



**ACORN**  
A Secondary Alternative Provision

# SEN Policy and Information Report

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## **Legislation and guidance**

This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **Definitions**

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

**Roles and responsibilities - Professionals who support children with special educational needs/ and or disabilities (SEND) within the school.**

All our staff are responsible for pupils with special needs.

There are a number of experienced professionals working to support your child here at Acorn School. All of the professionals are available to meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have. Should you wish to contact anyone working with your child please call the main school reception on 01522 822428 or email enquiries@theacornschool.co.uk

Each person working with your child has a specific role to fulfil:

<b>Class/Subject Teacher</b>	Responsible for ensuring all students have access to good/outstanding teaching and that the curriculum is adapted to meet each individual student's needs (differentiation).
<b>Keyworker</b>	Responsible for ensuring all students in their form receives the correct guidance and pastoral support to make good academic progress. Keyworkers also teach Lifeskills and PSHE lessons which seek to improve social and emotional development.
<p><b>Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO):</b></p> <p><b>Mrs S Allen</b>  <b>National Award for SEN Coordination (Middlesex University)</b></p>	<p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that all members of staff working with your child are aware of your child's individual needs and/or conditions and what specific adjustments need to be made to enable them to be fully included within school lessons and make good progress.</li> <li>• Ensuring that all staff working with your child are supported in delivering the planned work/programme for your child, so they can achieve the best possible progress. This may involve the use of additional adults, outside specialist help and individually planned work and resources.</li> <li>• Ensuring that the school's SEND Policy is followed in all classrooms and for all the pupils with any SEND.</li> <li>• Coordinating all the support for children with SEND and or disabilities, to make sure all children get a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs.</li> <li>• Updating the school's SEND register (a system for ensuring all the special educational, physical and sensory needs of pupils within the school are known and understood) and making sure that there are excellent records of your child's progress and needs.</li> <li>• Use VSEND as a tool to show how Acorn is meeting needs and liaise with parents to access the tool.</li> </ul>
<p>The SENCO ensures that you as a parent are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involved in supporting your child's learning</li> <li>• Kept informed about the support your child is getting</li> <li>• Involved in reviewing how they are doing and be part of planning ahead for them.</li> <li>• Liaising with all the other people who may be coming into the school to help support your child's learning e.g. the Educational Psychology Service.</li> <li>• Aware, if necessary, of specialist support for class teachers and support staff in the school so they can help your child to achieve their potential.</li> <li>• Supporting training for staff so they are aware and confident about how to meet the needs of your child and others within the school.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Teaching Assistants (TAs)</b></p>	<p>TAs work with the class teacher to identify areas of support for students with SEND. Their main priorities are to support students to access the curriculum and to empower students to develop effective strategies that enable them to become independent learners. They support the implementation of differentiation and specialist support strategies in the classroom and keep students focused on learning activities during lessons. TAs also provide support to improve social and emotional development through both formal intervention and through the Keyworker.</p> <p>All TAs are required to attend all training opportunities related to SEND and differentiation. Most TAs are classroom based practitioners; however, some are specially trained and are able to deliver specific SEND programmes outside of the classroom. Students also receive behaviour support within the classroom and also 1:1 behaviour support outside of the classroom.</p>
<p><b>Counsellor</b></p> <p><b>Debbie Washington</b> <b>Karen Hopper-Pert</b></p>	<p>Responsible for working with our pupils who are most vulnerable. Some may be suffering childhood trauma, others need more therapeutic behaviour support. These sessions are 1:1.</p>
<p><b>Assistant Headteacher in charge of behaviour</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Lucy Shury</b></p>	<p>Responsible for the day to day management of all aspects of behaviour support, including all behaviour support in class and 1:1 behaviour support.</p>
<p><b>Headteacher</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Ang Dawson</b></p>	<p>Responsible for the day to day management of all aspects of the school. She will give responsibility to the SENCO and class teachers but is still responsible for ensuring that your child's needs are met. Also responsible for ensuring the SENCO role is delivered in accordance to statutory guidance and in line with school policy and ensuring that the Governing Body is kept up to date about any issues in the school relating to SEND.</p>
<p><b>SEND Governor</b></p> <p><b>Sue Cordell</b></p>	<p>Responsible for making sure that the school has an up to date SEND Policy and that the school has appropriate provision and has made necessary adaptations to meet the needs of all children currently in attendance. The SEND Governor is also responsible for making sure that the necessary support is made for any child who attends the school and for making visits to understand and monitor the support given to children with SEND in the school and being part of the process to ensure your child achieves his/her potential.</p>

## **How are pupils' needs identified?**

According to the SEND Code of Practice, the four primary areas of SEND are:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical development

KS4 pupils are identified and placed on the SEND register using a variety of information. The school uses tracking and progress data as an early identification indicator. All KS3 pupils are placed on the SEND register with information about their needs.

