

# Willow Tree Academy



## Policy on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion

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## **Statement of Intent**

The staff and governors at Herringthorpe Junior School and Willow Tree Academy aim to address special needs and social, emotional and mental health provision through a whole school/ academy approach. Our ethos is one of collaboration and inclusion between senior leaders, teachers, support staff, parents, agencies and most importantly, the child.

Through our position statement and a flexible approach to differentiated learning, valuing the achievements of all, we aim to develop children's strengths, address needs and create an enabling and safe setting for all pupils.

Overall, we aim to support all children to reach their potential in a caring and cooperative atmosphere by:

- providing a broad and balanced curriculum through Quality First Teaching
- develop understanding of purpose and relevance of learning
- raising self esteem through appropriate challenge and differentiation
- providing a secure and safe environment to enable children to flourish
- developing provision for nurture to support SEMH needs

## **1. Legal framework**

### **Introduction**

1.1 This policy was reviewed and updated in April 2020 in line with the Code of Practice.

1.2 Willow Tree Academy provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and we pride ourselves on inclusivity. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our school at any time such as:

- Girls and boys
- Ethnic minority groups
- Children who learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- Children with special educational needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Children who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion
- Pupils who have been identified as Vulnerable Children
- Those who are gifted and talented
- Those who are looked after by local authority
- Others such as those who are sick, bereaved or whose parents or divorced or separated

When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special educational needs and require particular action by the school.

1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional or highly differentiated support within Quality First Teaching and Learning experiences.

1.4 Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their time in school. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment of children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

1.5 The Disability Discrimination Act identifies the fact that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act. We will assess each child as required, and make the appropriate provision, based on their identified needs.

1.6 This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Willow Tree Academy in relation to inclusion. It gives a framework from which all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors, work. It records the consensus of views at which our academy has in relation to children with Special Educational Needs. This policy should be considered in conjunction with the SEN Code of Practice alongside our:

- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

## **Aims and objectives**

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To create an environment that meets the needs of each child in school;
- To deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for all, based on Quality First Teaching (QFT) experiences;
- To outline how children's additional needs (learning or SEMH) are identified and subsequently targeted;
- To ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- To make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- To liaise with parents and outside agencies to ensure children's needs are identified and met as early as possible.;
- To work together with outside agencies to ensure best practice when assessing needs and devising interventions;
- To ensure interventions for each child are reviewed regularly to assess their impact, the child's progress and the views of the child, the parents and teachers;

- To ensure that our children have a voice in their own learning.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The Inclusion and Behaviour Lead for Willow Tree Academy - Mrs Faye Ebbs

Academy Pastoral Lead - Mrs Jane Forshaw

School	SENCO	Pastoral Team
Herringthorpe Junior School	Mrs Faye Ebbs	Mrs Jane Forshaw Mrs Rachel Mawe Miss Charlotte Bassindale (Nurture)
Greasbrough Primary School	Miss Kim Botham	Mrs Sarah Jenkinson
Roughwood Primary School	Mrs Lisa Wheeler	Miss Chelsie Whitworth
Rockingham Junior and Infant School	Ms Louise Greenwood Mr Ben Parkin Mrs Sam McDermott	Mrs Julie Tunks Mrs Justine Elliott

The SENCO in each individual school, manages the day-to-day operation of the policy and they;

- Coordinate the provision for and manage the responses to children's special needs;
- Support and advise colleagues;
- Oversee the records of all children with special educational needs;
- Act as the link with parents;
- Act as the link with external agencies and other support agencies
- Monitor and evaluate the special educational needs provision, and report to the governing body
- Manage a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs;
- Provide staff training and support across the academy;
- Contribute to the professional development of all staff.

### The role of the governing body:

The governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The governing body endeavours to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. They consult the LA and other schools, when appropriate, and report annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs. The governing body ensures that parents are notified of any decision made by the school about provision for their child.

