



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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Introduction

Estuary Academy Island is an alternative provision and aims to do the following:

- Make sure our school fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND

Estuary Academy Island will:

- Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so that they can be ready to move on to their next destination
- Help to identify any needs which may impact on learning or engagement
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
- Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood and secure destinations after year 11
- Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil

Estuary Academy Island aims to communicate with, and involve, pupils with SEND and their parents or carers in discussions and decisions about support and provision for their young person.

We will continue to ensure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND information report.

Other relevant policies include: Behaviour policy, equalities policy, safeguarding policy and complaints policy.

Definition of SEND

Estuary academy Island aims to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all young people regardless of their SEND need, however for the purpose of this policy we have included the definition of what SEND can be defined by which is:

SEND applies to those students who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age. This need or difficulty may result from factors such as learning difficulties, emotional and/or mental health difficulties, physical or sensory need, and social communication difficulties.

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (September 2014, revised January 2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- The Children and Families Act (2014) – Part 3; Children and Young People in England with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014) This policy, which reflects the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 guidance, is available to all staff and parents/carers of students with SEND. As recommended by DfE guidance, the SEND policy is reviewed annually by the Local Governing Body.

Vision and Values

Estuary Academy Island is an alternative provision and part of the Alternative Learning Trust. As such most of our pupils come from different schools and backgrounds. Our job as an educational provision is to identify every young person's level of need and create an effective provision which meets their profile.

At Estuary Academy we aim to create an atmosphere where young people can receive therapeutic support alongside a broad and balanced curriculum so that they can achieve their best and ultimately be ready to return to a mainstream setting or future destination. In addition to this, we want to be able to understand every young person as an individual and create a provision which celebrates their strengths and shares clear targets. Through identification we will pinpoint areas for development which will enable young people to reintegrate to mainstream or, if in KS4 secure an onward 16+ destination of their choice and be supported in realising their dream.

We understand as an alternative provision that students may reach us with unidentified needs. We aim to explore these areas in detail so that mainstream establishments can be supported to better meet the needs of individuals with SEND when they return to their settings.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

1. To provide all students of whatever ability with access to the whole curriculum, thus supporting the philosophy of inclusion.
2. To provide support to all students to enable them to achieve their full potential, making reasonable adjustments, so that no student is put at a substantial disadvantage.
3. To promote, within the staff, a corporate sense of responsibility for the special educational needs of all students.

The objectives of this policy are:

1. To identify and distinguish between the various forms of special educational needs experienced by our students.
2. To provide detailed information, for all staff, on each student's individual needs.
3. To provide strategies and resources which complement the areas of SEND students' experience in our local area.
4. To keep parents/carers informed of the needs and provision for their children.

5. To keep students informed of and involved in discussions related to the provision put in place for them
6. To offer additional support by identifying appropriate external agencies and making effective use of their services and input.

Responding to Special Educational Needs

The Inclusion team is made up of the SENCO, SEMH and Outreach Leads (as well as mentors), school counsellors, safeguarding and assessment leads who work together to support the needs of the young people within our care.

The assessment centre works to support the admissions of students into the provision and has developed so that students can be supported within this provision to prepare them for entrance into the school.

Young people will have identified adults who may be their form tutor or a key member of staff from either SEND, SEMH or our refocus team. All form tutors have the responsibility for the pastoral care of the students in their form and are available for contact before and after school, to work with students and/or their parents and carers to ensure that their pastoral needs are fully met. In addition, Estuary Academy Island has a self-referral process for families to identify when SEND support is needed.

Estuary Academy Island will hold weekly Inclusion panels where we will triage referrals made to us from staff, students themselves and families to ensure that we respond in an effective time frame to all requests for support.

1. Identifying Special Educational Needs:

Identifying Special Educational Needs: There are four Broad Areas of Need (SEND Code of Practice 2014 or 2015) to which the school is required to respond and acknowledge when planning provision:

- Communication & Interaction
- Cognition & Learning
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and / or physical needs.

The purpose of the identification of a particular SEND need is to establish what action the Academy needs to take to best support the student. The Academy identifies the need(s) of an individual by considering them as a whole person, looking at contextual factors which could contribute to their level of need displayed in an educational environment.

