

SOUTHLANDS SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs Policy

September 2023

Our mission statement is to “Help young people to help themselves”. This underpins all that we do and aim for our young people at Southlands. This policy will identify how we intend to provide for all our young people with Special Educational Needs.

At Southlands we want our students to feel:

Valued by our school community:

Our students are unique; we will teach them to understand their differences, diagnoses and needs. We will promote respect and understanding. We will provide opportunities for our students to develop their own self esteem, self confidence and resilience. We aim for our students to be happy, healthy and be able to make a positive contribution to our community.

Challenged to be the best they can be:

Our school staff team have high expectations for all of our young people. Targets are set and progress is reviewed regularly. Students who are underperforming are identified and plans are put in place to support them. We want all of our young people to reach the end of year 11 with the skills and qualifications they need to move on to post 16 education, training or employment.

Supported to learn and be independent:

Southlands has made significant changes to our learning environments to support our students learning, and we have plans to make further changes and adaptations in the future. We will engage and work alongside other professionals and agencies to support and benefit our young people.

Successful in whatever they choose to do:

We recognise that success is measured differently for our young people. We aim to identify and celebrate the small steps of progress our students make academically and socially. We aim to expose our students to a variety of different experiences and challenges in order to support and help them to be able to help themselves.

Profile of students 2023-24

We currently have 159 students on role.

100% of these students have an EHCP (Education, Health, Care Plan). All students have an EHCP on entry to Southlands and are therefore placed on the SEN register.

In relation to SEN diagnosis', according to their EHCPs, we have range of identified needs for our young people. These include:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder.

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.
- Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties.
- Global Developmental Delay.
- Moderate Learning Difficulties.
- Severe Learning Difficulties.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health.
- Specific Learning Difficulty.
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

Please note - Some children have more than one diagnosis within their plans.

Number of children in receipt of pupil premium funding:

- Pupil Premium - 65%
- Non Pupil-Premium - 35%

Our school building is on a single level and is wheelchair accessible. Our site is accessible for students who are visually or hearing impaired.

Rationale

This Report aims to meet the requirements of legislation including the 2014 Children and Families act, and to have regard to the associated Code of Practice and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Southlands is a school for students with a diagnosis of autism and / or moderate learning difficulties from Year 7 through to Year 11. All students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This policy details how the school intends to meet the needs of our students.

Purpose

Southlands school intends to provide every child on our school roll with an educational experience that meets their needs and requirements outlined in their EHCP. Our aim is to support and guide our students to meet their individual potential and help them to prepare for life outside of Southlands school.

Southlands provides a well balanced and structured adapted national curriculum in Key Stage 3 and a variety of accredited courses in Key Stage 4 alongside core elements of the adapted National Curriculum. In Key Stage 4 our students will complete a range of external courses which may include, Level 1, Entry level, ASDAN, OCR and some students will pursue GCSE qualifications if there is a cohort of students identified as having the ability to access a course at this level.

Specialist therapies and interventions are also offered to identified students to support their individual needs. These may include:

- Nurture
- Play Therapy
- Sessions with the school therapy dog
- Positive re-engagement plan
- Individual behaviour support plan

- Occupational therapy / regulation plan
- Clubs / activities at lunchtime and after school
- Community Learning
- Outreach
- Alternative Provision Placement
- Phonics intervention
- Speech and language

Religious Education:

Religious Education is taught through the guidelines of *North Tyneside agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2020)*. This framework enhances the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils, offering strong continuity and progression within and between key stages. RE is delivered in a weekly timetabled lesson for all students across the school. In KS3, RE is a stand alone subject covering religions and worldviews. In KS4, RE is taught alongside Citizenship with several religions threading through thematic enquiries. In addition, students are encouraged to attend religious places of worship, welcome visitors in school and attend RE affiliated assemblies. At both key stages, students are given the opportunity to explore theological, philosophical, ethical and sociological enquiries as stated in the syllabus. The curriculum is designed to develop deepening knowledge and understanding about a range of religious and nonreligious worldviews that cohabit our communities.

Futures:

KS4 students will choose two short courses to complete over the two year period. Students are supported to make choices and decisions that support planning for the future.

The ASDAN Short Courses are flexible, portfolio-based programmes designed to accredit up to 60 hours of activity and skills development. The focus is on completing challenges and skills development according to individual ability. Learners will be working at Entry level 3 to Level 1.

Courses are adapted to the interests and abilities of individual learners and provide lots of opportunities for personal development. They will also learn transferable skills that can be used in employment or further vocational study.

Careers:

An adapted Careers curriculum is followed for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Students learn about a broad and varied range of careers with the view of raising awareness of different options for our students as they progress through Southlands. All students will meet with our Connexions advisor from Year 9 onwards. As our students get closer to year 11 there is more of a focus on different career paths and post 16 options in preparation for leaving Southlands and going into further education, training or the world of work.

Staffing and other professional involvement:

Staffing levels at Southlands are enhanced, for this academic year (23-24) students in year 7 are taught in classes of up to 10 students for our formal pathway, and up to 7 for our students in our ASC base. Staffing levels are higher for those students who access our ASC Base. In years 8-11 students are taught in classes of between 10-12 students with a class teacher and a teaching assistant. Our focus on independence remains no matter which pathway our students are on, we aim to 'help our students to help themselves'. Support is reviewed continually so that our students learn skills to independently manage, progress and achieve at levels that are appropriate for each individual student.

