

# Acle Cluster Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

## Introduction

This policy outlines the procedures and information of support offered to the schools in the Acle Cluster to help meet the needs of pupils with SEND. It links with the individual SEND information reports published by schools in the Acle cluster.

The Acle Cluster is committed to working together with all members of the cluster community.

### Schools in the Cluster:

Acle Academy

Acle St Edmund C of E Primary School

Cantley Primary School and Nursery

Fairhaven VA Primary School

Fleggburgh Primary School

Freethorpe Primary School and Nursery

Lingwood Primary and Nursery Academy

Reedham Primary School

**Cluster Lead:** Paul Henery

**Cluster SEND Coordinator:** Sarah Gentle



**Signed:** Paul Henery

**Chair of Cluster Governing Body:** Bob Russell

## Our Approach to Supporting Learners with SEND in our Cluster Schools

The Acle Cluster believes in **participation for all**.

We want **all** adults and children to participate in learning and we celebrate all members of our community. We want an inclusive culture in all our schools, creating learning environments which are **flexible** enough to meet the need of all members of the school community. We want to be **responsive to the diversity** of children's backgrounds, interests, experience, knowledge and skills.

We value **high quality teaching** for all learners and actively support training and support for teachers and support staff in our schools.

### Aims

- Develop a culture of inclusion, valuing high quality teaching for all learners.
- Employ a collaborative approach with learners with a SEN or disability, their families, cluster schools, other local authority professionals, and partners across the public sector.
- Set appropriate individual targets based on prior achievement, high aspirations and the views of the learner and family.
- Share expertise and good practice across the cluster schools.
- Make efficient and effective use of school and cluster resources.
- Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) for the identification, assessment, support and review of special educational needs.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Children & Families Act 2014.
- Follow guidelines detailed by Norfolk County Council.

### What is Special Educational Needs?

At different times in their school career, a child or young person may have some educational need. The code of practice defines SEN as:

**“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:**

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

### How does a school know if a child needs extra help?

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, external agencies, regarding a pupil's level of progress.
- A pupil asks for help.
- Assessments that indicates gap in knowledge and/ or skills.
- Whole school tracking of attainment outcomes indicates lack of expected levels of progress.
- Observation of the pupil

## **Areas of Special Educational need**

### **1. Communication and interaction**

This can mean that a child has a speech, language and communication need (SLCN) i.e. they have difficulty in making themselves understood or in understanding the meaning of some or much of what they hear or read. This may result in problems taking part in conversations. Some children may have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) which could result in difficulties related to making sense of the world, imagination, distraction or distress from certain events, change in routines, co-ordination or motor (physical movement) functions.

### **2. Cognition and learning**

Children with learning needs will learn at a slower pace than other children and may have difficulty developing literacy or numeracy skills or understanding new concepts. Learning needs may be in addition to or as a result of other special educational needs. Children with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) will have difficulties related to one or more of dyslexia (reading and spelling), dyscalculia (maths), dyspraxia (co-ordination) and dysgraphia (writing). Poor behaviour can result from learning needs.

### **3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**

Difficulties with emotional and social development may result in immature social skills and the inability to make or sustain relationships. Certain accompanying behaviours can also be observed such as becoming withdrawn or isolated or challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. Unusual mood, conduct (behaviour) and medically unexplained physical symptoms can be indicators of a mental health need. Some children may have a diagnosis of a recognised disorder.

### **4. Sensory and/or physical needs**

Many children can have their sensory and/or physical needs met through adaptations to the curriculum, teaching activities or physical environment under the guidance of the Equality Act 2010. Some learners will require special educational provision; this is identified as a SEN under the guidance of the SEN Code of Practice (2014).

## **SENCO Meetings:**

The SEND cluster coordinator meets with the Cluster SENCOs at least termly. This enables the communication between schools and the sharing of good practice. The meeting sometimes includes discussion of pupils that may be a cause for concern. To ensure confidentiality names are not used but strategies are offered to help meet needs. Also, the meetings offer a chance to share new ideas, information, support each other and to look at individual school's SEND data in order to identify common needs across the cluster. The aim is to improve SEND practice and consistency across all cluster schools.

## **Allocation of SEND Funding:**

All schools have their own SEND budget, schools are initially expected to use the notional £6000 allocated to pupils to meet their additional needs. Each schools SEN memorandum can be found here:

<http://efs.norfolk.gov.uk/BudgetShare/>

The cluster hold additional funds called Top-Up funding and this is used to help provide learning support packages for specific pupils or groups of pupils. When top-up funding is required schools complete an application (Paperwork available in SEND Handbook and electronically from the Cluster SEND Coordinator).

This application goes to the heads' termly meeting. At this meeting allocation of funds are discussed and moderated by an educational psychologist to enable fair distribution of funds based on need. There is an expectation for heads and SENCOs to demonstrate how schools and cluster resources have been used effectively, before top up funding is allocated. All applications are completed a week before the panel date and emailed to cluster head, cluster SEND coordinator and Educational Psychologist.