Identification for KS4 may be as a result of:

- Information provided by the mainstream school
- Information provided by external agencies
- Teacher/non-teaching staff concern
- Parental/carer concern
- Assessments undertaken by subjects on arrival
- Termly tracking data
- Information from 1:1 behaviour support sessions

## **What are the different types of provision and support available for children with SEND and/or disabilities in this School?**

All teachers are teachers of SEND. The SEND Code of Practice makes teacher's responsibilities very clear:

'Teachers responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching' (p88)

### **The Curriculum**

In order to meet the learning needs of all pupils, the most important provision is quality first teaching with appropriate differentiation in place. The curriculum at Acorn has a focus on academic, pastoral and vocational subjects.

Students with SEND are carefully monitored through the work experience programme to ensure that the setting they choose is suitable for their needs.

### **Support available for pupils with SEND**

Students will get support that is specific to their individual needs. This may be all provided by the Class Teacher or may involve:

- Other staff from within the school
- Staff who will visit the school from the Local Authority central services.
- Staff who visit from outside agencies.

We also work with

- Educational Psychology Service
- Social Services
- Team Around the Child Coordinators
- Early Help Workers
- The Working Together Team (Autism Outreach)
- Youth Offending Team
- Healthy Minds
- STT (Specialist Teaching Team)
- CAMHS (mental health team)
- School Nurses
- Stonewall
- SEND Team (Lincolnshire County Council)
- LAC Team (Looked After Child Teams)
- Virtual Schools - Looked After Child Education Team
- Pilgrim School
- Grief and Loss Counselling
- Positive Futures
- Futures 4 Me
- We Are With You (Formerly Addaction)
- Community Paediatricians

Parents can contact the school to discuss any of the above services or if they wish to discuss ways of further supporting their child.

Types of support provided in response to the Code of Practice (the document that schools use to plan their SEND input).	What would this mean for your child?	Who can get this kind of support?
<p>Class teacher input via good/outstanding classroom teaching.</p> <p>Keyworker will input via good/outstanding classroom teaching.</p>	<p>This means that the teacher will have the highest possible expectations for your child and all students in their class. All teaching is based on building on what your child already knows, can do and can understand. Teachers will be putting in place different ways of teaching so that your child is fully involved in learning in class. This may involve things such as using more practical learning or providing different resources adapted for your child. Teachers will also put in place specific strategies (which may be suggested by the SENCO or staff from outside agencies) to enable your child to access the learning task.</p> <p>This is known as wave one intervention.</p>	<p>All children at the school receive this. They will also all receive behaviour support both implicitly and explicitly in the lesson.</p>
<p>Specific small group work or one to one intervention</p>	<p>This group may be facilitated by a Teacher or Higher Level Teaching Assistant who has received specific training. This intervention means that the student has been identified as requiring additional support in the school as part of our normal monitoring process. The class teacher and SENCO monitor the progress of students. Where gaps in understanding or learning are identified, additional support is assigned to help the student make the required progress. Targeted and highly personalised interventions can reduce the barriers to learning and support the student to make faster progress.</p> <p>Interventions will take place both for learning and for behaviour support.</p>	<p>Any student who has specific gaps in their understanding of a subject/area of learning. Students who need additional behaviour support, where the classroom delivery is not sufficient.</p>

If your child has been identified as needing more specialist input instead of, or in addition to, good and outstanding classroom teaching and intervention groups, referrals will be made to outside agencies to advise and support the school in enabling your child to make progress. Before referrals are made you will be contacted to discuss your child's progress and help plan possible ways forward. If it is agreed that the support of an outside agency is a way forward, you will be asked to give your permission for the school to refer your child to a specialist professional.



