

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Objectives:

The objectives of the Special Educational Needs policy are as follows:

- To identify students with Special Educational Needs
- To recognise that there is a continuum of need, which may be temporary or long term; mild, moderate, or severe and to classify student's needs accordingly.
- To provide students having Special Educational Needs with their entitlement of a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, unless this is impossible for reasons clearly specified and understood by all parties concerned.
- To support students having Special Educational Needs by using a variety of appropriate strategies. These include in-class support and small group teaching.
- To plan for individual students to participate and to make progress academically and in personal and social development.
- To seek the views of students, parents / carers, teachers and appropriate external agencies in determining and evaluating the provision for Special Educational Needs.
- To liaise with other providers as appropriate, such as colleges and training providers, in connection with the educational progression of students having Special Educational Needs.

In seeking to meet these objectives, My Choice School is aware that there is a finite level of funding and resources available. We can therefore only **DO OUR BEST** to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any students who have Special Educational Needs.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

My Choice School accepts the following definition of Special Educational Needs (Children and Families Act 2014, section 20):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/enacted>

A child or young person has Special Education Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A young person has a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions.

Some students at My Choice School have SEN as a consequence of their Adverse Childhood Experiences and significant trauma.

Our students are likely to have:

- Complex emotional and behavioural needs due to early neglect and abuse that may or may not have been identified on an EHCP
- Disrupted educational backgrounds due to family changes, placement changes or living in a home environment which has not supported a routine or lifestyle conducive to regular school attendance or learning
- Attachment disorders leading to problems with developing appropriate relationships and working within boundaries set by adults in a school and home environment
- Difficulties with cognitive functioning as a result of neurobiological response to developmental trauma and stresses
- Have other difficulties that may or may not be linked to trauma which may not be identified on an EHCP

Supporting students with Special Educational Needs

This policy works in conjunction with the My Choice School assessment and curriculum policies.

All teachers have a responsibility for delivering a student centred and individualised curriculum and planning for participation, progress and development.

The teacher is responsible for the day to day assessment, monitoring and planning of provision for each student.

The Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that assessment and planning is monitored, evaluated and meets the needs of each student and is conducive to ensuring progress. The Headteacher has responsibility for the statutory reporting, recording and attendance at meetings. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school is run so that it is conducive to participation, progress and development, that appropriate resources are used and that school improvement is identified and managed.

The Headteacher is the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

Key elements of this role are to:

- Provide information to Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Officers, Virtual Schools and other partner agencies involved in a child's placement
- Coordinate information for and attendance at Looked after Child Reviews and Annual Reviews of EHCPs
- Coordinate the development, completion and sharing of Education Plans and Individual Education Plans
- Liaise with all other professional agencies supporting the education of the child

The Headteacher also acts as the SENCo for the school.

Key elements of this role are to:

- Ensure termly assessment of all students, specifically in English and Maths, following the school assessment schedule.
- Monitor the results through the IEP for each student
- Supervise teachers in a way that supports the use of assessment data to underpin future progress
- Ensure that assessment data is used in a way that allows for school improvement
- Liaise with the placing authority
- Coordinate the initiation (where necessary), review and implementation of EHCPs
- Support teachers in strategies for inclusion and differentiation.

How the school works with outside agencies to meet the special needs of children

Students at My Choice School are often supported by a team of professionals that may include:

- Social Workers
- Independent Reviewing Officers
- Guardians, independent visitors and advocates
- Virtual School caseworkers
- Therapists
- CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) workers
- Outreach support professionals (e.g. CSE workers)
- Youth Justice caseworkers

- The Police
- Educational Psychologists
- Consultant Psychotherapist
- Family Support workers or keyworkers

The forums for the sharing of information and for planning are the CLA reviews, PEP meetings and EHCP reviews however the Headteacher and teachers liaise with professionals regularly by telephone and email outside of these forums in order to keep all informed of progress and issues. Visits to the school are facilitated at all practical opportunities.

How the school plans for students to participate, make progress and show personal development

When a student is placed at My Choice School a process of assessment and planning commences. During this period objectives on the EHCP are considered, alongside information from previous school settings and care placements. Key areas of work are identified and the provision available to undertake these.

The objectives on the EHCP are used to create targets for each term, these are detailed on the Education Plan. The targets are used to create sub targets which form the IEP and are used on Medium Term Plans. This ensures triangulation between EHCPs, IEPs and planning.