Students' level of need(s) irrespective of formal diagnosis are assessed on entry with the student family at the center of the information gathering process. Already identified needs are considered and included in the personalised planning for each young person.

It is often the case that some students have more than one area of need. Identifying 'poor behavior' as a special educational need is no longer an acceptable way of describing SEND. Any concerns relating to young person's behavior presentation should be viewed as an underlying response to a need which the Academy will be able to recognise and identify clearly as the student becomes better known, thereby allowing staff to respond to their needs accordingly. All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of every student in their class. Quality first teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have additional educational needs.

Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Estuary Academy Island regularly monitors the quality of teaching for all students. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support individual needs and extending a teacher's and/or mentor's knowledge of SEND.

We recognise that whilst English as an Additional language is not considered a special educational need, students may need further support with accessing the curriculum and individualised learning opportunities make up part of our offer.

We also acknowledge the vulnerabilities of our learners who with predominantly social and emotional difficulties, can be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. We take a proactive approach in our interactions with all our young people.

Should a young person be awarded an EHCP whilst in our care we will endeavor to create timely and appropriate transition plans, working with the family so that there is a smooth transition from our setting to a more specialist placement or back to a mainstream setting. In rare situations where a student is awarded an EHCP during year 11, and a transition to another school would negatively impact their GCSE results we will continue to work with them to ensure an appropriate destination is secured.

2. Identification, Assessment and Provision

At Estuary Academy Island all students have full access to the National Curriculum and equal entitlement to all aspects of learning. All staff are responsible for identifying students with SEND and, in collaboration with the SENCo, will ensure that students who require different or additional support are identified at an early stage. Assessment is seen as the process which assists this identification: in particular, whether a student is making progress is seen as a crucial factor in considering the need for additional intervention. Early identification of students with SEND is a priority for the Academy.

To aid identification, the Academy will make use of appropriate screening and assessment tools. The Academy will ascertain student progress through:

- Evidence gained through teacher observation/assessment
- Reference to performance in N.C. or other assessments judged against level descriptions national standards/descriptors.
- Standardised screening /assessment tools e.g.: Key Stage 2 test results and group/individual reading and spelling tests.

On entry, every student's attainment will be assessed to ensure continuity of learning from previous secondary school(s). When students with identified SEND start at Estuary Academy, the SENCo will:

- Use information from the previous school(s) to recommend the student's curriculum and pastoral provision
- Focus on the student's skills, note areas that require early support and inform all teachers.
- Ensure ongoing observations and monitoring to provide regular feedback on students' achievements and learning, including feedback and data collection from intervention.
- Involve students in the planning and agreeing of their targets through Academic Review.
- Involve parents/carers in a joint learning approach. The main methods of provision provided by the Academy are: Full-time education in classes with, when required, additional help and support being provided by subject teachers and mentors through an adapted curriculum. Where appropriate, this will involve a combination of on-site and off-site activities.

Intervention is decided on after initial assessment using our PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrow's with hope) process in conjunction with parents/carers. This is matched to the needs of the students and their areas of development. Intervention could include:

- ELSA
- Literacy and/or numeracy intervention
- Lexia
- Explicit teaching of executive functioning skills
- Social skills
- Other SEMH based interventions linked to Resiliency Scales and The Beck Youth Inventory

We believe in skills for life and have developed our interventions to incorporate skills which will be useful for the workplace.

We work based on every interaction being an intervention, and therefore staff are trained to support young people with social and emotional needs through everything we do using the PACE model.

3. **Monitoring Student Progress**

In circumstances where teachers decide that a student's learning and progress are unsatisfactory, a referral should be made to the Inclusion team by teaching staff where this will be triaged and bespoke intervention decided on in conjunction with the SENDCo.

