

Treetops Learning Community

SEN/D Information Report



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1. What are Special Educational Needs or a Disability?

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) gives the following definitions:

Special Educational Needs: A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.

Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

Disability: Many children and young people who have SEN may 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 includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.

2. What types of SEN/D do we provide for?

Treetops is a day special school for children and young people between the ages of 5 and 19 who experience moderate learning difficulties, including speech and language difficulties, ADHD, ASD, Asperger’s syndrome and developmental delay.

The school operates a special VB (Verbal Behaviour) department for children on the more severe end of the autistic spectrum and was the first special school in the UK to adopt these teaching principles.

3. How do we identify and assess pupils with SEN?

All teachers are responsible for every child in their care.

In order to identify the barriers to learning, we take into account all the information from discussions with parents or carers, the child/young person, the class teacher and information contained in the child’s/young person’s Education, Health and Care Plan. Advice may be sought from external professionals.

4. Who is our special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and how can s/he be contacted?

Due to the nature of the school, the class teacher is the first point of contact regarding a child's/young person's special educational needs. Please phone the school on 01375 372723 either for a telephone conversation or to make an appointment for a meeting.

5. What is our approach to teaching pupils with SEN/D?

Pupils in MLD classes are taught through the national curriculum, modified to meet their needs. Pupils in Key Stage 4 study for a variety of nationally accredited qualifications tailored to their needs, such as entry level, BTEC, GCSE and ASDAN.

In Key Stage 5 pupils follow appropriate ASDAN qualifications based around personal development and life skills. They also continue to study Maths and English.

Pupils in the VB classes follow their own daily timetable which consists of targets that form an individualised programme. In addition to academic skills in numeracy and literacy, targets also include teaching in communication, social skills, behaviour and self-help and independent living. The pupil's timetable is a combination of working on intensive teaching sessions using the principles of ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis) to teach and then time spent in the natural environment where the focus is generalisation of skills and communication. ABA is based on motivation and reinforcement, therefore each pupil's motivation is assessed during each session and items or activities are used to reinforce them when they are working hard to learn new skills. Pupils within the VB department often display very challenging behaviour, therefore a big emphasis is placed on taking accurate data which can then be analysed and an intervention put in place to help reduce this.

6. How do we adapt the curriculum and learning environment?

The school building is designed to accommodate children with a variety of SEN, with specialist rooms such as speech and language, soft play and VB classrooms. Class numbers are smaller, around 12, with at least one Teaching Assistant. Pupils in VB classes have individual tutors, overseen by a senior tutor and a class instructor. Rooms also have breakout areas for small group working or individual sessions.

7. How do we enable pupils with SEN to engage in activities with other pupils who do not have SEN?

Where appropriate, the school offers opportunities for pupils to engage with mainstream pupils as and when these arise. These may include sports fixtures, performing arts events, public speaking competitions and residential trips.

8. How do we consult parents of pupils with SEN and involve them in their child's education?

Parents are given the opportunity to visit the school and meet with teachers to discuss progress three times a year, as well being invited to class assemblies, harvest and Christmas celebrations, end of term awards assemblies and school productions. We also have a school app that is used to communicate everything from class activities to whole school events.

9. How do we consult pupils with SEN and involve them in their education?

Pupils are given opportunities, where appropriate, to make their views known through the EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) review process, School Council and PSHE lessons. We also like to think that pupils feel safe enough to air their views informally to teachers and support staff.

10. How do we assess and review pupils' progress towards their outcomes?

All pupils have been allocated an EHCP with objectives and outcomes agreed between school, parents, the child (where appropriate) and other relevant agencies. These are monitored throughout the year using an EHCP tracking document. Pupils work towards more specific targets based on their EHCP and the national curriculum or accredited specifications. The school has a bespoke assessment system allowing even the smallest amount of progress to be shown. Pupils following VB programmes are assessed against their individual programme targets in line with their EHCP.

Where appropriate, progress is discussed with pupils lesson by lesson, weekly, half termly and annually. Parents are involved as described above.

11. How do we support pupils moving between different phases of education?

As an all through school, transition between phases is straightforward and pupils are already familiar with staff and the school environment. Those joining the school normally have numerous outreach visits from school staff and are offered a period of transition. At the end of each academic year, the school has a whole school transition day where all pupils work with their new classes and teachers.

12. How do we support pupils preparing for adulthood?

Pupils follow an extensive PSHE programme which includes elements of functional skills, self-reliance and independence. For those needing more work in these areas, the V1th form curriculum is exclusively based around functional living, independence and self-advocacy. They and their parents have access to careers advice from Year 9.

13. How do we support pupils with SEN to improve their emotional and social development?

In addition to the extensive PSHE programme, pupils have the opportunity to be involved in residential visits in Years 6, 7, 9 and 11. These are normally based around adventurous activities. The school also runs a ski trip. There is a house system that presently runs in Years 6 to 9, offering opportunities for pupils to collaborate, compete and develop an identity with their peers and staff attached to their house.

Pastoral care is seen as a collegiate responsibility throughout the school, although pupils have a form teacher who has day to day responsibility for their welfare, supported by a Key Stage Leader.

14. What expertise and training do our staff have to support pupils with SEN?

As a special school, all staff are experienced in working with numerous types of SEN. Where staff are new or have particular skills that need to be developed, they are offered relevant training. The school is committed to providing continuous professional development (CPD) for all staff.

Treetops is a designated Teaching School.

15. How will we secure specialist expertise?

Where such expertise is not available through the staff, the school will access specialist expertise via the Local Authority and the NHS.

16. How will we secure equipment and facilities to support pupils with SEN?

The school's funding is commensurate with that of a special school, so all resources and facilities are secured as part of the school's normal operation.

17. How do we involve other organisations in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and supporting their families?

Through each pupil's EHCP and, as and when the need arises, the school has close links with Social Care, the NHS and a variety of organisations such as the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS).

18. How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our SEN provision?

The school has been judged outstanding by Ofsted in the last 3 inspections, in 2008, 2011 and 2014.

Governors/Trustees question and scrutinise data, conduct focussed visits and participate in learning walks.

19. How do we handle complaints from parents of children with SEN about provision made at the school?

The school's Complaints Policy is available to all parents. We have an open door policy and encourage parents to address all concerns with the school as soon as possible so that they can be resolved.

Pupils can speak to any trusted adult who will then refer the matter to the appropriate member of staff.

20. Who can young people and parents contact if they have concerns?

Parents can contact the class teacher in the first instance and then the relevant Key Stage Leader if not satisfied. If things are still not resolved, the matter can be taken through the Assistant Headteachers to the Deputy Headteacher and then to the Headteacher.

21. What support services are available to parents?

The school can signpost parents to relevant support agencies, dependent upon need.

In Thurrock, Information, Advice and Support Services are provided by the Parent Advisory Team Thurrock (PATT). Their services are free, confidential and impartial.

Parent Advisory Team Thurrock (PATT)

The Beehive, West Street, Grays, RM17 6XP

01375 389 894

info@patt.org.uk

22. Where can the LA's local offer be found? How have we contributed to it?

The LA Local Offer can be found on the Thurrock website at:

<http://www.askthurrock.org.uk/kb5/thurrock/fis/localoffer.page>

Our local offer is available on the school website:

<http://www.treetopsschool.org/local-offer.html>