels the pupil:

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted at the student’s identified area of weakness.
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or numeracy skills that result in poor attainment in other curriculum areas.
- Presents emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to the usual nurture or behaviour modification approaches used in the school.
- Has sensory or physical difficulties and continues to make little progress despite the provision of specialist resources or equipment.
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress

Methods of Identification:

- Teacher observation and continuous assessments
- Pupil progress and performance against age related expectations
- Internal testing of literacy, numeracy etc
- SEMH baseline assessments
- Support staff observations and safeguarding concerns impacting on school life
- Ongoing parental concerns and feedback
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9.0 Referral for Statutory Assessment

Where student progress is a significant cause for concern and intervention has been unsuccessful over a reasonable period of time, the SENCo will discuss the need for a referral for an Education Health Care Plan, with the parent’s permission. The LA will then determine whether or not to carry out the assessment and inform all relevant parties of the outcome.

10.0 Partnership with Parents

Aspire works tirelessly to build positive relationships and communication with parents and values and acts on their feedback. The school recognises that the parents of students with special educational needs and disabilities should be involved as partners who can play an active role in their child's education. All staff are asked to bear in mind the pressures that a parent may be under because of the additional needs of their children and we act with kindness and consideration and always on the assumption that the parents will want what is best for their child.

As such Aspire aims to:

- Recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their own past experiences and feelings.
- Focus on the strengths of the students and feedback positively and not just about issues or additional needs
- Ensure that parents understand their rights with regard to their child's special educational needs and that they are signposted to the appropriate support and guidance
- Respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different view points
- Respect the differing needs the parents themselves may have such as a disability or communication barrier
- Recognise the need for flexibility and kindness in supporting parents to attend meetings/events concerning their children

11.0 Intervention

Following identification of special needs the SENCo and other key staff determine the action needed to help the student in light of their assessment. Parents will be informed of the proposed action and it will be explained why this will be necessary and helpful.

Intervention may involve additional staff or it may mean the adaptation of approach or specific resources employed to meet needs. All interventions will be bespoke according to the needs of the student.

12.0 The role of the SENCO

The SENCO, in collaboration with the trustees and leadership team plays a key role in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision within the school, to improve the outcomes of the students. They take day to day responsibility of overseeing this policy, working closely with staff, students, parents and professionals. The SENCO also provides the necessary guidance to staff alongside the Teaching and Learning Leads, with the aim of securing high quality teaching provision across the school. The SENCO seeks to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning through the analysis and assessment of students' needs and through setting targets for improvement through the use of individual student plans.

They will ensure that resources are allocated effectively and to maximum effect.

13.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review.

Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by the SENCo in conjunction with teachers and other key staff. The effectiveness and efficiency of the policy will be reviewed at meetings on both a staff and leadership level as well as via parental and student feedback and alterations to practice may be made following these discussions.

14.0 Complaints

Any parents who are unhappy with the SEN provision for their child can share their concerns with the school SENCO or other members of the leadership team. If these concerns cannot be resolved they are advised to follow the school's Complaints policy which will be made available to them.