The targets are shared with everyone working with the young person, including social workers, parents and carers via the IEP and are also included in PEPs. These targets can be further developed through smaller weekly targets for students.

IEPs are written at the start of every term and review mid term and throughout the term if necessary, assessment and progress monitoring by the teacher and Headteacher contributes to the reviews. The IEP also has a report section providing a comprehensive document of progress. School reports are finalised at the end of every term with additional progress reports available for any statutory meetings during the term.

The order of the assessment may vary depending on the nature of the placement and the information available on referral however the key stages are:

- Meet the child and have discussions with key professionals and parents / carers
- Establish educational history, including dialogue with previous school

- Read current EHCP, PEP, previous school reports and IEP if available
- Identify levels at most recent school (if appropriate) and establish current levels using the BKSB initial assessment and diagnostic tools
- Establish likes and dislikes, hobbies, interests and social activities
- Establish ideas for classroom resources /activities and engagement
- Build relationships
- Liaise with social workers and other key professionals
- Confirm levels and ability of interactions and relationships with adults and peers, considering significant behaviours and incidents
- Observation by Headteacher and teachers and TAs
- Teacher assessment of academic and other performance levels throughout the term
- Student File and Tracking File commenced and maintained
- IEP revised and finalised
- PEP and EHCP AR and other statutory meetings arranged

The Student Files

Teachers are responsible for the daily, weekly and termly maintenance of a Student File and Student Tracking File for each student.

The purpose of the Student Tracking File is to evidence the progress for each student according to the needs and targets identified on their EHCP and IEP, and other assessment tools, with examples of work, evaluations, timetables, record of points indicating engagement and assessment data.

The Student File is the compilation of IEPs, reports, assessment of academic and SEMH progress and positive achievements that provide the narrative and 'tells the story' of each term for that student, mapping development and identifying where interventions are necessary.

When students present with very complex needs it can be reductive to only identify academic progress. My Choice School strives to promote academic progress, however we recognise that the path to academic participation and progress is created through the development of emotional and social progressions.

Our aim is to assist students in coming to terms with difficult areas of their lives, consolidate areas in which they function well, begin to view education as a positive and rewarding experience, and where possible enable the achievement of qualifications and promote their successful transition to a college placement. Alongside this we have an expectation that each student will make one level progress in Maths and English each year, assessed using BKSB.

We believe each child, irrespective of age or background, has the ability to learn, the potential to grow, and the capacity to change. Through a process of nurture, guidance, safety and positive learning experiences, children are able to replace past experiences of failure and underachievement with successful and personally rewarding outcomes. They are empowered to reflect about themselves and their abilities in a more satisfying and healthy way thus offering real direction to their intellectual and personal growth.

We recognise that achievement involves more than achieving academic qualifications. There has to be an appropriate balance between academic learning, exploration of effective social skills and understanding the wider world, developing strategies for self regulation, and opportunities for emotional growth and understanding. Offering our young people an empathic, reflective, responsible, stimulating, and enjoyable learning environment helps them gain these qualities for themselves, enabling them to participate in community and create a positive future. We understand both the academic and developmental disruption faced by each child, we

regularly assess emotional functioning, and create supports and pathways for successful social participation.

The Student File contains information that gives background to the student's educational and emotional functioning. This information enables a clear rationale for decisions made about each student; their targets, timetable and the expectations of progress. It demonstrates why "age-appropriateness" is a complex mix of chronological, emotional and cognitive functioning that varies across the school's provision. It allows for aspiration to be clear and realistic and for past cycles of negative experiences to be broken down in a contained way.

All teachers and TAs in My Choice School are responsible for students with Special Educational Needs in their classrooms. The provision for students with Special Educational Needs required the support of the whole school / home community. Besides creating a learning environment which is encouraging and sensitive to individual needs, we see education as more than academic performance. It is also about fostering qualities of independence, self-advocacy, positive self-esteem and a respect for others.

My Choice School recognises that we may not be able to meet the needs of all students placed with us. Students with complex learning, social, emotional and communication needs may require additional support and more specialised provision (eg complex S&L or ASC input). My Choice School will consult with education authorities in order to identify alternative provision and the availability of additional input and advice. During this process My Choice School will continue to provide an education programme to the best of our ability and within the limitations and scope of our curriculum.

Policy link:

Admissions
Curriculum
Assessment

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Review due June 2025

