



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the nature of the SEND provision that Heritage School is able to provide. At Heritage, we have clear aims and expectations for all children and staff. Our ethos is to respect and value each child as an individual, with their own unique needs. We recognise that each child has their own personal talents, experiences, learning styles and needs. Most children with Special Educational Needs or disabilities (SEND) should be able to reach their full potential in our school. We recognise that at different times during their school life a child or young person may have a special need or disability. In implementing this policy, we believe pupils will be helped to overcome their difficulties. Whilst many factors contribute to the range of difficulties experienced by some children, we believe that much can be done to overcome them with parents, teachers and pupils working together. We have staff experienced in identifying a range of barriers to learning, skilled in differentiating the curriculum and adapting teaching strategies to meet children's diverse needs and styles.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the:

- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 (updated 12 September 2024) including The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- KCSIE 2024

This policy should be read also in conjunction with the school's Accessibility Plan, Curriculum Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Admissions Policy.

Principles and aims of the school

In line with the SEND code of Practice 2015, Heritage believes that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. Teaching any pupils with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility and regular assessments of progress are made for all pupils to enable identification, monitoring and support to be put in place in a timely fashion.

The school aims:

- to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with access to all, whilst acknowledging that some children may need additional support in progressing towards common goals.
- to address SEND needs in the classroom with reasonable adjustments where we are able, so that pupils can work alongside their peers and feel empowered and motivated to do their best.
- to work in partnership with children and parents when addressing and reviewing children's needs, including creating and reviewing a SEND Support Plan.
- to promote effective liaison with outside agencies where applicable.
- to develop staff awareness of issues regarding SEND and the Code of Practice.
- to encourage a positive self-image for all our children.

Definition of 'Special Educational Needs and Disability' (SEND Code of Practice 2014)

'A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. Children and young people who have SEND may

also 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’. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.’ (Code of Practice).

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Identification and assessment of SEND

Heritage School recognises that high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) suggests that ‘pupils are only identified as SEN if they do not make adequate progress once they have had all the intervention / adjustments and good quality personalised teaching.’ (Section 6.37)

Our first step therefore, is for the teacher to make their own adjustments and assess the effectiveness of these before contacting the SENCo. These adjustments are either done in class or, if appropriate, with a TA in a separate room either as an individual or in a small group. Progress is carefully monitored to see whether the differentiation has been successful.

If, after careful consideration, the pupil is not making adequate progress and the teacher is concerned, the member of staff will make a referral to the SENCo (via the ‘My(Academic)Concern form’) The teacher(s) and SENCo will meet to discuss these concerns and decide upon the next steps.

We recognise that identifying SEN is a collaborative process, and pupils are likely to be discussed at length in staff meetings and with parents in order to obtain the wider picture. The SENCo will make their own observations, may run some standardised assessments and will actively seek and draw on information from all who support a pupil: the staff, the parents, the pupil and any other professionals involved, before deciding that a pupil has SEN.

If the teacher and SENCo feel that the pupil falls within the SEN code of practice definition of a learning difficulty or disability, they will make an appointment to meet with parents and / or pupil if appropriate to discuss these concerns and make a SEND Support Plan. Where applicable, the parents may wish to contact an external assessor at this point, but this will be discussed with the teacher and SENCo.

The SEND Support Plans are created with reference to the four areas of need, whilst recognising that a pupil might not fit one of these categories entirely, or may span two or more categories. These needs and requirements are categorised as follows:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Physical and/or sensory needs

The SEND Support Plan is unique to each student and is created in discussion with the pupil. Needs are identified and steps / access arrangements / special accommodations are listed so that the teacher can ensure that they are meeting the needs of the pupil.

Once a SEND Support Plan has been created, it will be shared with the relevant teaching staff and will be stored in the SEND Management file. A copy of this SEND Support Plan will be shared with parents.

Teachers will update the SEND Support Plan and add their own observations and comments that help us to form a view of what best supports the pupil. This will be reviewed and shared in the latter half of the Spring term with Parents and Pupils in the Senior School, and with the parents at the Spring parent consultations for the Infants and Juniors. They will be reviewed and updated internally in the Autumn term.

It is important to note what does not constitute a pupil having a special educational need: the code of practice states that “Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN ... equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.”

At times a pupil may experience a specific event, or incident that can lead to short term learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties; these include incidents such as bullying or bereavement. These events will not always lead to children having SEN but can have an impact on wellbeing and sometimes this can be severe and will be addressed within school through pastoral support. The SENCo and Mental Health Lead work closely together within the school team and will combine to support the pupil should this be the case. Where there are long-lasting difficulties, Heritage may reconsider whether the child might have SEN.

