

# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy



## Hethersett Schools Cluster

*In Partnership with Schools and Communities*

Hethersett Woodside Infant and Nursery, Hethersett VC Junior, Hethersett Academy,  
Cringleford Primary, Little Melton Primary, Mulbarton Infant, Mulbarton Junior

## **RATIONALE**

The Hethersett Cluster of schools is committed to providing a full and effective education to all learners and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We have developed this as a Cluster Policy in order to give a consistent response to all learners in our care and their families.

## **CONTEXT**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy is a key element of Hethersett Cluster's policy framework for supporting the needs of all children and young people between the ages of 3 and 18.

The cluster is formed by the schools in the Hethersett area as listed on the front page and promotes an ethos of:

- Ensuring safety and security for all
- Maximising learner well-being
- Removing barriers to opportunity and improving choice for all
- Planning for and investing in the future
- Encouraging partnerships, participation and contribution

The Cluster Policy was drawn up in 2013, in response to Norfolk County Council's new arrangements for the delegation of SEND finances to the cluster. This revised Policy has been written to respond to the requirements of the Children & Families Act (2014) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014) with regard to assessment and provision for SEND.

## **OBJECTIVE**

To provide the structure for a learner-centred process that engages learner, family, school and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality, needs led provision that is consistent across the cluster. This is to ensure all of our learners are able to access the same opportunities for learning and social development achieving maximum progress and promoting their well-being.

## **Aims**

- Develop a culture of inclusion valuing high quality teaching for all learners, with teachers using a range of effective differentiation methods.
- 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.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF THE POLICY**

The policy will be monitored and evaluated annually by the SENCOs, governors, teachers and head teachers from each school in consultation with parents of and learners with SEN and/or disabilities.

## **LEARNERS WITH A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED (SEN) OR DISABILITY**

The current definitions of learners with a SEN (SEND Code of Practice 2014) and/or Disabilities (Equalities Act 2010) are provided at Appendix A.

There may be times in a learner's school career when they are identified as having a SEN. These learners will be provided with intervention or support that is 'additional to or different from' the normal differentiated curriculum. This may be on an ongoing basis or for a limited time whilst they secure the required skills they need to progress at an expected or accelerated rate.

Many learners with sensory and/or physical disabilities may require adaptations, made as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. Some learners will require special educational provision; it is this group that should be identified as having a SEN.

### **How we identify and support learners with SEN**

#### **Assessment of need(s)**

All learners' attainment and achievements are monitored by their teacher who is required to provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities differentiated for individual learners. Where a learner is making inadequate progress or falls behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the class teacher. Adequate progress could:

- Be similar to that of peers;
- Match or better the learners' previous rate of progress;
- Close the attainment gap between the learner and their peers;
- Prevent the attainment gap growing wider.

Where learners continue to make inadequate progress despite support and high quality teaching, the class teacher will work with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to assess if a learner has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support. Details of assessment tools and materials used in our cluster can be found in Appendix B. In some cases it may be necessary to seek assessment by or advice from an external professional such as a specialist teacher or educational psychologist.

#### **Areas of Special Educational Need**

Children identified as having a special educational need (SEN) will be considered within one or more of the following categories of need:

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

This can mean that your 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).

Further information about the four areas of SEN can be found in the SEN Code of Practice (2014).

### **Planning support**

Families will be notified in cases where additional support is required to support a SEN. A plan will be drawn up to reflect the aim(s) and nature of the intervention / support, the expected impact and a date for review. Schools will seek to consult with the learner and their family to draw up the support plan.

### **Implementing support**

The planned support will remain the responsibility of the class or subject teacher including working closely with other staff involved in implementing the intervention / support. The SENCO will provide support to the class or subject teacher where needed, particularly in assessing learners and advising on effective implementation.

### **Review of impact**

The class or subject teacher will consider evidence of assessment in conjunction with the views of learners and their families to review impact that the intervention / support has had and in consultation with the SENCO review any further need for support. Where there is a sustained period of insufficient or no progress, the school may decide to gain involvement and advice from a specialist. Schools will seek to consult with the learner and their family before involving a specialist.

