Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
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Note	This policy must not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

This policy connects to the Accessibility Plan, the EAL policy (EDU.POL.046), the More Able Pupils policy (EDU.POL.041), the Curriculum, SMSC and Fundamental British Values policy (EDU.POL.008), the Behaviour policy (EDU.POL.027), the Positive Handling and Restrictive Interventions policies, the Safeguarding and Mental Health and Wellbeing policies (EDU.POL.037), and the Complaints policy (EDU.POL.034).

Related policies are held within RADAR in the School's policy folder.

2. Introduction

At The Acres, we are a specialist setting and the great majority of our pupils have special educational needs or disabilities. Many arrive having found earlier settings hard to manage, often with social, emotional and mental health needs alongside other difficulties. We provide a safe, nurturing and therapeutic environment built around each pupil, so they can settle, learn and make progress from their own starting point.

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This policy sets out how we identify, assess, plan for and support pupils with SEND, how we work with parents, carers and other professionals, and how we make sure every pupil can access a broad and ambitious curriculum.

3. Aim & Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers, and visitors at The Acres. It aims to:

- Ensure the early and accurate identification, assessment and review of pupils' special educational needs.
- Set out how we plan and deliver high-quality, personalised provision through the graduated approach.
- Explain how we meet our duties to pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan.
- Make clear how we work in partnership with pupils, families and other agencies.
- Show how we remove barriers to learning and make reasonable adjustments so every pupil can take part fully.

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

- Special educational needs. A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision, meaning provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.
- Disability. Under the Equality Act 2010, a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- Education, Health and Care plan. A legal document, maintained by the local authority, that sets out a child or young person's needs and the provision required to meet them.
- Graduated approach. The four-part cycle of assess, plan, do and review, through which we match support to need and refine it over time.
- SENCo. The special educational needs coordinator, the member of staff responsible for the day-to-day operation of SEND provision.

5. Policy Content

5.1 Principles and Approach

Our approach rests on the following principles.

High expectations for all. SEND is never a reason to lower ambition. We expect every pupil to progress.

Adapted, not narrowed. We adapt teaching and support so pupils can access learning, rather than removing learning from them.

Relational and trauma-informed. We understand behaviour as communication and build provision on safe, trusting relationships, in line with the Keys Connect model.

The pupil at the centre. We seek and act on pupil voice at every stage of planning and review.

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Partnership. We work openly with parents, carers, the local authority, health and care professionals.

Preparation for adulthood. Our provision is pointed at independence, communication, life skills and successful transitions.

5.2 SEND Provision in Practice

Identifying special educational needs

We identify needs as early as possible, drawing on information from previous settings, the EHC plan, assessment on entry, staff observations, and the views of the pupil and their family. We recognise the four broad areas of need set out in the SEND Code of Practice. These are communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health, and sensory or physical needs. Many of our pupils have needs across more than one area.

The graduated approach

We use the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review. We assess each pupil's needs, plan the right support with the pupil and family, put that support in place, and review its impact, refining provision over time. This cycle runs alongside the statutory processes for pupils with an EHC plan.

Education, Health and Care plans and annual reviews

For pupils with an EHC plan, we deliver the provision set out in the plan and review progress against its outcomes. We hold a statutory annual review at least once every twelve months, or more often for younger children or where needs change, and we work with the local authority on any amendments. Pupils and families are central to the review.

The Team Around a Child

At The Acres, we use a Team Around a Child approach. This multi-agency team, chaired by the SENCo, may include teaching and support staff, parents and carers, the pupil where appropriate, social workers, health professionals and the local authority. It reviews progress, agrees targets and shapes provision.

Meeting frequency and review expectations are determined by need and risk.

Curriculum access and adaptation

Every pupil receives a broad and balanced curriculum, adapted to their needs through differentiation, in-class support, small-group and individual work. For pupils with the most complex needs, the curriculum is personalised to develop communication, independence and life skills, using assistive technology, sensory resources and alternative communication where appropriate.

Working with parents and carers

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We keep open and regular communication with parents and carers through meetings, reports and informal contact, and we support them to take part in planning and decisions. Concerns about SEND provision are handled through the school's complaints policy, and we signpost families to the local authority SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.

