



Amherst School (Academy) Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Policy Title	SEND Policy
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Policy Reference	KCC model - revised
Function	For Information and Guidance
Status	Statutory
Audience	Parents, Governors, Headteacher, Teachers, Support Staff, the Department for Education.
Ownership / Implementation	The Headteacher and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
Staff member responsible	Helen Holmes, Inclusion Manager.
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Approved by Staff & Pupil Welfare Committee	January 2019
Date Approved by Governing Body	March 2019
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“Inspire Every Pupil”

Amherst School

SEND Policy/Information Report

Revised January 16th 2019

The Inclusion Manager at Amherst School is Helen Holmes, who is a qualified teacher and has completed the National Award for SEN Co-ordination.

Mrs Holmes is available by phone at school on 01732 452577 (Mon-Weds) or by email at helen.holmes@amherst.kent.sch.uk

2014 Code of Practice Definition of Special Educational Needs and disability

A child has SEN if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of school age has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or*
- (b) 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.*

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 - that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’

Our admission arrangements for pupils without an EHC plan do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs. Decisions on the admission of pupils with an EHC plan are made by the Local Authority.



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What provision does Amherst make for children with SEN?

At Amherst we teach children with all frequently occurring special educational needs, including Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia), speech and language needs, autism, Asperger's syndrome, learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. There are other kinds of SEN, which occur less frequently, and with which we are less familiar - but we can access training and advice in order to meet such needs. Amherst has experience of meeting the needs of pupils who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) plan for ASD, speech and language, physical disability and medical conditions.

The school SEN register includes all children who have EHC plans. Other children on the register come under the category 'SEN Support'. These children receive extra help with their learning over and above what is available in class, for example, individualised maths tuition or specific targeted support with writing and spelling.

How do you identify and assess pupils with SEN?

At Amherst, teachers monitor the progress of all pupils three times a year to review their academic progress. All writing is teacher assessed, based on a range of writing in children's English and Topic books. To inform our teacher assessment, we also use a range of assessments with all the children at various points:

- NFER English and maths, years 3, 4 and 5, autumn, spring and summer terms;
- NFER verbal and non-verbal reasoning (year 4 in September; year 5 in September and May);
- Past SATs papers in year 6;
- Rising Stars SPAG (spelling and grammar), all year groups 6 times a year;
- Moderation of progress in maths, writing and reading.
- Spelling age and reading age used as appropriate depending on the need of the child.

Teachers use all this information, alongside work in class exercise books and knowledge of the child to assess the children against our internal 'Steps' tracking criteria, three times a year.

As a result of ongoing tracking and monitoring, we aim quickly to identify children who are not making adequate progress. At this point a teacher might ask the Inclusion Manager to look at the child's books, make a classroom observation, and possibly conduct some assessments (for example Junior Language Link, Sandwell Early Numeracy or Dyslexia Portfolio). This can give us a fuller picture of a child's needs and allows us to put additional targeted support in place.

Some children simply develop at different rates from others; some children happen to have a summer birthday, and will catch up in their own time; and some children may have challenges outside school that affect their learning in school. Clearly, there can be more than one reason for a child making less than expected progress.

We also have access to the specialist teaching service, who can use a broader range of assessment tools. If we feel their advice would be helpful, we first discuss this with parents and ask for their written consent. The purpose of a more detailed assessment might be to



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understand what additional resources and different approaches might help a child to make better progress. These recommendations are incorporated into the class Provision Map, which is reviewed three times a year. Some children, including all those with EHC plans, have personalised plans, reflecting their needs. If a child is having extra help through an intervention, this is shared with parents/carers at parents' evenings in school. Parents are always welcome to come into school to talk with the class teacher or the Inclusion Manager at other times - just phone the office for an appointment.

We make sure that all teachers and support staff who work with your child are aware of the support and resources to be provided, have had relevant experience or training and know what resources and approaches work best.

How does Amherst evaluate the effectiveness of its provision?

Each review of the Provision Map looks at children's progress and takes note of the views of the teacher or TA delivering the interventions.

The 2014 SEN Code of Practice says that inadequate progress...

- *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 rates of progress*
- *widens the attainment gap*

The interventions we provide across the school are reviewed annually by the Inclusion Manager and teachers. This allows us to make informed judgements about whether or not specific interventions are having a positive impact, and if not, what might be more effective. This information is reported to the governing body.