### **Funding intervention and support**

In April 2013 Norfolk County Council introduced new processes for funding SEN support. All funding for SEN in mainstream schools is delegated to the schools' and clusters' budgets. It is the expectation that schools provide support to their learners with SEN from their SEN budget. Where a learner requires an exceptionally high level of support that incurs a greater expense, the school can make a request to the cluster for additional funding following the agreed cluster SEN funding protocol. The funding protocol for Hethersett cluster is available on request from your school SENCO.

**The decision making for distribution of funding is equally shared amongst all schools, although the Cluster Governing Body may take a decision to delegate this.**

### **Transition**

A change of school, class and staff can be an exciting, yet anxious time for all learners. We endeavour to make sure these periods of change are managed in a sensitive way to provide continuity of quality provision and reassurance to our learners and families. Our processes for transition are explained further in Appendix C.

## **CLUSTER ARRANGEMENTS**

### **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)*

### **The Cluster Governing Body**

The cluster governing body, in co-operation with the head teachers:

- determines Hethersett Cluster’s policy and approach to provision for learners with SEND;
- oversees the spending arrangements recommended by the cluster chair as a result of a quorate decision;
- monitors the impact of SEN provision considering information such as attendance, exclusions and attainment data;
- meets regularly to review the cluster SEN profile, agree the development of cluster SEN arrangements and liaise with local authority personnel.

Individual School’s Governing Bodies must nominate one governor with responsibility for SEND and report to families annually on the school’s policy on SEND. The governor with responsibility for SEND will liaise regularly with the SENCO and cluster governors and report back to the full Governing Body.

### **The Head Teacher**

The head teachers in the cluster hold responsibility for the decision-making group regarding funding and resourcing and will ensure the cluster governing body is provided with the information required to fulfill 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**

The SENCOs in the cluster form the decision-making and implementation or operational group. The cluster’s SENCOs will meet regularly to allocate funds, share good practice, expertise and develop SEN provision across the cluster schools.

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. Key responsibilities delegated by the head teacher may 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 in their school
- 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 to support all learners within our community of schools

### **The Cluster Host SENCO**

The cluster headteachers will regularly review and nominate a 'host' SENCO, who will organise the agenda for and chair cluster SENCO meetings each half term. The host will work in conjunction with the SEN Facilitator to ensure the continued development of collaborative practice, high standards of provision and fair funding across the cluster.

The host will ensure the framework for cluster operation and systems to delegate SEN funding are maintained and ensure paperwork is distributed.

### **The Cluster SEN Facilitator**

The SEN Facilitator is an independent service to provide guidance and support for the cluster's strategic development of practice and high standards in SEN and 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 host SENCO to promote consistency across the cluster.

### **The Teaching Staff**

Teachers are responsible for adapting the curriculum and planning appropriately differentiated work to meet the needs of learners with SEN and for maintaining records of strategies used and their impact. Schools ensure their teachers are 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, Hethersett Cluster believes that all families of children with SEND should 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.

### **Learners with a SEN or disability**

Learners will be encouraged to participate in processes designed to support them including decision-making, setting learning targets, contributing to and reviewing their learning plans; and their school's local offer.

### **Admissions**

No learner will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the SEND code of practice and Disability Act we will not discriminate against learners with a SEN and/or disability and we will take all reasonable steps to provide effective educational provision. The Hethersett Cluster will empower families to make an informed decision about the most appropriate setting for the holistic care and learning development for their child.

Policy date: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Review date: July 2015

### **Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

The Code of Practice (2014) states

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.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them (Clause 20 Children and Families Act)

### **Definition of Disability**

The Equality Act (2010) defines a disabled person as someone who has: ***“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”***.

In the Act:

‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairment”

‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties as well as an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness”.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as Dyslexia, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Having an impairment does not **of itself** mean that a learner is disabled. It is the effect on the learner’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered. The test of whether impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one or more of the following:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk or physical danger

