



# SEN Policy

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| <b>Review Cycle</b>              | <b>Annual</b>       |             |
| <b>Owned By</b>                  | <b>Head Teacher</b> |             |
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## **Palmerston School Special Educational Needs Policy**

This policy was drawn up in 2015 and reviewed annually since. The process involved: consultation between the Headteacher and the Governors responsible for SEN, discussions with the School Council, consideration of views expressed in a questionnaire given to parents and agreements arrived at via a number of staff meetings which focused on how the school adapts to meet the complex needs of some of its students. The result of a curriculum review in 2018 were also taken in to account.

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## 1. PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

### **Mission Statement**

Every students regardless of gender, race, religion, culture and special educational need, should be valued equally and have access to educational opportunities which include a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, delivered at a pace, level and style that meets the individual needs of that student.

### **Aims of the school**

#### **Students**

- To provide equal opportunities for all students
- To create a safe and positive environment in which students are able to meet their full potential
- To enable students to leave the school as confident individuals who are able to make a positive contribution to their world
- To create a learning environment which promotes independence and celebrates the achievements of all the students.
- To promote a sense of community and collective responsibility in which students show respect for others and their environment.
- To provide the resources to support students in their learning.
- To develop a partnership between parents and professional to enhance the learning process.
- To foster links with the local community and provide opportunities for the students to integrate into their community.

#### **Curriculum**

- To provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
- To provide access to the National curriculum at the appropriate level.
- To provide a suitably differentiated curriculum
- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of the students.
- To emphasise the areas of communication and independent living skills as core educational needs for our students.
- To prepare students for adult life and to enable them and/or their carers to make an informal choice about post school provision.

#### **Delivery**

- To use assessment, reporting and recording methods to inform the learning and teaching process and to measure progress, involving both assessments of learning.
- To provide Individual Education Plans that identify clear targets and teaching methods and document progress.
- To recognise and celebrate achievement.
- To promote appropriate behaviour across the school through general behaviour strategies and Individual Behaviour Support Plans when required.

- To use a variety of teaching methods that recognise and accommodate different learning styles.
- To allow students to make decisions, show initiative and take responsibility for their actions.
- To promote communication opportunities throughout the curriculum.

## **2. THE STUDENTS**

The students who attend Palmerston School have all been assessed as having severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. They almost always have an Education Health Care Plan before admission. The admission process is managed by Liverpool LEA. In addition to severe or profound learning difficulties the students may have other learning needs such as:

Autistic Spectrum Disorder  
 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
 Visual and/or Auditory Impairment  
 Medical or Health Difficulties  
 Behavioural or Social Difficulties

The school adapts to meet the needs of the individual student as far as is practicable. For students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder an eclectic approach is adopted that draws on a variety of recognised autism friendly techniques and these techniques may be used for individuals or across a group or class. Staff are encouraged to develop expertises in these additional learning needs as well as in severe/profound learning difficulties. Due to the often complex nature of the needs of the students, teachers and learning support staff work very much in partnership with parents and professionals to provide the best learning environment possible for each student. Students are grouped in to classes according to their Key Stage i.e. Key Stage 3 (11-14), Key Stage 4 (14-16). The school believes that much is gained by students being mixed ability groups with their peers providing that their individual needs can be met. Strong friendships and peer support have developed between students with very different needs and we seek to promote these relationships. Students within a Key Stage are grouped according to ability to access the curriculum appropriate to their needs. The opinions of students are valued and we aim to encourage them to develop skills in expressing choices and opinions. There is the opportunity for students to express their ideas as part of the Annual Review process. The school has also formed a School Council in order that students can influence key decisions that are important to them.

## **3. THE MANAGEMENT OF SEN ACROSS THE SCHOOL**

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

- The Governing Body is responsible for:
- ensuring that suitable provision is made for students who have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties and any additional difficulties
  - ensuring that teachers and support staff are aware of the range of SEN experienced by students and can provide for those needs
  - ensuring that students have access to the activities of the school

- reporting to parents on the implementation of the school's SEN policy
- having regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out it's duties

Governors are involved in developing the SEN policy and in monitoring it. They are kept up to date and knowledgeable about the provision made by the school, the development of funding, equipment and personnel and any changes in the profile of needs within the school and LEA.