Transitions

We plan carefully for transitions, including entry to the school, moves between key stages, and the move to post-16 education, training or employment. Transition planning is built into annual reviews and prepares pupils and families for the next step.

SEND, behaviour and restrictive interventions

We recognise that pupils with SEND can be over-represented in behaviour incidents and in the use of restrictive interventions, and we work to understand and reduce this. Behaviour is supported through relational and trauma-informed practice and through each pupil's plan. Where a physical intervention is used, it is recorded in line with our positive handling and restrictive interventions arrangements, and a pupil's SEND status is captured as part of that recording. This policy should be read alongside the Behaviour, Positive Handling and Restrictive Interventions policies.

SEND and safeguarding

Pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding risks, and communication or other barriers can make those risks harder to spot. Staff are alert to this, do not assume that signs of abuse relate only to a pupil's SEND, and act on any concern through the safeguarding procedures. We pay particular attention to mental health, to early help, and to sharing the right information when a pupil joins or moves on. This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Mental Health and Wellbeing policies (EDU.POL.037).

English as an additional language and more able pupils

Having English as an additional language is not a special educational need. We assess language need separately from SEND so that pupils are not wrongly identified as having SEN, and we support pupils with EAL through the EAL policy (EDU.POL.046). We also hold high expectations for pupils who are more able, including those whose ability sits alongside SEND, and stretch them through the More Able Pupils policy (EDU.POL.041). This policy should be read alongside both.

5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

SEND records, including EHC plans, individual plans and review notes, are held securely on Arbor and kept up to date. Leaders monitor the impact of provision through progress data, wellbeing indicators and review outcomes, and report to the proprietor and governors at least termly.

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5.4 Equality, Inclusion and Accessibility

At The Acres, this policy is applied fairly and without discrimination, in line with the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable adjustments so pupils with SEND can take part fully, and we monitor outcomes for different groups and act to remove disadvantage. This policy is aligned with our three-year accessibility plan, which sets out how we improve access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information over time.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Pupils

Pupils take part in setting and reviewing their own targets, and share their views about what helps them learn.

6.2 Staff

Staff teach pupils with SEND well, adapt their teaching, and follow each pupil's plan. Staff contribute to assessment, planning and review, and keep accurate records of progress.

6.3 The SENCo

The SENCo leads the day-to-day operation of SEND provision and the statutory processes for pupils with an EHC plan. The SENCo coordinates assessment, planning and annual reviews, liaises with the local authority and other agencies, and supports and develops colleagues in their work with pupils with SEND.

While independent schools are not legally required to appoint a qualified SENCo, at The Acres we ensure SEND provision is led by a suitably experienced SENCo or equivalent specialist.

6.4 Leadership

Leadership at The Acres makes sure this policy is implemented effectively, that staff are trained and resourced, and that SEND provision is monitored and improved. Leaders monitor attendance, suspensions, exclusions, restrictive interventions and safeguarding concerns affecting pupils with SEND alongside educational outcomes.

6.5 Governance

The proprietor and governors at The Acres hold the school to account for the quality and impact of SEND provision and for compliance with the relevant duties, monitoring through reports, visits and scrutiny of evidence.

6.6 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are active partners in planning and review, are kept informed, and are supported to contribute their knowledge of their child.

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6.7 Named leads

The SENCo at The Acres is Robyn Taylor

7. Training Requirements

SEND, including the graduated approach and supporting pupils with SEMH needs, is covered in staff induction at The Acres and refreshed regularly. The SENCo and staff receive ongoing development covering current SEND practice, trauma-informed approaches and legislative updates.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

9. Sources of Information / References

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3, which sets out duties towards children and young people with SEND.
- The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, 2015), the statutory guidance we follow.
- The Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments and the duty to have a written, three-year accessibility plan.
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the standards on the welfare, health and safety of pupils and on information provided.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025, and 2026 from 1 September 2026), under which pupils with SEND may need additional support and are recognised as potentially more vulnerable.
- The schools we work with sit across different inspectorates. This policy is grounded in the underlying duties, which are common across them. Where the inspecting body needs to be named, our school is inspected by ISI.

10. Version Control

This document can also be found in Radar. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The named owner for review at The Acres is the headteacher.