Whilst we have a clear step-by-step process, it is therefore important that we can be flexible in our thinking and vigilant to the progress and wellbeing of each pupil.

SEND Support Plans

Where the school identifies that a pupil has special educational needs (including behaviour needs) the school will create a SEND Support Plan which identifies specific concerns or barriers to learning and highlights strategies to address them.

The SEND Support Plan follows the principles of assess, plan, do and review. Conversations with pupils, parents and staff, data from standardised tests, teacher assessment and observations of pupils will form the assessment of need. Once a need or barrier is identified then the SEND Support Plan is drawn up to plan support to enable the pupil to overcome the barrier or make progress towards an identified SMART outcome. Teaching staff, parents and pupils are then engaged in following the plan and continually reviewing progress. Once an outcome is achieved then the plan may have achieved its goal, at which point the plan may cease. Alternatively a new outcome or barrier may be identified and the process will begin again.

In the Infants and Juniors, the Support Plan is reviewed and a copy is shared with the parents in the Spring Parent and Teacher consultation evening. It is also updated internally in the Autumn term.

Senior SEND Support Plans are reviewed and shared with the pupils in April and a copy is sent home for parents to comment and respond. The school may sometimes recommend 1-1 support or resources beyond what the teaching staff are able to provide. This may be above the core offer and is therefore chargeable to parents in discussion with the school, or may need to be sought externally.

Roles and Responsibilities

The code of practice states that “All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with SEN

and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum.”

At Heritage it is therefore the responsibility of all teachers to support and differentiate for the needs of all pupils in their class. In the Infant and Junior schools, the teachers will liaise with the designated SENCo to discuss a child's needs and draw up / modify the SEND Support Plan as the child develops and progresses through the school. When the SEND Support Plans are shared with parents the class teacher does it in the Lower School, and the SENCo in the Senior School.

The Head of Juniors and the Head of Infants are responsible for the Teaching Assistants' timetables and allocation of support in the Infants and Juniors. They will ensure that the Teaching Assistants are familiar with the SEND Support Plans and teachers will plan the support provided by the Teaching Assistants accordingly.

The SENCo (in agreement with the Deputy Head) is responsible for allocating SEND resources, liaising with parents and staff regarding specific needs and potential strategies and monitoring overall progress. The SENCo is also responsible for working with staff, parents, pupils and external agencies / assessors to support teachers to ensure provision is made both in class and for access arrangements as appropriate to the needs of the pupil. As with all work in the school, the SENCo will work in liaison with the Deputy Head for strategic decision making and resource allocation.

Disability

Due to the nature of its facilities, Heritage has limited capacity to make adjustments for disabled pupils, but will do all that it reasonably can to comply with its responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. See our Disability Policy.

English as an additional language (EAL)

A child **must not** be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which has been spoken at home (section 20 (4) Children and Families Act).

We have many pupils at Heritage who speak one or more languages outside school. We liaise with pupils and parents to ensure that they can understand and access their learning and can socialise with their peers at school. Pupils will only be admitted to Heritage School where the school is satisfied that the prospective pupil has sufficient skills in the English language, or is likely to acquire such skills sufficiently rapidly. This may entail a commitment by parents to arrange lessons out of school hours and to pay all associated costs. The school does not offer English as an additional language lessons.

Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular attention. If there is a concern that a young person with English as an additional language may have SEN then the school will ensure there is detailed tracking in all aspects of a child or young person's performance across different areas of learning. It will be essential to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND.

One-to-one and small group support

The majority of SEND pupil needs are met through differentiated, high quality teaching in class. However, Heritage employs a modest amount of additional adult support through employing teaching assistants to support individuals and groups, dependent on need. The majority of TA hours are distributed within the Infants to ensure early intervention and to best support the varying rates of acquisition of core skills during these early years. In Juniors there is the equivalent of two days of TA support shared across Year 3 to Year 6 classes and is allocated each annum according to need.

As a general rule, it is expected that from Year 5 pupils will have sufficiently strong core skills to be able to access mainstream classroom teaching without additional support. However, for some pupils with SEND there will be some specific areas of support that may still be required to support progress.

If a pupil needs 1:1 or small group support and / or access to specific resources beyond the core school offer, then parents will be encouraged or required, to arrange and pay for this. In this instance the SENCo will liaise with parents to discuss the pupil's needs and what additional support may be most supportive. Heritage may recommend that families pay for additional support in school, additional resources or an external tutor.