As part of our community at Southlands School we work closely with a variety of professional agencies. They provide an in-depth knowledge and understanding that supports and assists staff to ensure that our teaching and delivery matches our students needs, and can support staff to develop individual plans to keep our students safe and well regulated. These professionals work alongside students, teachers and teaching assistants to develop techniques and skills that will support each individual child.

The needs and requirements identified and detailed in EHCPs can require support and intervention from Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology and other professionals. We aim to work with professionals to ensure that each young persons needs are met to the best of our ability. We strive as a school to have a strong partnership with parents and carers, we have a pastoral team who ensure that there are open avenues of communication between home and school.

Transport:

Transport to and from school is organised by the Local Authority and not school. Transport staff are employed by the transport companies. Southlands has an Independent Travel Coordinator who will work with our students to give them experiences of independent travel and if and when appropriate provide training for our young people who would like to independently travel to and from school.

Admission:

At admission panel any pupils placed at the school will have an EHCP detailing a diagnosis of Autism and/or moderate learning difficulties. The majority of pupils are admitted to Southlands School at the start of Year 7, however pupils may be admitted in any year provided school can meet their needs and there is space in their academic year group.

EHCP Reviews:

An annual review of each students EHCP is held annually. Parents and carers are invited into school to review progress and together ensure that the aims and outcomes detailed in the EHCP are current and reflect the needs of each student. We value the input of our parents and carers into the EHCP process, views are gained during the meeting, in addition to the views and opinions of the young person. Any other professionals involved with each student are also invited to attend to ensure that all views are shared and are reflected in the EHCP. After the EHCP meeting a draft document is created to reflect the changes made during the meeting. A copy is given to the parents and carers to review before the document is sent to the SEND team.

How we teach and assess our students:

A key component of our SEN provision is to allow students to develop in situations that promote and encourage independence and confidence at every opportunity with the skills and support of understanding and knowledgeable staff.

School staff utilise a wide variety of teaching methods and strategies in order to meet the needs of individual pupils in lessons. Staff are aware that our students access learning in a variety of different ways, staff are adaptable and aim to ensure that lessons motivate and stimulate our students and are accessible to all.

Our students are assessed by our teaching staff to determine their progress in National Curriculum subjects. School follow a PRAG system (Purple, Red, Amber and Green) This allows staff to identify students who are making expected progress, or exceeding it, or are in need of further support and intervention in order to meet their potential.

Assessments provide staff with information to assist in their planning to ensure that our students needs are met. In addition our assessments provide school, parents and carers with information about students achievements during each academic year. Assessments provide evidence about the quality of our curriculum offer across each key stage.

Southlands school uses the Trackit Lights system in order to assess and record pupil behaviour and engagement across the school day.

Resources

The school has a delegated budget, which is monitored on a termly basis by the governing body finance and staffing committee.

All members of staff have opportunities to suggest areas of expenditure. Heads of Department are allocated budgets for their subjects which may include SEN specific learning aids. We acknowledge that the most valuable resource is staffing, and there is a real commitment to use every available resource to retain and recruit skilled teachers and teaching assistants. There is also continued professional develop and training of staff in order to meet the needs of our young people effectively.

Communication

We understand that not all of our students will be able to communicate their needs, intentions or worries effectively. All staff are aware of this and appropriate safeguarding and communication training is undertaken and refreshed at least on an annual basis. The school currently has a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Sam Hall and a team of Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) Angela Noble, Stella Ellis, Joanne Gallagher, Alison Glen-Ravenhill and Alice Beadle.

Any specific health and medical needs are documented to all staff to ensure knowledge and training needs are up-to-date and accurate this. The designated SENCO is Stella Ellis.

At Southlands we value good communication with parents, carers and other professionals. School staff can be contacted via telephone calls, text message and e-mail. Parents are invited to attend annual reviews and parents evenings and to contact the school at any time if they have any issues or

concerns they would like to discuss. Initially phone calls will be answered by our office staff who will determine and advise the best member of staff to support and help parents, carers and professionals. Southlands has a termly Newsletter, The Buzz which is circulated to parents and carers and is available on our school website.

Our young people are consulted on aspects of school life through our active school council. Our annual review process includes gaining the views and opinions of our students, students are invited to attend the review meeting if they wish to. We also circulate an annual survey to all of our students in order to gain the views and opinions of our young people.

Local offer for students with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities.

Southlands School is an inclusive school, our aim is to ensure that all of our young people are able to achieve their potential whatever their needs or challenges.

Southlands staff consult with parents, carers and other professionals regarding our local offer by:

- Talking to parents and carers about each young person, to ensure that school understands their needs from the families perspective.
- Formal and informal meetings are offered throughout the academic year to ensure that support is offered and parents, carers and other professionals are kept up to date about progress.
- Home visits take place if this is required.
- New students and those transitioning into and out of Southlands are offered visits, tours and opportunities to meet staff and have their questions answered. Bespoke resources are created if required to support our students to feel comfortable and confident in their new school.

How we support our families

Southlands School aims to work with our families to support them with their young person's learning and development outside of school. We offer our parents and carers:

- Support from our Home School Liaison – Alison Glen-Ravenhill.
- Access and support from our Pastoral Team, Joanne Gallagher, Sean Kirkup, Scott McKenzie, Jeanette Hall and Marie Wetherell.
- Organised events, workshops and coffee evenings.

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's needs, education or progress please contact the school to make arrangements to discuss this further with your child's teacher, our pastoral team or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Southlands school's complaints procedures are in place and can be accessed through our website, we would always hope to resolve any issues or concerns informally by working in partnership with parents and carers.

Parents can contact North Tyneside SENDIASS for impartial information, advice and support in relation to their child's special educational needs and / or disability on 0191 643 8313.