The process by which the Academy will identify and manage students with SEND status is outlined below: The processes of Assess, Plan, Do and Review have been identified as an underlying principle of the 2014 Code of Practice. These principles influence how the Estuary Academy Island works with students with SEND and assess how individuals are responding. The prime determining factor of the need to provide additional support through SEND provision is whether an individual is making adequate progress. Adequate progress is defined as that which:

- Narrows the attainment gap between the student and her/his peers
- Prevents the attainment gap increasing
- Is equivalent to that of peers starting from the same baseline but less than the majority of peers
- Equals or improves the student's previous progress rate
- Ensures full curricular access
- Shows an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Shows improvements in the student's behavior

Should concerns regarding progress remain, despite sustained intervention, the Academy will raise the student at the Inclusion panel and consider requesting a Needs Assessment which may lead to an educational p

Parents/Carers will be fully consulted at each stage. Each of these intervention programs is detailed in appropriate sections of this policy. The Academy also recognises that parents/carers have a right to request a Statutory Assessment (EHCP) at any time.

4. Record Keeping

The Academy will record the steps taken to meet a student's individual needs, the SENCo maintaining records and ensuring access, when required. All confidential information in paper form will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and where documents are electronically stored will be password protected. In addition to the usual school records, an Individual Student PATH plan will be created for each student and stored electronically on Edukey (Provision Mapping Software). The PATH plan may include:

- Information about academic ability
- Information from previous schools
- Information from parents/carers

- Information on areas of difficulty and interest
- School information on progress and behavior
- The student's own perceptions of difficulties
- Information from health/social services/other agencies, e.g.: CAMHS
- A provision map to show what interventions are in place and when they should be reviewed.
 - Assessment data from entry package
 - Details about the students dream and steps of how they can achieve this through their learnign journey

5. **Request for Statutory Assessment**

The Academy will make a request for a statutory assessment to the Local Authority when, despite an individualised program of at least three cycles of the 'plan, do and review process' a student remains a significant cause for concern, in relation to their progress. A Needs Assessment application may also be made if a student has not made sufficient progress towards reintegration into a mainstream school. EAI will work with the mainstream school to secure a Needs Assessment.

Requests for statutory assessments may also be made by the parent/carer or by referral by an outside agency. To carry out a Statutory Assessment the Academy will have the following information available:

- Details of SEND Support to date
- Records and outcomes of regular In School Reviews (At least 2 ISRs)
- Information on the student's health and relevant medical history
- Academic progress and attainment
- Literacy/numeracy attainments
- Other relevant assessments from specialist e.g. support teachers/educational psychologists
- The views of both parents/carers and student
- Social services/Educational Welfare service reports
- Involvement by other professionals

An Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), formerly SEN Statement, may be provided in situations where, after a statutory assessment, the LA considers that a young person's needs are such that alternative provision or specialist placement must be sought.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the SENCO:

The SENCo is Mrs Katrina Osborne, and she holds the NASENCO qualification.

The SENCo plays a crucial role in the SEND provision of the Academy. The SENCo works closely and in collaboration with the Head Teacher, other Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members and the Local Governing Body to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy. Other responsibilities of the SENCo include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Coordinating the provision for students with SEND
- Liaising and giving advice to fellow teachers and support staff
- Managing the Inclusion Team
- Liaising with parents/carers of students with SEND
- Informing parents/carers of the fact that additional provision has been made for their son/daughter
- Liaising with external agencies, LA support services, Health Professionals, Youth Employment Service, Social Services and other relevant bodies
- Organising the screening and further appropriate testing for access arrangements for GCSEs and other external exams
- Identifying CPD need and contributing to the organisation and delivery of CPD
- Liaising with the Headteacher and School Business Manager regarding SEND funding and the cost of provision (including use of external agencies)
- Providing the Head of School, SLT and Local Governing Body with regular reports regarding SEND and or contributing to the statutory SEND Information Report.

The Role of the Subject Teacher:

“All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs.” (SEN Code of Practice 2015)
The 2014 Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the teacher with regards to SEND: Quality First Teaching is an essential element of addressing and supporting students with SEND in their classes. The individual teacher's responsibilities include:

- Being aware of the school's procedures for the identification, assessment and subsequent provision for SEND students
- Collaborating with the SENCo to decide what action is required to support a student's
- Progress

- Working with the SENCo to collect all available information on the student
- Meeting an individual student's needs by offering differentiated teaching and, if required, adapted resources
- Developing constructive and supportive relationships with students and their parents/carers.

The Head of School's responsibilities include:

- The day-to-day management of all aspects of the work of the school, including the SEND provision
- Keeping the Local Governing Body well informed about SEND within the school
- Working closely with and, if required, supporting the SENCo
- Ensuring that the school has clear and flexible strategies for working with parents/carers, and that these strategies encourage involvement in their child's education and progress.