Types of support provided in response to the Code of Practice (the document that schools use to plan their SEND input).	What would this mean for your child?	Who can get this kind of support?
<p>Specialist assessments run by outside agencies e.g. Specialist Teaching Team (STT). These are what we refer to as wave two and three interventions. We also work with Local Authority central services such as the Educational Psychologist. This will help the school and yourself to better understand your child's particular needs.</p> <p>We also refer to the Community Paediatrician if there is a concern that your child may have ADHD and/or ASD.</p>	<p>The specialist professional will work with your child to understand their needs and make recommendations, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making changes to the way your child is supported in class e.g. some individual support or changing some aspects of teaching to support them more appropriately</li> <li>• Support to set targets which will include their specific professional expertise</li> <li>• Your child's involvement in a group run by the school under the guidance of the outside professional e.g. a social skills group or circle of friends</li> <li>• Group or individual work with outside professional</li> </ul> <p><b>These professionals can guide the school to allowing up to 15hours per week individual or small group support for your child. Acorn is an Alternative Provision therefore a number of these hours are being met just by attending the school.</b></p>	<p>Students with specific barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through whole class good/outstanding teaching and intervention groups</p>
<p>Specified Individual support for your child of more than 15 hours in the school and highly specialised interventions are usually provided via a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This means your child will have been identified by the class teacher/SENCO as needing a particularly high level of individual and small group teaching (more than 15 hours a week), which cannot be provided from the resources already delegated to the school</p>	<p>Usually, if your child requires this high level of support they may also need specialist support in school from a professional outside Acorn. This may be from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Authority central services such as Specialist Social Communication (including Autism) Outreach Team or Sensory Impaired Service (for students with a hearing or visual need)</li> <li>• Outside agencies such as the Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service, Occupational Therapy Service, Physiotherapy and/or CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)</li> </ul> <p><b>These professionals can guide the school to allowing up to 15hours per week individual or small group support for your child. Acorn is an Alternative Provision therefore a number of these hours are being met just by attending the school.</b></p>	<p>Students with specific barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through whole class good/outstanding teaching and intervention groups and for whom 15hours support is not sufficient to meet their needs.</p>

## **Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

Your child's mainstream school, Acorn (or you) can request that the Local Authority carry out a Statutory Assessment of your child's needs. This is a legal process and you can find more details about this in the Local Authority (LA) based local Offer website:

<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/parents/support-and-aspiration/sen-and-d-reforms/thelocal-offer/>

After the request has been sent to the Local Authority (with a lot of information about your child, including some from you), they will decide whether they think your child's needs (as described in the paperwork provided), seem complex enough to need a Statutory Assessment. If this is the case they will ask you and all professionals involved with your child to write a report outlining your child's needs. If they do not think your child needs this, they will ask Acorn and your child's mainstream school to continue with the support in place.

After the reports have all been sent in, the Local Authority will decide if your child's needs are severe, complex and lifelong and that they need more than 15 hours of support in school to make good progress. If this is the case they will write an EHC Plan. If this is not the case, they will ask the Acorn and your child's mainstream school to continue with the support through the Graduated Approach and also set up a meeting at the Acorn or your child's mainstream school to ensure a plan is in place to ensure your child makes as much progress as possible.

The EHC Plan will outline the support your child will receive from the LA, how the support should be used and what strategies must be put in place. It will also have long and short term goals for your child. They may specify an additional adult who may be used to support your child with whole class learning, run individual programmes or run small groups including your child.

At this point it will also be decided whether a permanent placement at Acorn will be the most suitable option for meeting the requirements of the EHC Plan. Your child's needs are paramount.

### **Staff Training: How are the adults working at Acorn are helped to work with children with SEND and what training do they have?**

The SENCO's job is to support the class teacher in planning for students with SEND.

The school has a Development Plan, including identified training needs for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of all students. This may include whole school training on SEND issues or to support identified groups of learners in school, such as ASD, ADHD, Attachment Disorder, Dyslexia, differentiation, etc. The VSEND document from Lincolnshire County Council is being actioned in KS4 and for all pupils where an EHCP request is required.

All staff undertake a compulsory twilight training programme to ensure that they have the best and most up to date information. Training focuses around behaviour management as well as learning. It is led by the Educational Psychologist.

Training takes place on a regular basis. If you would like to hear about the training which is currently taking place or has taken place by the staff members in the please speak to the SENCO.

## **Monitoring student progress: How do we measure the progress of your child and how we keep you informed?**

Your child's progress is continually monitored by the class teacher. Class teachers will set subject specific targets differentiated to the students' individual needs. His/her progress is reviewed formally every term. For KS3, a general indication of the level they are working at and predicted levels. For KS4, GCSE grades indicate the student's current and predicted level.

You will receive daily phone calls from your child's Keyworker to let you know how your child has been getting. Your child's mainstream school will be regularly updated about your child's progress. There will also be regular meetings with Acorn, your child's mainstream school and yourself in order to discuss your child's progress both academically and also relating to behaviour.

The progress of a student with an EHC Plan is formally reviewed at an Annual review with all adults involved with the child's education. The SENCo will monitor your child's progress within any individual or group provisions that they take part in. You will be invited to meet twice a year for a review to set more specific targets for students aimed at addressing specific areas difficulty or concern.

How will Acorn let me know if they have any concerns about my child's learning in school?

Acorn has robust measures for tracking student progress. When classroom teaching is not meeting the needs of a student, the teacher will raise this with their Keyworker and the SENCo who will look at your child's attainment across the curriculum. If your child is then identified as not making progress, the school will make a decision about whether to monitor this or set up an intervention group, and will inform you. Acorn's use of VSEND at KS4 will allow us to see how well we can meet your child's needs and what areas of need we need to focus on.

