

SEN Policy Updated April 2010

Definitions and Aims:

This policy describes how Light Hall School provides support to enable students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to reach their full potential, to be included in the school community and make successful transition to adulthood.

We pay due regard to the Code of Practice (DfES, 2002) which states that:

“A student has a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they have a greater difficulty in learning than a majority of children the same age.”

The governing body are committed to inclusion with every student having equality of opportunity and full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

This policy reflects the aims and objectives of Light Hall School.

Roles and responsibilities:

The special educational needs co-ordinators, Mrs Helen Close and **Ms Elizabeth Tunstall**, are responsible for:

- The implementation of the code of practice
- The day to day operation of the schools Special Educational Needs policy
- Liaison with and advising colleagues
- Coordinating provision for students with special educational needs
- Maintaining records of students with special educational needs
- Liaison with parents of children identified as having special educational needs
- Contribute to the in-service training of staff
- Liaison with external agencies
- Managing the review process of students with special educational needs
- Liaison with feeder schools
- Liaison with colleges of further education
- Management of Learning Support Assistants.

The SENCO is supported in her work by the Assistant SENCO and a team of Learning Support Assistants. The LSAs may support SEN youngsters both in-class and out of class. The timetables of the Learning Support Assistants are organised by the SENCO and Assistant SENCO according to the needs of the students.

Arrangements for SEN Provision in School:

In line with the Code of Practice (DfES, 2002) Light Hall Learning Support Department produce an SEN list, updated three times a year. This details the name and form of the student and their area(s) of difficulty.

A student can be placed on the SEN list in a number of ways. Subject staff can refer students to the SENCO. Parents can also contact the school if they so wish. On transition, the SENCO or Assistant SENCO consult with Junior School staff to ensure that information is up to date and accurate. Once we have received a referral we will gather further information on that child and where appropriate undertake some routine testing. If a student transfers at another time, for example in the middle of an academic year, Heads of Year will pass on any relevant information to the SENCO.

We expect movement both up and down the SEN list. A child may be moved down or off the list if they are making “adequate progress”. Decisions on whether a child is to be moved down or off the register are made in full consultation with staff and parents, who are given opportunity to discuss the movement if they so wish.

Each student is placed at School Action, School Action Plus or Statement level on the SEN list according to the severity of their learning difficulty. There is also a section for students who have in the past experienced a special educational need whom staff need to be aware of.

Students at School Action may not necessarily have an Individual Education Plan. However staff will have access to general strategies which can be used to support students at School Action.

If a student is at School Action Plus there will be involvement of outside agencies to help the school meet his/her needs. This may take the form of observations, discussions, individual or small group teaching. The advice of these professionals is used to inform the IEPs which we aim to review termly.

If we feel that a child is still not making adequate progress at School Action Plus we will, in consultation with outside agencies, apply for statutory assessment, which may or may not lead to a statement.

Students with statements of Special Educational Needs all have IEPs and reviews are held termly where necessary with an Annual Review held at a time dictated by the statement.

Where appropriate IEPs detail strategies to help staff meet the needs of students within their classroom.

Reviews can be formal meetings, at Parents’ Evenings or over the telephone.

We value parent partnership and recognise the important role of parents and the valuable insight they can provide. We therefore actively encourage parental involvement in all aspects of their child’s school life. Parents are invited to take part in reviews. We also inform parents of relevant information via letters and telephone calls. If parents wish to access the Learning Support Department they can do so by appointment, at any time.

Admission arrangements for students experiencing SEN are the same as other students. For more details please refer to the Schools admission policy.

Facilities and Resources:

The Learning Support Department has a dedicated resource and teaching base, where students may be taught on a one-to-one basis or as part of a small group.

All new buildings are adapted for students with physical disabilities.

The school budget includes money to be spent on SEN. Allocation of funding for SEN is determined by the head teacher. Some funding is designated directly to the Learning Support Department. A majority of the funding is spent on teaching staff, allowances for the SENCO and Assistant SENCO and the non-teaching periods that these positions entail. Money is also used for Learning Support Assistants and administration support for the Learning Support Department. In addition, the Pastoral Support Centre receives funding from the SEN budget. Money is also set aside for improving the physical environment for SEN students.