How does Amherst assess and review the progress of children with SEN?

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked three times per year by their class teacher. In addition to this, children with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments, to track progress in reading age or spelling age, for example. Our assessments are listed in section 2. If results suggest that progress is not as good as expected, the class teacher and Inclusion Manager will revise the Provision Map.

What is your approach to teaching children with SEN?

The 2014 SEN Code of Practice states: *'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.'*

At Amherst the quality of teaching is judged to be good or outstanding (Ofsted 2015). We follow the [Mainstream Core Standards](#) (please click link or go to kent.gov.uk and search Mainstream Core Standards), and if necessary provide one-to-one teaching, small group teaching or ICT learning programmes.



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How does the school adapt its curriculum and learning environment for children with SEN?

We follow the advice in the Mainstream Core Standards on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for children with SEN. We also incorporate advice given as a result of specialist assessments, and follow the strategies outlined in EHC Plans. Our school has ramps to all external classroom doors, grab rails alongside slopes and steps, and a lift, so that all children can access the whole school site. There is also a care suite with a hoist in the main school building.

What extra support for learning is available to children with SEN?

As part of our budget we receive SEN funding. This allows us to access specialist training for staff along with appropriate resources. In some cases, children need an exceptional level of resource - primarily one-to-one support - for which schools provide up to £6000 per year, with the Local Authority providing top-up funding to the school.

How do you enable children with SEN to take part in school activities?

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at Amherst are available to pupils with SEN either with or without an EHC plan. Wherever possible, the school enables the participation of all children in all activities.

How do you support children's emotional and social development?

At Amherst we model by example the inclusion of *all* children, with or without SEN. We support pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching: the PSHE curriculum, whole school and class assemblies and small intervention groups; and indirectly through the school's ethos and culture.

For children with the most need for help, we offer time-out space for children to use when upset or agitated, friendship group, lunchtime club, Minecraft club, Drawing and Talking, Lego Therapy, social skills group, referral to children's bereavement service, and a buddy system pairing new children entering year 3 with children in year 6. We have access to a qualified children's counsellor in school. Occasionally, we might ask for external specialist support, in which case we can make referrals to Early Help or to CYPMHS (was CAMHS), the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service.

How can I get in touch with the Inclusion Manager?

The Inclusion Manager at Amherst is Helen Holmes. Mrs Holmes is available by phone at school on 01732 452577 (Mon-Weds) or by email at helen.holmes@amherst.kent.sch.uk. Mrs Holmes holds a weekly drop-in for parents, every Wednesday afternoon; details in the school newsletter.

How are staff trained to work with children with SEN?

All teachers cover working with SEN as part of their training, and where a specific need is identified, they may receive extra training. We meet the training needs of teaching assistants through an in-house rolling programme of TA training, external courses, and by shadowing members of staff experienced in working with children with specific needs. In addition, there



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is an Induction Handbook for all new staff, and sometimes, whole school training takes place on Inset days and Twilight sessions.

How do you obtain specialist equipment?

Where external advisers recommend the use of specific equipment, which the school does not have, we either buy it using SEN funding, or loan it. For specialised communication equipment, we can ask for advice from Kent's Communication and Assistive Technology team.

How do you involve parents of children with SEN?

All parents are invited in to discuss the progress of their children. Parents of children in years 3 and 5 have three parent-teacher consultations per year; parents of children in years 4 and 6 have two per year. Parents are also invited to open afternoons and 'meet the teacher' sessions. There is an opportunity to meet the Inclusion Manager at weekly drop-in sessions. We are also happy to arrange meetings outside these times. Parents receive a full school report at the end of the summer term.

If your child has an individual provision plan, you will have the opportunity to meet with the Inclusion Manager in school three times a year and revise it. Parents of children with an EHC plan also review their child's provision plan three times a year as well as attending and contributing to the child's annual review. Attendees at annual review generally include other agencies involved with the child. Parents receive copies of all paperwork forming the annual review.

How do you involve children with SEN in their education?

When a child has been identified with SEN, we talk to him or her about the extra help they are receiving and why. Clearly, parents and teachers play a more significant role in the primary school years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence as they get older.