**Discrimination arising from disability (Equality Act 2010) (See Appendix A)**

**Assessment Tools and Materials available for use in the cluster**

Assessment Package	Learning Focus	Age Range
Parallel Spelling Test: D Young	Spelling	Year 2 to 7
Basic Number Screening: Hodder	Number	Age 7 to 12
Ravens Coloured Matrices	Underlying learning difficulties	Age 4-18
Sandwell Early Numeracy test	Number	Age 4 to 14
Dyscalculia Screener (Brian Butterworth)	Dyscalculia	Age 6 to 14
BPVS	Receptive language	Age 3 to 16
Diagnostic spelling (primary)	Spelling	Age 5 to 12
Cognitive Ability Test	General Learning	KS 2 to 4
New Group Reading Test	Reading & comprehension	KS 1 to 4
Wide Range Intelligence Test	Verbal & Non-verbal cognitive ability	Age 4 to 85
Wide Range Achievement Test	Reading, Spelling and Maths	Age 5 to 94
Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting	Handwriting speed	Age 9 to 16y 11m
York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension	Reading	Age 12 to 16



## SEN Level of Need

<p style="text-align: center;">Learners with low level special educational needs or with low levels of attainment <i>Provision made in class</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attaining below nationally expected levels for age.</li> <li>• Unable to maintain concentration / focus for periods appropriate to age</li> <li>• Difficulties with independence, organisation and following instruction</li> <li>• Displays some disruptive / inappropriate behaviour that requires management</li> <li>• Some difficulties with friendships/relationships</li> <li>• Some delay in fine and/or gross motor skills</li> <li>• Some communication and/or language difficulties although is understood by known people</li> <li>• Requires some support / supervision for care / mobility / medical needs through a health / care plan</li> <li>• Requires some small group work to ensure progress</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">Learners with moderate level special educational needs <i>Needs met by school with Wave 2 and/or 3 provision up to a cost of £6,000 per year</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known to one or more services / agencies</li> <li>• Attaining below nationally expected levels for age for a prolonged period (2 terms) despite Wave 1 intervention</li> <li>• Require some adult support / 1:1 work / specialist equipment to facilitate access to the curriculum</li> <li>• Delay in fine and/or gross motor skills requiring specialist equipment</li> <li>• Experience social difficulty that requires support</li> <li>• Some communication and/or language difficulties hinders access although can make needs known</li> <li>• Reduced participation in and contribution to learning activities</li> <li>• Evidence of stress and/or anxiety responses to identified situations</li> <li>• Displays behaviour that frequently disrupts own or peers' learning opportunities</li> <li>• Requires intervention for care / self help / mobility / medical needs through health / care plan</li> <li>• Sensory needs generate a requirement to modify information and materials</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">Learners with high level special educational need <i>Possible application for funding from cluster for provision costing over £6,000</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known to a number of services / agencies with high level of involvement from at least one</li> <li>• Attaining well below nationally expected levels for age (<i>reaching P5-8 by end of KS2 or L2 by end of KS4</i>)</li> <li>• Very slow progress resulting in a widening gap between their own and age appropriate attainment despite support</li> <li>• Delayed fine and/or gross motor skills require adult support</li> <li>• Significant difficulties with organisation and/or communication inhibit access to classroom activities</li> <li>• Require a highly adapted or personalised curriculum, able to participate in limited classroom activities</li> <li>• Experiences extreme social difficulties and frequent social isolation despite support</li> <li>• Reduced attendance and/or engagement</li> <li>• Display behaviour that persistently disrupts attendance, own or peers' learning opportunities, progress and/or repeatedly causes harm or damage</li> <li>• Extreme stress and/or anxiety responses generated by identified situations</li> <li>• Requires extensive intervention to develop age appropriate self help /daily living / personal care skills</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">Learners with a significantly higher level of special educational need <i>Possible request for statutory assessment (Single assessment of Education, Health and Care from 2014)</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of involvement from a number of services</li> <li>• Achieving significantly below nationally expected levels for age (&lt;2<sup>nd</sup> percentile)</li> <li>• Unable to access classroom activities or formal learning situations despite significant support</li> <li>• Show minimal progress or even regression despite high levels of support</li> <li>• Socially isolated, vulnerable and/or disengaged</li> <li>• Motor skills require high levels of adult support and specialist equipment to access the curriculum</li> <li>• Wholly dependent upon adult support for care needs</li> <li>• Display extremely inappropriate behaviour that consistently disrupts own or peers' learning opportunities</li> <li>• Behaviour causes damage to property and / or danger of harm to him/herself and / or others</li> <li>• Disengaged from learning with imminent risk of exclusion</li> </ul>

### Phase Transfer and Transition Planning for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

In order to ensure successful transfer between educational settings and schools for our learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and a consistent approach to transition across the cluster schools, our SENCOs work collaboratively to share and develop good practice and effective processes.