The governing body has identified a governor within each school to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special education needs. The SEN governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEN provision including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

Ensuring that this policy is adhered to and meets the requirements set out in the Code of Practice (2015), our Executive Head Teacher, Mrs Jane Fearnley, oversees SEND policy and practise at all 4 schools within Willow Tree Academy. The head teacher ensures that all those who teach a pupil with an Education and Health Care plan are aware of the nature of the plan and have responsibility for the annual review of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan.

### **3. Definitions**

- **Educational Inclusion**

Within Willow Tree Academy, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability and/or needs. We have high expectations of all of our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background.

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- Providing highly differentiated support for children who need help with communication, language, literacy and numeracy
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences;
- Planning for children's full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities;
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and social understanding and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

- Working in cooperation with the SENCo to ensure early identification and intervention of children with SEND.
- Work in cooperation with the SENCo, T.As and parents to provide, implement and review Individual Development Plans (IDPs) or SEN Support Plans for SEND children in their class.
- Planning and implementing extension and enrichment activities for the most able children.
- Ensuring that all pupils have a voice and that they understand their contributions are valued.
- Actively celebrating and building on pupils' strengths and achievements.

Attendance is a big contributing factor to ensuring that children can make progress. If children do not attend school regularly, then gaps in learning will begin to appear and this can impact on their attainment. As individual schools and as an academy, we place a high value on attainment and instil this value within our children, celebrating positive attendance regularly. Our Learning Mentors and Attendance Officers contact parents and families regularly to ensure that attendance is a priority and children and staff are involved in monitoring and tracking attendance in their classroom, using charts and graphs to celebrate attendance.

#### **4. Special educational needs and support at Willow Tree Academy**

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their:

- behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends
- reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels, for example because they have ADHD
- physical ability

Children are considered to have a Special Educational Need or Disability if:

- They have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- They have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for other children of the same age.

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable them to:

- Understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- Experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Children have a right to be safeguarded at all times and this is a priority within our academy and across the pastoral teams within each school and academy wide (see our Child Protection Policy).

We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom and encourage in-class interventions where possible. There are times, though, when to maximise learning or reduce anxiety, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom.

At Herringthorpe Junior School, many of the children who join us have already been in early education. In many cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all of our children.

As an academy, we have a series of steps which ensure we are rigorous in the identification, monitoring and evaluation of our SEND provision. This is outlined below:

Early Identification Form:

Class teachers use this form to carefully assess the current levels of children and monitor additional in-class support used for individuals where concerns have arisen. Any concerns identified need to be discussed with parents prior to the Early identification process beginning. Upon identifying need and seeking and implementing advice from the SENCO, if a child still presents significant needs which require additional support in one or more areas, a letter will be sent to parents requesting permission to add their child to the SEND register.

SEN support:

If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty or have significant gaps in their learning, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This is referred to as SEN Support and refers to any additional support that children receive alongside usual Quality First Teaching within the classroom.

Since the 2015 Code of Practice - the term 'SEN Support' term has replaced previous terminology of 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus'

SEN Support may occur when:

- There has been little or no progress made with existing interventions
- Additional support is required to develop literacy or numeracy skills
- Additional support is required for emotional, behavioural or social development
- Additional support is required for sensory or physical impairments
- Additional support is required for communication or interaction needs

Where needs are similar, it is appropriate to support these children within a group focusing on the common needs. However there is scope within the SEN Support for each child to have individual targets. Provision will be in a small group as well as some individualised support for their more personal needs. Provision will run concurrently with differentiated curriculum support. The group may be taught by the class teacher and

also supported by a TA. The responsibility for planning for these children remains with the class teacher, in consultation with the SENCO.

#### Individual Development Plan (IDP):

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is written for each child on the SEN register and outlines specific targets which are generated to ensure that children's learning is personalised and allows them to celebrate their successes at a level which suits their needs. These plans allow three SMART targets to be identified based on a child's needs and outlines strategies which can be used to meet these needs and the team of people who will support the pupil in their achievements.