How would the Governing Body respond to complaints from parents of pupils with SEN concerning the provision made at the school?

We would encourage parents first to discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher, with the Inclusion Manager or with the Headteacher to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the Governing Body. If the complaint were not resolved after it had been considered by the Governing Body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service could be contacted. If it still remained unresolved after this, the complainant could appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if the case referred to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an EHC Plan, where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints falling within this category cannot be investigated by the school.



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How does the Governing Body involve external agencies?

The Governing Body has a governor who has responsibility for SEN. This governor meets with the Inclusion Manager three times a year. As part of these meetings, the Inclusion Manager reports on how the school has engaged with the following:

- LIFT (the Local Inclusion Forum Team) to access the specialist teaching and learning service
- The Disabled Children's Service, who provide support to families for some pupils with high needs
- Access to the Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy services
- Any requests for advice made to the Communication and Assistive Technology Team

I have a child with SEN; who can I contact for support from KCC?

If you need advice from KCC, please contact Advice and Support Kent/IASK (formerly Kent Parent Partnership Services). They provide free, impartial, confidential, advice, support and options around educational issues for parents of children with special educational needs or disabilities. They empower parents to play an active and informed role in their child's education. They can be contacted as follows:

HELPLINE: 03000 41 3000 (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm)
Office: 03000 412 412
E-mail: iask@kent.gov.uk
Website: IASK (click here or go to kent.gov.uk and search IASK)

Where can I find out about KCC's local offer? Go to kent.gov.uk and search for Local Offer.

How do you support children with SEN when they move schools?

Infant to junior: Because Amherst is a junior school, we recognise that children moving from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 are also moving school, with a change of site, uniform, structure and - importantly - transitioning from being the oldest to the youngest children in school. The year 3 teachers from Amherst visit year 2 in July to observe their future class in their current setting. This enables face-to-face discussion with the year 2 teachers to discuss each child individually.

Amherst has a buddy system, whereby in term 4, children in year 2 at Riverhead Infants are paired up with children in year 5 at Amherst. They do various activities together with their buddy, from making Easter Bonnets to a mini-Olympics during the spring and summer terms. Then, at the start of the new academic year, new year 3 children are met at the gate by their now-year-6 buddies, and taken to class. The year 6 buddies also accompany their year 3 partners to the lunch hall during the first week of term, and look out for them on the playground. For children with SEN, in addition to the buddy system, Riverhead hosts transition meetings, which are attended by Amherst's Head Teacher, Inclusion Manager, the child's new class teacher and the child's parents. Often, external professionals will attend too - from the Specialist Teaching Service or Health, for example.



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All children in Year 2 have organised visits to Amherst before they join us in year 3; those with SEN have extra visits, when they take photos of their new school, and use them to make their own transition books to look at over the summer holidays. Where children with an EHC Plan are coming from schools other than Riverhead Infants, the Inclusion Manager will observe the child in his or her current setting, and have a handover meeting with the class teacher and/or SENCO. .

Junior to secondary: A smooth transition between primary and secondary schools has an impact on children's wellbeing and their successful integration into their new settings. Clear records are kept for all children with SEN and passed on to their new schools. For children with an EHCP, Amherst will initiate a transition meeting with the SENCO at the secondary school, attended by parents and, where relevant, external professionals.

The Head Teacher and the Inclusion Manager have a good knowledge of secondary schools, including Special Schools, in the Sevenoaks area. We can support parents by accompanying them on visits to secondary schools if required.

For children receiving SEN Support, there will usually be a transition meeting with the SENCO at the new secondary, or where this is not possible, a telephone conversation. The Specialist Teaching Service, Early Help and the school counsellor also provide invaluable support during transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

NOTE

This policy/information report has been written in line with the requirements of:-

Children and Families Act 2014

SEN Code of Practice 2014

SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Part 3 Duties on Schools - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

Schedule 1 regulation 51- Information to be included in the SEN information report

Schedule 2 regulation 53 - Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer

Equality Act 2010

Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012

SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies (amended as required):

Accessibility, Admissions, Behaviour, Single Equality Scheme, Child Protection, Homework, Medical, Teaching and Learning. These policies may be viewed either online via the school website, or at the school office.