At times, a pupil with SEND may request, or be recommended, to reduce the subjects they are taking to better support them to focus their studies, reduce anxiety or to enable further learning to be put in place. In these circumstances, in liaison with staff, parents and the pupil, a plan will be drawn up for the sessions. These sessions may be used for overlearning, reinforcement or study skills and will be supported from within the Heritage team where possible. Any additional resources recommended to focus the sessions, such as workbooks or study guides, would be chargeable. At times these slots will be used to enable additional independent study / completion of homework, in these cases the pupil will join the Independent Study groups that are already in place.

The school can often make recommendations of tutors parents might approach or resources that could be used to support at home or in school. Sometimes tutor support can be delivered during school hours in liaison with the SENCo and in line with safer recruitment. At other times if this is impractical for the tutor or the school then parents will need to organise and pay for 1:1 support out of school hours.

Use of technology

At times, following professional recommendations and internal discussions with the SENCo, the use of assistive technology may be identified as a strategy to support a pupil with SEND. The SENCo will discuss with parents how to supply and manage on a day-to-day basis any assistive technologies that the school recommends. All such use will be in keeping with our Acceptable and Safe use of Screens Policy. Where a laptop is required, a pupil will be issued with a school owned Chromebook for use on site during school hours, and the pupil will be asked to sign the SEND Chromebook Code of Conduct.

Recommending an Educational Psychological Assessment

The school may recommend that a child have a full educational psychological assessment using a psychologist who the school has an established relationship with. The purpose of such an assessment is to assess the nature and extent of a child's special educational needs. It will also recommend strategies to help mitigate the effects of any needs that were identified. The school can recommend educational psychologists capable of undertaking an assessment. Parents must then make the practical arrangements and pay for the assessment. Costs can exceed £600. Where parents have an educational psychological assessment, the school expects to receive a copy of the full report. Withholding information could lead to the school requiring a pupil to be withdrawn.

Access Arrangements for IGCSE exams

Where pupils have long-term special educational needs requiring support to access the curriculum, they may require access arrangements when they take their IGCSE exams. Any arrangements given for IGCSE / GCSE exams should be normal practice within the school and there must be a significant body of evidence to demonstrate an ongoing need. If it is likely that access arrangements will be needed, then in Year 9 the SENCo will contact parents to arrange an assessment. The assessment will then be scheduled to take place at the end of Year 9 with an agreed assessor, with whom the school has a working relationship. Parents will need to pay for any access arrangement assessments carried out. All access arrangements must be verified and agreed by the exam boards following appropriate and meaningful assessments. Medical and supporting evidence may be required to substantiate a history of need. Any queries about access arrangements should be directed to the SENCo.

The SENCo and Head of Careers work closely together to ensure that SEN pupils are given the appropriate information, advice and guidance to be able to progress to a suitable course when they leave Heritage.

Education Health and Care plans (EHC plans)

Parents and the school have the right under section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC plan. The school will always consult with parents if the school wishes to exercise this right. If parents wish to exercise this right, the school reserves the right to form its own view about the extent to which it is prepared to support this process. Should the Local Authority refuse to make an assessment or fail to agree to the creation of an EHC plan, the parents (but not the school) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal Health Education and Social Care. The school reserves the right to form its own view about the extent to which it is prepared to support an appeal.

The school will cooperate with the Local Authority to ensure that the relevant reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.

Parents are liable for any costs incurred by the school in association with the delivery of the EHC plan that are not met by the Local Authority.

Admissions

Parents of an applicant who has special educational needs and/or a disability are expected to disclose these needs fully to the Headmaster and, where reports exist, provide the Headmaster with full written details. Where possible, this information should be sent to the school prior to a tour and meeting with the Headmaster. Heritage will use this information to assess the applicant's needs and evaluate whether the school can provide adequately for the applicant.

Withdrawal

Heritage School reserves the right, following consultation with parents, to ask or require them to withdraw their child from the school if, in our opinion after making all reasonable adjustments and exhausting appropriate strategies:

- they have withheld information from the school which, had the information been provided, would have made a significant difference to the school's admission decision and / or the management of their child's learning difficulties, or
- their child's learning difficulties require a level of support or medication which, in the judgement of the Headmaster, the school is unable to provide, or
- their child is in need of a formal assessment, remedial teaching, learning support or medication to which they do not consent or are unwilling to pay for.

Authorised by	Matthew Fox
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