The role of the school governors:

The Role of the Designated SEND Person on Local Governing Body. The Local Governing Body has an important responsibility with regards to progress of and outcomes for students with SEND. These include:

- Ensuring that the provision for SEND students is made and this is of a high standard
- Ensuring that SEND students are fully involved in school activities
- Having regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out responsibilities regarding SEND students
- Being fully involved in developing and subsequently reviewing the SEND policy.

7. Effective provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have an EHC Plan

Evaluating the effectiveness of provision

The SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17) describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

For pupils without an EHCP there will be a termly review of the provision made for the child which will enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of provision. The collation of termly reviews, including individualized targets will be drawn together and communicated to the management committee. Please note that in some cases alternative provisions (and PRUs) are unable to admit students with EHCPs due to the PRU agreement set out by KCC.

Our commitment to ensuring the effectiveness of provision relies on our secure monitoring and evaluation processes for the interventions and support we offer in an open and honest way. We carry this out in the following ways:

- Classroom observations
- Work sampling
- Teacher discussions with SENCO
- SEND focus learning walks
- Informal feedback from staff, pupils and parents alongside our referral process
- SEND team meeting discussions
- Team Around the Child and Inclusion panel discussion
- Alongside data monitoring and whole school assessment approaches

In keeping with the EHCP review process, every pupil will have a termly review alongside parents/carers where individualised targets are evaluated and provision is adapted after review. Some students may have more frequent assessment dependent on the progress they are making in their current provision. Using our assessment process we will be able to see progress in young people's key areas.

Teaching Pupils with special educational needs

The school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs High quality teaching, adapted for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. As stated, 'Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered' SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.37)

Teaching follows the mainstream core standards (<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/specialeducation-needs/special-educational-needs/the-mainstream-core-standards>) advice developed by Kent County Council to ensure that our teaching conforms to best practice. In meeting the Mainstream Core Standards, the school employs some additional teaching approaches, as advised by internal and

external professionals such as, precision teaching, small group teaching, use of ICT software learning packages as well as vocational subject teaching. These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as 'notional SEN funding'

Adapting the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs

At Estuary Academy Island we adapt our approach as well as the learning environment to incorporate social and emotional strategies which include using a trauma informed approach. Staff have received training on the PACE model and looked into the theory behind this so that all staff can approach students in a trauma informed way and proactively support in and outside of lessons. We use the results and provision listed in educational health care plans to support our whole school approach to supporting students with SEND in the school environment.

It is our intention to ensure continuously that the curriculum and learning environment are appropriate for all children. We have the following in place:

Disabled toilet facilities

Vocational subject specific provision

Inclusion Hub to support SEMH as well as intervention spaces

A sensory and therapy area

Interventions match to fill gaps in learning

All staff training matched to overall student need

SEND and SEMH mentors responsible for specific interventions as well as deepening students understanding

SEND systems and monitoring

Additional support for learning

As part of our budget, we receive 'notional SEND funding'. This funding is used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and personalised teaching for pupils requiring SEND support. The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case and a full list of the interventions we can offer is on our provision map. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6000 per year of resource for pupils with high needs, and above that amount the Local Authority should provide top up to the school through Higher Needs Funding. Due to the funding arrangements at Estuary Academy Island, we are unable to apply for Higher Needs Funding however, we are committed to providing the same level of support as set out through the Higher Needs Funding process.

How do we enable students with special educational needs to engage with school activities together with children who do not have special educational needs?

Clubs, trips and activities offered by our community team offer many opportunities for students to be involved together in community work and enrichment. We will use our resources to provide any additional support which may be necessary to engage with said activities. #

Developing emotional and social skills

Estuary Academy wants all pupils to be able to develop socially and emotionally. This is fostered through our interactions with students as well as explicit teaching of social skills and SMSC events.

We also provide therapeutic intervention which may be received from our school counsellor who also works within the inclusion team to advise and support with group and whole school provision.

For some pupils who need more immediate support we can also provide access to sensory bases through the school as well as a more equipped sensory room. We will also use the Boxall Profile as a tool to support staff in understanding and planning for social and emotional support.