IDP books have been used as a method of evidence collection for a number of years now and this has been successful in allowing progress towards personal targets to be tracked, enabling success to be shared and celebrated with parents in termly reviews. When targets are set, this book is used as an evidence portfolio to show progression towards these targets and the daily impact. Interventions for these children with SEND are frequent and evidenced appropriately - allowing parents, teachers and the children to see their own progress and understand their targets and how they can achieve these.

#### Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP):

For some learners, their main area of need is their Social, Emotional and Mental Health and their subsequent behaviour, which can often lead to secondary issues in cognition and learning. As an academy, we use 'Restorative Practice' as an approach to dealing with behaviour (see Behaviour Policy and RP Policy) however, for some children their needs are greater and their experiences mean that individualised support is required. An IBP focuses on the process of trigger identification and offering alternative reactions to situations. The SENCO and class teacher will work alongside the child and their parents/carers each term to identify triggers, behaviours and positive steps towards improving behaviour. Occasionally, a Boxall Profile will be used to identify key criteria and targets to support children.

A child receiving SEN Support will be reviewed each term (Autumn/Spring/Summer). Parents/Carers and the child will be invited to contribute and will be consulted about any further actions and targets which will be set. As part of the review process, the SENCO and children's class teacher, in consultation with the parents/carers, may conclude that despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support for a considerable period, the child continues to have significant needs which are not being met by current interventions, therefore further support is required.

For those children whom we consider to have more severe or complex needs or for whom a number of strategies have been trialled and had little success, we would seek advice from other professional services. This support may include;

- Learning Support Service
- Educational Psychologist
- Visual Impairment Team
- Hearing Impairment Team
- CAMHS

- MIND etc.

A variety of support can be offered by these services, such as advice to the school about targets and strategies, specialised assessment or some direct work with the child. The specialist services will always be invited to contribute to the planning, monitoring and reviewing of the child's progress. Provision will run concurrently with differentiated curriculum support and whenever possible, be implemented within the child's normal classroom setting.

SEND Plans:

For those children where additional advice and support has been sought by different service providers and professionals, the movement from an IDP to an SEND plan may be made. Parental and child involvement is imperative in writing and reviewing an SEND plan, as with an IDP.

Education, Health and Care Plan:

The highest level of support offered for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities is the implementation of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, which is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support programmes.