11. Appendices

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11.1 Appendix A: School-Specific Annex

SEN Leadership and Strategic Oversight

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) at The Acres is: **Robyn Taylor (SENCo)**

The SENCo is responsible for:

- Coordinating SEND provision across the school.
- Overseeing EHCP implementation and review processes.
- Leading the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.
- Liaising with parents, carers and external professionals.
- Supporting staff with adaptations and strategies.
- Monitoring the impact of SEND provision and interventions.
- Contributing to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour reviews relating to pupils with SEND.

Profile of Need at The Acres

The Acres is a specialist setting supporting pupils with a range of additional needs, including:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).
- Communication and interaction difficulties.
- Cognition and learning needs.
- Sensory processing difficulties.
- Attachment and trauma-related needs.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Many pupils present with needs across multiple areas and require highly personalised support packages.

Team Around the Child (TAC) Arrangements

The Acres adopts a Team Around the Child approach to reviewing and planning provision.

Meetings may involve:

- SENCo
- Parents and carers
- Pupils (where appropriate)
- Teaching staff
- Pastoral staff
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Social Workers
- Educational Psychologists
- Health Professionals
- Local Authority Representatives

Meeting frequency is determined by individual need, level of risk and statutory requirements.

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Additional review meetings may be arranged where concerns arise regarding:

- Progress.
- Attendance.
- Behaviour.
- Safeguarding.
- Placement stability.

SEND Provision and Intervention Offer

Provision available at The Acres includes:

Universal Support

- Differentiated teaching.
- Adaptive curriculum delivery.
- Trauma-informed practice.
- Classroom support.
- Pastoral support.
- Communication-friendly environments.
- Behaviour support strategies.
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Targeted Support

- Small group interventions.
- Emotional literacy support.
- ELSA interventions.
- Drawing and Talking.
- Social skills programmes.
- Mentoring and key worker support.
- Attendance support programmes.
- Regulation and coping strategies.

Specialist Support

- External agency involvement.
- Educational Psychology advice.
- CAMHS involvement.
- Occupational Therapy recommendations.
- Speech and Language strategies.
- Social Care support.
- Bespoke EHCP provision.

Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet identified needs.

EHCP Annual Review Arrangements

For pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans:

- Annual Reviews take place at least annually.
- Parents and carers are invited to all reviews.
- Pupil voice is collected and presented.
- Relevant professionals are invited to contribute.
- Outcomes and recommendations are submitted to the Local Authority within required timescales.
- Actions arising from reviews are monitored by the SENCo.

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Transition reviews are prioritised for pupils approaching key educational milestones.

Accessibility Arrangements
The school's Accessibility Plan is held on:
OneDrive
The plan details how the school improves:

- Access to the curriculum.
- Access to the physical environment.
- Access to information.

Reasonable adjustments are implemented to enable pupils with SEND to fully access school life and learning.

SEND and Safeguarding
The school recognises that pupils with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities.
Staff are trained to:

- Recognise barriers to communication.
- Understand behaviour as communication.
- Identify safeguarding concerns that may present differently in pupils with SEND.
- Make timely referrals to safeguarding staff.

SEND information is shared appropriately to support effective safeguarding and risk management.

Preparation for Adulthood
The Acres promotes preparation for adulthood through:

- Careers education.
- Independent living skills.
- Community engagement opportunities.
- Work-related learning experiences.
- Vocational accreditation pathways.
- Transition planning for post-16 destinations.

Preparation for adulthood outcomes are considered during EHCP reviews and wider SEND planning.

Partnership with Families
The school works closely with families through:

- Regular communication.
- Review meetings.
- EHCP annual reviews.
- Team Around the Child meetings.
- Parent consultations.
- Pastoral and safeguarding support.

Families are actively encouraged to contribute to planning, provision and review processes.

Local SEND Support Contacts

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SENCo: Robyn Taylor
Local Authority: North Lincolnshire Council
North Lincolnshire SENDIASS
Email: help@nlsendiass.org.uk
Telephone: 01724 277665

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND Provision
The impact of SEND provision is monitored through:

- Academic progress data.
- EHCP outcomes.
- Attendance data.
- Behaviour information.
- Restrictive intervention monitoring.
- Safeguarding information.
- Pupil voice.
- Parent feedback.
- Annual Review outcomes.

Leaders review SEND outcomes termly to ensure provision remains effective, appropriately resourced and responsive to the changing needs of pupils attending The Acres

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