### **The Role of the SENCO**

The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) at Palmerston is Alison Wheeler.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- managing the Annual Review Process
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for students with SEN
- ensuring there is liaison between parents and professionals
- advising and supporting staff in meeting the needs of all students in the school
- planning and organising the continuing professional development of the school staff with regard to SEN
- ensuring the appropriate IEPs are in place and monitoring the quality and implementation of these
- ensuring appropriate records and information on the student's special educational needs are collected and updated and are used to inform the teaching and learning process
- liaising with external agencies including the LEA, health, social services, professionals, connexions and voluntary bodies.

### **The Provision of Speech and Language Therapy**

Within the school, staff have been trained by Speech Therapy service to provide some aspects of communication therapy and to liaise with the Speech and Language services. The staff are Susana Hankin & Lou Swift.

They are available to provide some one to one work with identified students, to advise staff on communication strategies and issues and to refer students to a Speech and Language therapist when required.

In addition a number of school staff have had additional training in specific communication strategies and are able to provide individual or group work in these techniques e.g. PECS, symbol supported communication, signing. Electronic communication aids, use of ICT.

### **The Multi-disciplinary Team**

Multi-disciplinary and interagency co-operation is in place to ensure provision meets the complex needs of the students. The school has links with other special schools, mainstream schools, health and social services departments and voluntary agencies. We work on a regular basis with the following:

Educational Psychologist

Physiotherapist  
Visual Impairment Service  
Auditory Impairment Service  
Speech and Language Therapist  
Educational Welfare Officer  
CAMHs  
School Medical Officer

### **The Role of the School Nursing Team**

The school nursing service deal with the day to day nursing needs of the students which may include:

Gastroly feeds and care  
Medications, treatments and dressings  
Offering advice, training and support to educational staff  
Regular liaison with parents, education staff and other agencies  
Assisting the school Doctor with annual medical examinations  
Immunisation programmes  
Height and weight checks  
Liaising with specialist teams e.g. epilepsy services

## **4. PROCEDURES**

### **Admissions**

The LEA manage the admissions to the school

The officer dealing with admissions to Palmerston is

Karen Gleave  
Children's Services  
Parklands  
Speke

In general all students have an Education Health Care Plan on admission. The statement will have been drawn up following the guidelines in the Code of Practice and will contain all the recommendations relevant to the educational needs of the student.

The Parent Partnership service is available to support and advise parents through the statementing and placement process.

### **Annual and Transitional Reviews and IEPs**

In accordance with the Code of Practice the school will ensure that all students have an Annual Review of their Education Health Care Plan.

The school sets date and the time of the review and invites parents and relevant professionals to the review. Prior to the review the school circulates the school annual report and recommendations and any other reports received along with the LEA standard review documents. In addition in the week prior to the formal Annual Review the parents are offered an opportunity to meet informally with the class teacher to discuss the annual report and any concerns they have. The purpose of the review is to consider the evidence

presented and the views of the parents and the student, to assess progress, to make recommendations for the targets to be set for the following year and to consider the appropriateness of the EHCP and placement.

The review will identify:

- Targets for the following year that will form the basis of the IEPs
- Actions and persons responsible
- Any additional provisions required
- Any changes needed to the EHCP
- Any changes needed in the placement

The Head of Key Stage/Headteacher writes a summary report which is circulated to all those attending or invited and a copy is sent to the LEA. The LEA may then decide to amend the EHCP if necessary.

The Annual Review process in Year 9 is the official transition review. At this stage very general information and advice is given as almost all students remain at Palmerston until they are 19. If parents indicate that they are unhappy with the provision and wish to move their child then the Local Authority officer will be invited to discuss options.

In reviews from Year 12 onwards the Annual Review devotes much of the time available to considering plans for the transition to adult providers. Parents and students are advised of possible choices Head of 16+ in association with any social worker involved will provide information and help to organise visits, assessments etc. The involvement of social services is seen as important as funding for adult placements is held by them. The Head of 16+ works closely with any assigned social worker to ensure that the transition to adult services is as smooth as possible.

The targets set at the Annual Review inform the planning of the IEPs for each student. The IEPs are written termly in the second half of the term and reviewed each half term or necessary. The IEPs cover areas such as communication, literacy, numeracy, PHSE, independence or switch access. They describe very precise targets that are to be achieved within a term outline the strategies to be used and the criteria for success. The IEPs also give ideas for how the skills may be practiced on other settings including how parents can also work on the targets as homework.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting Progress**

Initial assessments for learning are undertaken by the teacher in consultation with any other professionals during the first 6 weeks in school and these form basis for the IEPs which are written for student in core areas of the curriculum.