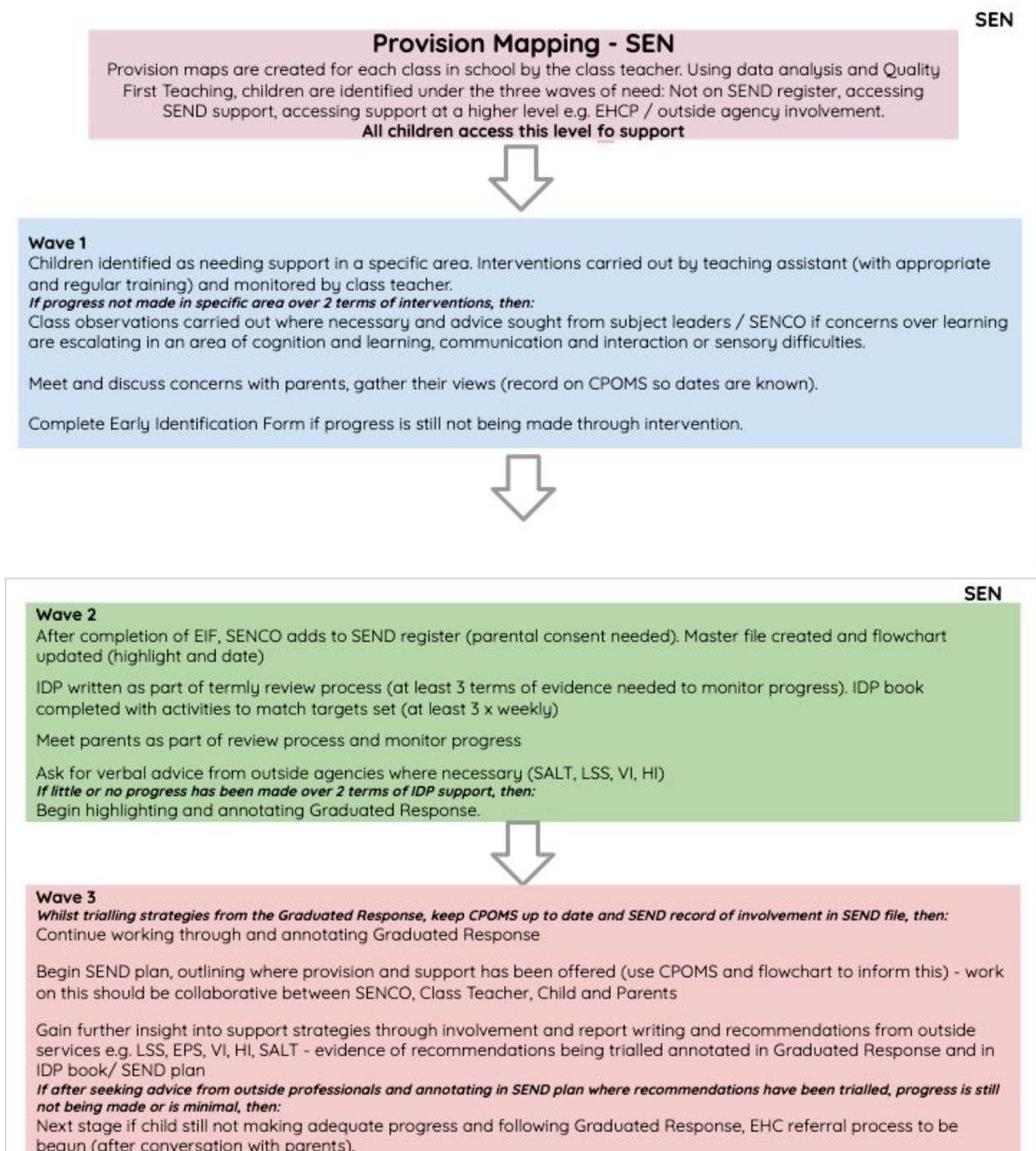
EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. Reports and assessment procedures are carried out in the process of applying for an EHC plan and the involvement of many services contribute to creating a portfolio of information about a child to ensure that they are receiving the highest level of care.