All learners moving to a new school will be offered a series of activities and visits organised to familiarise them with the new school environment and teachers prior to the date of transfer. Details of these are available from your child's school.

For our children with SEND, it may be necessary to provide additional opportunities to develop relationships with staff and familiarity with their new school environment. These additional transition arrangements will be provided in response to your child's individual needs and identified through discussion between schools, and with you and your child.

#### **Information Sharing**

##### Transition Planning Meetings

During the last term of each academic year transition planning meetings will take place for all children changing class within the same school. Current teachers will meet with new teachers. For children with an additional need, meetings will begin earlier in the year. These meetings are to discuss your child's strengths, interests and any additional needs they may have. They will share ways that those additional needs are being met, including what has worked well and what has not been so successful.

Where your child will be starting a new school, the sendco and teacher(s) at your child's school will meet with the sendco and teacher(s) at their new school. There is likely to be more than one transition planning meeting and they could take place from as early as November in order to provide as much information as possible to the new school about your child. This is so that they can ensure preparations are made to welcome your child and make their transfer to their new school as smooth and successful as possible. It is likely that you and your child will be invited to attend at least one of these meetings.

##### Transfer of information

You will know that your child's school will have been keeping records to track your child's academic and social achievements, attainment and progress (including results from any assessments and reports from the health service or other professionals) together with information about any additional support they have been providing for your child. This information will be shared with the new school at transition planning meetings and passed to the new school when your child transfers to inform future decisions about how best to support and develop your child's wellbeing, skills and learning.

If your child has a statement of special educational needs, the sendco and teacher (if known) from their new school will be invited to the annual review meeting. This will be held before your child transfers to their new school.

#### **Visits**

##### Starting school

Before your child starts in the Nursery or Reception class at school, staff from the new school may arrange to visit your child in their pre-school setting, at home or both. Home visits provide an opportunity for staff to meet your child in an environment where they are most comfortable and for you to ask any questions you may have about the transfer. Visits to the pre-school setting allow your child's new teacher to see how he or she interacts with other children. Additionally your child is likely to be invited to attend sessions in their new school. This will provide opportunity to meet their new friends and teachers, and to find out about things that are important to them.

## Changing year group

During the summer term, all children moving to a new class within the same school will meet their new teacher in their new classroom. It may be appropriate for extra visits to be arranged and/or for their new teachers to visit them in their current classroom.

## Moving to a new school

Children changing schools within the cluster are likely to be invited to make a series of visits to their new school to join in activities designed to help them become familiar with their new school and classroom and meet staff and other learners that they will see regularly in school. Our experienced SENCOs work to ensure that children are shown and told about the things that are important to them. For example, where lunch boxes are kept, what the dining room looks like, where the toilets are and where to find their peg. Some schools offer events specifically for new children moving to their school for example a 'summer school' activities week.

Visits and activities are tailored to be enjoyable and reassuring for your child. The number of visits will be agreed as appropriate dependent on the needs and wishes of your child. Some children may need or wish for more visits than others. It may also be appropriate for your child's new teachers to visit them in their current school.

## **Information for you and your child**

Your child may be given a selection of photographs to take home and share with you. These are likely to be of the adults your child will meet regularly and places around the school and in their classroom that your child will need to know about.

Your child may be given other information as appropriate. This may include letters from learners already attending your child's new school, timetables, details of what they will be learning about, school rules etc. A plan of the school may be useful for some students moving to secondary school. It would be helpful to discuss this information with your child to prepare them for their new school life.

Where applicable you and your child will be consulted and provided with information about any specific physical alterations or arrangements needed for your child.

## **Support for Parents**

All of our schools are keen to provide support for families who may be anxious at this time. If you would like additional information, meetings or support to visit new schools please speak with your child's school SENCO or class teacher. An impartial support service is also available to parents of children with identified special educational needs or disability from the Parent Partnership Service. ([www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk) or Tel: 01603 704070)

## **Post 16 education**

For students moving on to Post 16 education, our secondary schools tailor transition packages around the learners. This may include supported visits to new settings or early enrolment onto courses.