Assessment is then on-going and is used to inform the learning and teaching process. The school's curriculum is linked to the National Curriculum, Sensory curriculum and a Semi-Formal Curriculum all using Equals schemes of work. Each student has their own online Evidence for Learning file which contains all forms of appropriate assessments for that individual e.g. SILSAF, QUEST etc. Other materials for assessment may be used to suit the needs of the individual e.g. Derbyshire Language materials. This detailed approach to assessment allows the school to show progress in terms for small steps. Progress is monitored formally at the Annual Review meeting.

At the end of their school career the school provides a summative which summarises the student's attainment and achievement during their school life.

### **Individual Behaviour Support Plans**

Some of our students display challenging behaviour. Our response is based on the belief that behaviour has a function and carries a meaning. (see Behaviour Policy). If the behaviour of a student causes concern an Individual Behaviour Support Plan will be drawn up that outlines the positive aspects of the student's behaviour, areas of concern, an analysis of the behaviours causing concern and proactive reactive strategies for support the student.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any matters of concerns about the behaviour of their child.

The Deputy Head is trained as an advanced MAPA (Managing Actual Physical Aggression) instructor and updates the whole school staff both annually and/or when needed.

## **5. ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM**

It is agreed that in addition to our Curriculum the following are important aspects:

- communication and independent living skills are considered to be high priority, core aspects.
- social and leisure skills require direct teaching
- some students require time to be sent on therapies, positioning and well-being issues
- for some students the curriculum requires significant modification and should be tailored to individual need.

Students are able to access a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets their needs. No student is excluded from an activity purely on the basis of a disability of they would benefit from that experience.

## **6. RESOURCES**

### **Funding**

The LEA allocates funding to the school based on pupil places. Additional monies come into school via other lines e.g. Standards Funds and these may have criteria for approved spending. The Governors and Headteacher set a budget and allocate funding based on an analysis of the current needs and priorities of the school.

As part of this some funding will be under the direct and central control of the Headteacher, other funds will be allocated to subject managers to provide resources for their subject area. The Key Stage departments have a budget for larger, shared purchases. Each class is also granted a small sum for the provision of class based resources. Any specific equipment or resources for an individual will have to be met from one or other of these sources.



e.g. The provision of a specialist piece of seating may be funded through the furniture allocation. The purchase of a Big Mac communicator may be funded from the Communication allocation.

A token economy and reward structure may be funded through a class budget line. Areas other than traditional curriculum subjects also attract funding e.g. manual handling, behaviour management, communication.

There is room for flexibility and any concerns or funding difficulties should be discussed with the Headteacher in the first instance.

### **Equipment**

On occasion pieces of equipment will be purchased to suit the needs of an individual student. This equipment remains the property of the school and the school reserves the right to allow other students to share the equipment if appropriate and will retain the equipment when the student leaves.

### **Staff**

The Senior Management Team allocate staff to a class group at the beginning of the school year and the needs of the students in the class group inform these decisions. The deployment of the staff within the class is the responsibility of the class teacher.

Occasionally the Headteacher may apply to the local authority for an additional support assistant to support an individual.

If any support staff are absent the Head of that Key Stage is informed at the start of the school day and staff are redeployed according to the needs of the students and the safety of groups.

### **Lunch Time Arrangements**

Teachers supervise and teach over the lunch time period. Students following eating programmes or programmes linked to independent living skills as appropriate. Leisure time is covered by support staff under the supervision of a teacher. Individual arrangements may be made depending on the needs of the students.

### **Students and Volunteers**

A variety of outside agencies request placements for their students and individuals may offer their services as volunteers. Subject to child safeguarding procedures these requests are dealt with by the Assistant Head and staff are consulted as to where the additional support may be best used.

### **Physiotherapy**

The physiotherapist and his team are available to offer support to students and regularly come into school. The team may provide advice to staff and parents/carers or undertake direct work with individual students. The physiotherapist may also offer a hydrotherapy session to some students.

### **School Medical Officer**

The school medical officer is based in school and will hold medical reviews as and when needed. Additional consultations can be arranged.