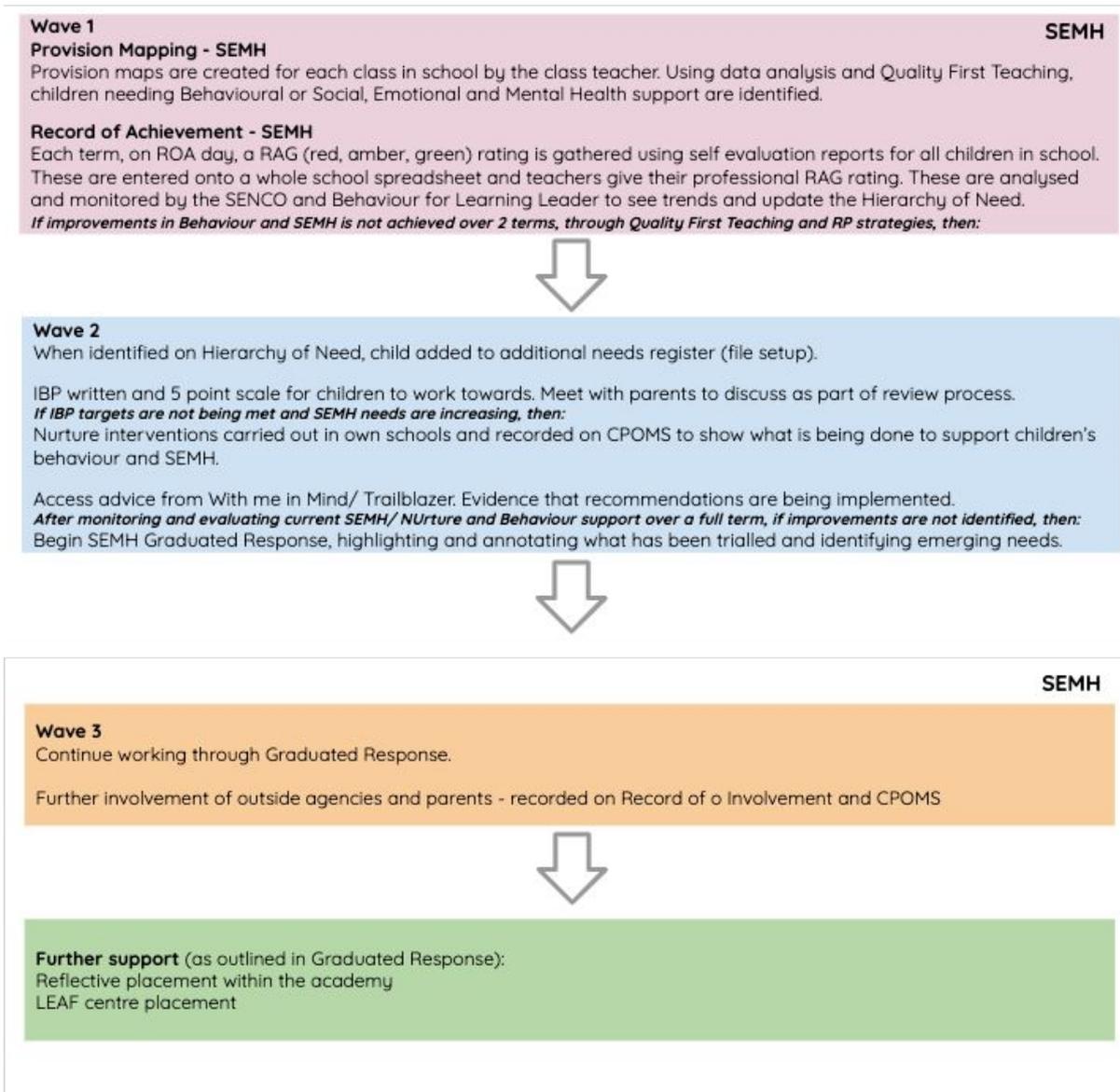
Graduated Response:

Where a child or young person is identified as having Special Educational Needs, educational establishments should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. By taking this approach earlier, decisions and actions can be revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child/young person's needs and of what support will help to secure good progress and good outcomes. This approach is known as the Graduated Response.

The SEND Graduated Response guidance is intended to be used as a tool for schools and settings and those partner agencies working with them and has been created in collaboration with SEND professionals, parents/carers and young people. At Willow Tree Academy, we have developed our own Graduated Response documents which identifies Behaviours/ Learning Behaviours observed, Assessment Tools completed, the strategies trialled and the outcomes and impact of these strategies. The information gathered through the Graduated Response moves through three phases of behaviours and interventions and is used academy wide to identify next steps in a child's support plan.

The following flowchart examines and identifies the progression through strategies of support which we use at Willow Tree Academy in order to ensure that they are being utilised to their maximum potential and to ensure consistency in approach:





## 5. Nurture and Inclusion at Willow Tree Academy

Nurture groups are a short-term, focused intervention for children with particular social, emotional and behavioural difficulties which are creating a barrier to learning within a mainstream class. Across our academy, we endeavour to provide nurture provision and interventions regularly for pupils with presenting SEMH needs.