Top-up funding is only allocated for 3 terms maximum and up until the end of the financial year. For pupils with complex needs funding will be budgeted for annually to ensure specialist support is maintained, funding will be reviewed every March.

### **Criteria for applications:**

- Recommendation of the SENCOs
- Recommendation from professionals/ Cluster ASST
- Pupil's deterioration in levels or need
- Pupils with Education Health Care Plans
- High need pupils
- Schools have spent notional funding and are unable to fully meet additional needs of individual or groups of pupils
- Reference to Appendix 3 "SEN level of need" (see below)

### **How do we know the funding has made a difference?**

There is an expectation for schools to gather evidence of pupils starting points before funding and evidence for what has changed as a result of funding. Without this any application faces being returned or rejected.

Schools are expected to complete an "Impact Form" annually (pro forma in the cluster handbook).

Evidence of impact could include:

- Data demonstrating progress
- Learning Plan targets achieved
- Assessments before and after interventions
- Lesson observations
- Class teacher feedback on pupil behaviour
- Parental feedback
- Pupil feedback
- Professional reports

### **Contingency Fund:**

The cluster holds a contingency fund to be used for unplanned high level of need if no further funding is available.

### **Training Fund:**

The cluster allocates funds for training. The areas of training are discussed with SENCOs and Heads in order to meet the changing needs of the cluster schools. Training is delivered locally wherever possible and may be with other clusters.

**Additional professionals:**

The cluster employ professionals part-time funded through the SEND Top-up Fund:

- A SEND cluster Coordinator
- A Parental Support Advisor
- An Educational Psychologist
- An Advisory Support Teacher

**Complaint procedure:**

If a parent is not satisfied with the SEND provision for their child, the concern must first be raised with their child's class teacher. If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved, then parents are given the opportunity to meet with the school's SENCO and the Cluster SEND coordinator. If there is still a cause for complaint the SEND manager will contact the Local Authority's SEND Cluster adviser for advice.

If a school is not satisfied with the outcome of an application made to APASH (the heads' meeting) they should put in a revised request that includes any new evidence requested, to the next head teachers meeting.

## Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities

*“Mainstream schools **must***

- *use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people’s SEN*

*“Schools have duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage.”*

*SEN and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (June 2014)*

### Role of the Cluster Governance

It is the role of the cluster’s governing body to be up to date and knowledgeable about the SEND provisions available, including how funding is deployed. A Governor for SEND will be appointed annually by the Cluster Governors. The SEND governor will ensure that the SEND provision is an integral part of the cluster development plan and that the quality of the SEND provision is continually monitored.

### The Head Teacher

The head teachers hold responsibility for the decision-making on SEN funding and resourcing. They ensure the cluster governing body is provided with the information required to fulfil their duties.

Head teachers have responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of their school’s work, including provision for learners with SEND. The head teacher should keep their own school’s governing body fully informed and also work closely with the SENCO. Head teachers will support SENCOs to submit applications for cluster funding.

### The SENCO

SENCOs, in collaboration with the head teachers and governors, play a key role in developing and implementing the SEND policy and provision in school, in order to raise the achievement of learners with SEN. Responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the school’s SEND policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with Special Educational & Disability Needs
- Liaising with and advising teachers
- Managing Teaching Assistants / SEN team
- Maintaining the records and monitoring the progress of all children with SEND
- Liaising with families of learners with SEND
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Liaising with external agencies including the LEA’s support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.
- Working with the cluster SENCOs

## **The Cluster SEND Coordinator**

Responsibilities include:

- To meet with SENCOs and visit schools regularly to discuss SEND provision
- To monitor impact of allocation of SEND funds
- To gather information from the schools with regard to the Cluster SEND profile, skills and resources audit
- To liaise with cluster SENCOs to co-write and monitor the SEND development plan
- To facilitate and broker SEND training as required by schools
- To represent the cluster at SEND meetings in the county and disseminate information to SENCOs, Heads and governors
- To report to the cluster Heads and the cluster governing body
- To contribute to the completion of the annual SEND Health Check and Cluster SEND action plan

## **The Cluster SEN Facilitator**

The SEN Facilitator is a service to provide guidance and support for the cluster's strategic development of practice and high standards in SEN. It facilitates sharing good practice with other clusters. Acting independently of the schools, the Cluster SEN Facilitator will maintain an overview of funding allocation, monitor the impact and quality of provision throughout the cluster and facilitate discussion on self-evaluation and value for money, evidenced in impact and outcomes for individual learners. Support and guidance will be provided to all schools and the cluster SEND Coordinator to promote consistency across the cluster.