Our refocus team are trained to support students in the moment and mediate between the teacher and the Inclusion team, to decide on the appropriate next steps for each young person on a day to day basis.

External referrals are used where we feel additional, and more specialist help is required.

Training of staff

There is a program of CPD which we have developed to identify gaps in teacher's knowledge and address this to match the needs of our young people, predominately this centers around social and emotional training and adapting curriculum to suit the needs at our school.

The Inclusion team may be trained by professionals who we use to support our understanding and practice in working with students who have special educational needs.

For highly specialist training such as communication equipment, we will seek advice from the KCC team of professionals who can advise us.

Consulting with parents and carers

At Estuary Academy we pride ourselves on involving parents every step of the way on our journey from our initial meetings through to a young person's destination. We work in partnership with parents which means we are available to discuss their child's provision throughout the term and on three occasions a year, parents/carers will receive a written report. We are happy to arrange additional meetings which can be requested through our self-referral process. Parents can also request support through our community team. As part of our whole school provision the curriculum is adapted to ensure that all students catch up through additional teaching and learning opportunities. This will not imply a child has special educational needs. All provision is recorded, tracked and monitored through provision map. Reports from provision map will be shared at least three times a year.

If progress in provision is not seen, we will contact parents at the earliest opportunity and invite them to be involved in deciding on the next steps in the process.

As we work alongside school partners, we encourage the sharing of pupil profiles as well as information and targets to enable any transitions to be smooth. Parents are also entitled to this information and we will work transparently to ensure all stakeholders receive the required information to ensure a student's needs are met.

We provide advice, guidance and SEND drop in sessions to support parents with support and EHCP applications. This may be with Estuary Academy staff or through external professionals.

Arrangements made by the management committee about complaints from parents relating to the educational provision for students with SEND needs

The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at Estuary Academy are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with the SENCO or Headteacher to resolve the issue before making a formal complaint to the Chair of the Management Committee. If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the Management Committee, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases. There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an EHCP, where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

How the school and the Management Committee involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The school and the Management Committee have engaged with the following bodies:-

- Free membership of LIFT for access to specialist teaching and learning service
- Access to Educational Psychology service through the pupils' home schools
- Link to Disabled Children's Service for support to families for some pupils with high needs
- Access to the local authority's service level agreement with Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy Services for pupil with requirements for direct therapy or advice

- Ability to make ad hoc requests for advice from Communication and Assistive Technology Team, etc

- Membership of professional networks for SENCO eg NAS, SENCO forum, NASEN Etc.

Support Services for Parents

We welcome parents to discuss any concerns with us as a school but recognise that professional bodies are at times necessary to reach the best outcomes for the young person. Services such as IASK (Information Advice and Support Kent) provide support and advice for parents/carers who have a child (children) who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Trained staff can provide impartial legally based information and support on educational matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities, including health and social care. The aim is to empower parents, children and young people to fully participate in discussions and make informed choices and decisions; also, to feel confident to express their views and wishes about education and future aspirations.

They can be contacted on HELPLINE: 03000 41 3000 Office: 03000 412412 E-mail: iask@kent.gov.uk www.kent.gov.uk/iask

The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At Estuary Academy Island, we work closely with the educational settings used by the pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as seamless as possible. The SENCO and wider staff team has strong communication channels and ensures all information is transferred and where possible transfer meetings are held to share information first hand. Pre-admission meetings are led, where possible, by the senior member of staff in charge of that phase. They include time with the Programme coordinator and SEND Assessment Lead to ensure every opportunity is taken to support the flow of information. We also contribute information to a pupil's onward destination by providing information to the next setting. Each pupil leaves with a transition file, detailing key information and contacts if anything further is needed.

We work closely with our partner schools where there are identified staff who will support the transfer and transition of students to and from Estuary Academy.

Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on:

<https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferchannel=0> and parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCO for support to gain the information they require.

Parents and Carers may also find it useful to use <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educationalneeds/what-to-do-if-you-think-your-child-has-send/explore-your-options-for-sensupport> to determine what actions they might find useful moving forward.

Signed: Katrina Osborne

Date: 30th September 25