We use a Hierarchy of Need to ascertain levels of need in school and work inclusively to ensure that we are giving all of our children the support they need in order to be able to thrive, both educationally and as independent individuals.

Inclusion of all learners is essential at Willow Tree Academy and where there are behaviour or SEMH barriers exhibited by some children, we use our nurture provision and graduated response information to identify triggers and place the child at the centre of their own pathway to success in meeting their own targets. Across the academy, we use 'Reflective Placements' as an initial step before an exclusion on the basis of behaviour

(where this is appropriate). This involves a child being educated at one of our other school sites to reflect on their behaviour and consider how their behaviours might change in order to reduce risk of a fixed term exclusion.

Starting in 2020, we have secured funding for the LEAF centre to be built on the grounds at Rockingham Junior and Infant School. Upon completion, the LEAF centre will be a unit which provides safe, secure and focussed provision for vulnerable learners who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Our vision is to create an outstanding provision that radically improves the emotional well-being, learning opportunities and social development of children most vulnerable to social and educational exclusion. Thus, improving their life chances.

## **6. Allocation of resources**

The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with Education and Health Care Plans.

The head teacher/ SENCO informs the governing body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed.

The Head Teacher and the SENCO meet annually to agree on how to use delegated funds to support inclusion and SEN. They review provision ensuring that all children receive their entitlement whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background.

## **7. Assessment**

For a detailed outline of the stages of support offered to children across Willow Tree Academy, refer to section 4.

The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

The LA (Local Authority) seeks advice from a range of agencies before making a formal decision as to whether the child will need an Educational Health Care plan. The needs of the child are considered to be paramount in this.

For some children, there are barriers to learning which stem from Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs (SEMH). For these children, it is paramount that school employs a safe and stimulating environment for children. Our Academy Pastoral Manager, Mrs Jane Forshaw, and our Inclusion and Behaviour Lead, Mrs Faye Ebbs, work directly with these children and alongside the SENCOs and Behaviour for Learning Leaders within each individual school setting to ensure that these children develop confident

relationships in schools and are able to identify and discuss their needs and make choices. For some children, whose behaviour can affect their ability to access their curriculum learning, IBPs (Individual Behaviour Plans) are put in place to set targets and give children ownership of identifying consequences and how to make positive steps. This is overseen by the SENCOs and our Learning Mentors, who will meet with parents and children to assess and review these targets regularly. Positive friendship and social skills groups are run weekly to improve children's relationships and close gaps in social and emotional understanding.

## **8. Partnership with parents and Pupil Participation**

### Partnership with parents

The school works closely with parents in the support of those children with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.

The school prospectus contains details of our policy for special educational needs, and the arrangements made for these children in our school. The governors' Annual Report to Parents contains an evaluation of the policy in action. A named governor takes a particular interest in special needs and is always willing to talk to parents.

We have regular meetings to share the progress of special needs children with their parents. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

### Pupil participation

In our schools, we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. The work in our school recognised the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills. It is imperative that we allow children to thrive in areas where they are successful and enjoy all learning opportunities. We are passionate about creating a climate for learning which premises on social innovation and encouraging children to be aware of what is available to them in the outside world.

Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets on their Individual Development Plans and/or Individual Behaviour Plans and attend review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their targets and identify areas where they would like more support. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

## **9. Staff training**

It is the role of the SENCO, alongside the pastoral team and Head of School, to ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date and that staff training is in line with expectations. Newly Qualified Teachers and Recently Qualified Teachers follow a specific programme for their continued professional development, including training from the SENCO. Local Authority guidelines are followed and support with training around specific areas of SEND and SEMH are obtained from outside agencies where necessary.

## **10. Monitoring and Reviewing**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it is up to date with current legislation. The policy will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Academy Inclusion and Wellbeing Lead
- SENCOs
- Pastoral Team
- Executive Headteacher

The policy and/or procedures will, where necessary, be revised in light of these evaluations. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.