### **Visual and Auditory Support Service**

Teachers from the auditory and visual impairment team offer advice to school staff and in some instances may be involved in direct work with individual students.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

A nominated teacher has received additional training from the Speech Therapy service and there is a joint development framework for additional joint training. This teacher manages the provision of communication education across the school and may undertake some direct work with individuals. She can also decide when it is appropriate to refer an individual to a Speech Therapist for further assessment and advice. A number of other members of staff have been trained in specific communication systems.

### **Educational Psychologist**

The Educational Psychologist can be called on to access students and offer advice.

### **Social Services**

The school works closely with social workers allocated to the students. The relevant social worker is invited to the Annual Reviews and their role is vital when planning post 19 placements and funding.

The school's child protection co coordinator attends strategy and core group meetings if at all possible. A member of school staff will attend placement review meeting if possible or a short written report will be provided. The school does make a room available for such meetings by arrangement with the administrative team.

## **7. INTERGRATION AND LINKS**

The school is not an isolated community. We have many links with other schools and agencies. In addition to the many external agencies that support the school the school is committed to being part of the educational community in Liverpool and the Merseyside area. Palmerston is an active member of the local learning network, the regional SLD network and the 14-19 collaborative. The membership of these groups involves us in working with primary and secondary schools in the area. This may involve staff in joint training or planning or may open opportunities for our students to access curriculum experiences in the mainstream setting e.g. a catering course at a local secondary school. The school also welcomes students from mainstream schools to access our curriculum if appropriate or for placements.

There is also the possibility of shared placements for some individuals which may involve spending sometime at both Palmerston and a mainstream school.

Palmerston is also able to support mainstream school that have students with severe learning difficulties on their roll via an outreach service.

## **8. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF STAFF**

The school supports both teaching and support staff in their continuing professional development. There is an on-going programme of training and development to assist

staff in gaining essential knowledge and skills required by the school e.g. first aid training, manual handling, understanding of autism and behavioural support. All teaching and learning support staff have access to a regional training day organised by the Merseyside SLD Headteacher's Association. Other in service training days are planned to reflect the priorities in the School Development Plan.

In addition all staff are encouraged to develop personal areas of expertise e.g. autistic spectrum disorder, management of behaviour, business management, ICT skill (see appendix for current list of staff qualifications).

Many of the staff have considerable experience of working with young people who have special needs and their experience and expertise is used to support new staff in gaining these skills and knowledge. All new staff have a planned induction during which they are given written information, training in core areas and experiences that are designed to integrate them smoothly in to the school environment.

## **9. COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

We hope that we provide an excellent service for our students and their parents/carers. However if there are any concerns, questions or complaints about the service we provide for our students with special needs these should be raised as soon as possible.

Initially it may be appropriate to approach the class teacher or Headteacher to discuss any issues. Alternatively the Governors with responsibility for SEN may be able to help.

The school also has a more formal complaints procedure and a copy can be obtained from the school office.

From time to time the school does request information from parents, carers and students about our service e.g. via a questionnaire. The views expressed are considered very carefully by staff and Governors and are a valuable means by which we try to improve our work and meet the needs of students and their families more effectively. Your time and co operation in completing such exercise are appreciated.

## Teaching and Learning Staff Qualifications:

Initial first degrees including:            B.A.s  
    B.Sc. Geography  
    B.Ed Theology  
    Special Educational Needs (SLD)

P.G.C.E. or Teaching Certificate

Catholic Teachers Certificate

Advanced Diploma in Special Educational Needs  
Diploma in Special Needs in Education  
Postgraduate Certificate in Autistic Spectrum Disorder  
Postgraduate Higher Diploma in Educational Studies  
Postgraduate Diploma in Special Needs

M.A. in Educational Management  
M.A. in SEN & Inclusion  
M.A. Advanced Educational Practice with SEN  
N.P.Q.H.

NVQ 2/3 in care

Short Course including

CPI Non violent crisis intervention 2 trainers and all staff trained  
Centaur Manual Handling (Handling people with special Needs) 1 trainer and LSAs/LSOs trained.

City and Guilds Computer Skills

Administering medication including: rectal diazepam, buccal medazolam, epipen, inhalers, oxygen, and gastrostomy feeds.

Safety training in using minibus.

Online Safeguarding & Child Protection (all staff)

- Safe guarding children
- Health and Safety
- Roles and Responsibilities
- E - Safety & Anti Bullying