## **The Teaching Staff**

Teachers are responsible for adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of learners with SEN and for maintaining records of strategies used and their impact. Teachers need to be aware of the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for learners with SEN. For details of a school's approach to teaching and learning and continued professional development (CPD) opportunities for teachers, please see the school's teaching and learning policy.

## **Teaching Assistants (TAs)**

TAs work with the SENCO and teachers to provide support for learners with SEN and disabilities across the school, maintaining records of the learners they work with, and attending reviews and meetings as requested.

## **Families of Learners with SEN**

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, Aclé Cluster believes that all families of children with SEND must be treated as equal partners. Parents are invited to positively contribute in the processes for Support for Learning Plans and their views are sought for reviews. We encourage active family participation by providing guidance on how they can support their child's learning at home. The cluster provides user-friendly information and strives to ensure that parents understand the procedures and are aware of how to access advice and support.

## Appendix 2: Cluster Assessment tools

These assessment tools are to support SENCOs in accurate assessment of need and gauging the success of prior interventions. This will then inform data on referrals to cluster and impact forms.

Assessment	Learning Focus	Age range
Group Reading Test	Reading: whole class screening	6 to 14 years
Salford	Reading: 1:1	5 to 13 years
Neale Analysis of Reading	Reading: 1:1 with diagnostic element	6 to 12.11 years
Single Word Spelling Test	Spelling: whole class screening	5 to 14 years
BPVS	Understanding of spoken language: 1:1	3 years to adult
Sandwell Early Numeracy Test: Stage 2 and 3	Maths	7 to 14 years
Diagnostic Interviews in Number Sense	Maths: 1:1 assessments mapping children's understanding of number	8 to 10 years (but can be used with older children where maths is causing a concern)

The cluster is currently exploring a good tool for assessing Social Emotional and Mental Health and for working memory.

### Appendix 3: SEN Level of Need:

Learners with low level special educational needs or with low levels of attainment

*Provision made in class*

- Attaining below nationally expected levels for age.
- Unable to maintain concentration / focus for periods appropriate to age
- Difficulties with independence, organisation and following instruction
- Displays some disruptive / inappropriate behaviour that requires management
- Some difficulties with friendships/relationships
- Some delay in fine and/or gross motor skills
- Some communication and/or language difficulties although is understood by known people
- Requires some support / supervision for care / mobility / medical needs through a health / care plan
- Requires some small group work to ensure progress

Learners with moderate level special educational needs

*Needs met by school with Wave 2 and/or 3 provision up to a cost of £6,000 per year*

- Known to one or more services / agencies
- Attaining below nationally expected levels for age for a prolonged period (2 terms) despite Wave 1 intervention
- Require some adult support / 1:1 work / specialist equipment to facilitate access to the curriculum
- Delay in fine and/or gross motor skills requiring specialist equipment
- Experience social difficulty that requires support
- Some communication and/or language difficulties hinders access although can make needs known
- Reduced participation in and contribution to learning activities
- Evidence of stress and/or anxiety responses to identified situations
- Displays behaviour that frequently disrupts own or peers' learning opportunities
- Requires intervention for care / self help / mobility / medical needs through health / care plan
- Sensory needs generate a requirement to modify information and materials

### Learners with high level special educational need

#### *Possible application for funding from cluster for provision costing over £6,000*

- Known to a number of services / agencies with high level of involvement from at least one
- Attaining well below nationally expected levels for age (*reaching P5-8 by end of KS2 or L2 by end of KS4*)
- Very slow progress resulting in a widening gap between their own and age appropriate attainment despite support
- Delayed fine and/or gross motor skills require adult support
- Significant difficulties with organisation and/or communication inhibit access to classroom activities
- Require a highly adapted or personalised curriculum, able to participate in limited classroom activities
- Experiences extreme social difficulties and frequent social isolation despite support
- Reduced attendance and/or engagement
- Display behaviour that persistently disrupts attendance, own or peers' learning opportunities, progress and/or repeatedly causes harm or damage
- Extreme stress and/or anxiety responses generated by identified situations
- Requires extensive intervention to develop age appropriate self help /daily living / personal care skills

### Learners with a significantly higher level of special educational need

#### *Possible request for statutory assessment (Single assessment of Education, Health and Care from 2014)*

- High levels of involvement from a number of services
- Achieving significantly below nationally expected levels for age (<2<sup>nd</sup> percentile)
- Unable to access classroom activities or formal learning situations despite significant support
- Show minimal progress or even regression despite high levels of support
- Socially isolated, vulnerable and/or disengaged
- Motor skills require high levels of adult support and specialist equipment to access the curriculum
- Wholly dependent upon adult support for care needs
- Display extremely inappropriate behaviour that consistently disrupts own or peers' learning opportunities
- Behaviour causes damage to property and / or danger of harm to him/herself and / or others
- Disengaged from learning with imminent risk of exclusion