Light Hall also operates its own internal unit to support students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This facility, the Pastoral Support Centre, operates by taking referrals from staff.

Inclusion:

In accordance with the law and the philosophy and policy of Light Hall School, the principles of inclusion are fully adhered to. All students, irrespective of SEN, are offered a broad and balanced curriculum suitable to their needs. The SENCO and Assistant SENCO work hard to ensure access. Students with a special educational need are actively encouraged to participate in trips and visits. They are encouraged to interact socially with peers. We appreciate that break-times can be particularly distressing for some youngsters, especially those with an ASD and the Learning Support teaching base and/or library is available at those times.

In the Upper School there is access to a more flexible curriculum, with links to local colleges. This is offered to students who the school feel will benefit from a more vocational approach to their GCSEs. **This is coordinated by the Alternative Curriculum Coordinator.**

Complaints Procedure:

It is envisaged that any issue would be resolved before it becomes a complaint through our good communication with parents. However, if this is not the case the whole school complaints procedure should be followed. A copy of the current Complaints Procedure is available on request.

In-Service Training

The Learning Support Department has access to a training budget which is used to continue the professional development of all team members. The SENCO and Assistant SENCO attend relevant Solihull network meetings and other relevant LEA training. Other courses will be attended where there is an identified need. The Learning Support Assistants are also actively encouraged to further their training.

The SENCO continually supports the professional development of all staff regarding SEN issues. Information is disseminated via staff bulletins, SEN newsletters and the Learning Support Department handbook. Training is delivered to wider staff on INSET days, and at staff meetings and we work with individual departments on key SEN issues such as differentiation.

Partnerships and Liaison

A wide range of external services and agencies are accessed to help meet the needs of the SEN students. These include:

- Solihull Specialist Inclusion Support Service
- Educational Psychological Services
- Social Services
- School Nurse and other Health Services
- Connexions
- Xstream Counsellors
- Skills Force
- Fairbridge
- NSPCC
- Solihull Bereavement Counsellors
- Growing Through
- Schools Liaison Police Officer
- Children as carers
- Cascade
- Solihull Student Referral Units
- 20 20 Services

Transition Arrangements:

We recognise the importance of smooth transition from primary to secondary school and the anxiety this can cause both for children and parents. The SENCO liaises with cluster schools and holds a transition meeting where all primary SENCOs are invited to transfer relevant information.

We also arrange extended induction visits for the most vulnerable youngsters. Upon arrival at Light Hall, wherever possible, students with SEN are given a named Learning Support Assistant, who can help them settle into secondary school life. Staff are fully informed of students' difficulties and receive training prior to the arrival of children in September.

In the Upper School, there is access to an alternative curriculum for a small minority of students. These places are limited and are allocated when there are vacancies.

Success Criteria:

If this policy is effective we would expect to see evidence of the following as part of everyday practice:

Students

- Positive responses in student surveys.
- Participation in the review process

Parents/ Carers

- Attendance at reviews
- Positive feedback on parental surveys

Progress and achievement

- A majority of SEN students improving their NC levels.
- A small minority of SEN students moving up the stages of the Code of Practice.

Teaching staff

- In lesson observations we would expect to see SEN strategies being employed.
- All IEPs returned for reviews.

Monitoring:

This policy and the work of the Learning Support Department is monitored in the following ways:

- Parental comments at reviews
- Attendance at reviews
- Student comments through the review progress
- Curriculum review conducted by Senior Managers
- Staff responses to IEPs
- Monitoring of specific programmes
- Student evaluation of intervention programmes
- Departmental Improvement Plan
- Analysing data on student achievement
- Lesson observations
- Questionnaires
- Student tracking
- Work scrutiny

The data gathered through the monitoring process is used to evaluate the success of this policy and thus the work of the Learning Support Department. This will then inform the Annual Governors Report.

Annual Milestone:

Using data to track and challenge underachievement of SEN youngsters.

Date of review:

July 2011

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