If your child is still not making expected progress we will discuss with you:

- Any concerns you may have
- Any further interventions or referrals to outside professionals to support your child's learning
- How we could work together, to support your child at home/school.

Should you have any queries about your child or if you feel there are issues please make contact via your child's Keyworker in the first instance. They know your child well and see them every day. They will then put you in touch with us if they feel that further investigation/intervention is required.

### **Differentiation: How will the teaching be adapted for my child with learning needs or SEND?**

Planning and teaching will be adapted on a daily basis, if needed, to meet your child's learning needs and increase your child's access to what is on offer. Class Teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of the individuals in their classes, and will ensure that learning tasks are adjusted in order to enable your child to access their learning as independently as possible. Specially trained support staff can implement the teachers modified/adapted planning to support the needs of your child where necessary. Specific resources and strategies will be used to support your child individually and in groups.

Classes at Acorn are much smaller than in mainstream schools. Allowing for your child to access more adult support and individualised learning. Classes often have more than one member of staff, allowing pupils to access more adult support.

### **How will we support your child when they are new to our school, moving key stages, reintegrating back into a mainstream setting or leaving Acorn?**

We recognise that 'moving on' can be difficult for a child with SEND and steps are taken to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

When a student and their parents are spoken to about attending Acorn, they will be invited to Acorn for an induction. If other professionals are involved, they will also be invited to discuss your child's needs, share strategies used, and ensure provision is put in place before your child starts. We may suggest adaptations to the settling in period to help your child to settle more easily.

When students begin at the Acorn the SENCO/ Subject Leader/ Class Teacher will pass information on to the new class teachers at Acorn, prior or during the induction meeting. All students in KS4 will have a Pupil Passport which has all the relevant information to allow your child to reach their potential. The pupils with an EHCP will also have a specific target sheet with targets based on their EHCP. All staff are able to access the school data base to gather appropriate information to aid classroom support. All pupils in KS3 will have reintegration targets based on their Pupil Profile and their individual needs.

When students move on from us we will work with any new schools/providers to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible. We have a Re-Integration Officer who will support your child in their new school or with their re-integration back into their mainstream. We can be contacted by the mainstream school for discussions about specific support. We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as quickly as possible and we will provide evidence of additional classroom or exam based support when needed. If your child has an EHCP then we will arrange further transition visits and review meetings to ensure that all of the relevant support is in place.

**What support do we have for you as a parent of a child with SEND? How do we consult and involve pupils and parents?**

Following the Induction Meeting for the pupil, all staff will be given information about the pupils' strength and weaknesses as well as the agreed outcomes. Then the following will continue to happen in order to support parents:

- All staff are available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress or any concerns/worries you may have. All you need to do is make an appointment or call.
- Key workers will ensure a phone call home takes place on a daily basis if there are any concerns at school. This is also the ideal time for you to talk to them about any concerns you may have at home.
- We will ensure that all information from outside professionals will be shared with you in person or via a written report. The SENCO will share any new assessments and support strategies suggested by outside agencies with you and will be notified when new support measures are implemented and invited to discuss these with the SENCO.
- It is very important that we work together to ensure your child's success. Please let us know if anything changes at home. This can support the Acorn to help the student transfer appropriate effective strategies into the classroom.
- In addition: If your child is undergoing Statutory Assessment you will also be supported by the Children's Services SEND Team. They will ensure that you fully understand the process and that you get all the information and support you require.

### **How have we made Acorn physically accessible to children with SEND?**

At Acorn we pride ourselves on the accessibility. We undertake a standard accessibility plan which is reviewed every 3 years or whenever a student with specific needs joins us. We have disabled toilets and a shower with disabled access. Our school is accessible by wheelchair.

We also have access to specially trained staff who can modify exams, scribe and read for students who are unable to do so for themselves thus ensuring they have the best possible chance to show their learning in their examinations. Pupils will undertake their exams at their mainstream school, with full support from Acorn.

### **How can I let the school know I am concerned about my child's progress at Acorn?**

If you have concerns about your child's progress, you should speak to your child's Keyworker in the first instance. If they feel it is not something easily dealt with then the Class teacher will be in touch with you. The Class teacher will then decide if they feel a meeting with the SENCO is necessary.

If you are not happy that the concerns are being managed and that your child is still not making progress you should speak directly to the SENCO.

Year 11s will also have Parents Evenings to allow you to get information on progress, speak to staff if you have any concerns and get advice in supporting your child through their GCSEs

## Frequently Asked Questions

- My child is having problems with learning. How do I find out what his/her particular difficulties are?

There are several options open to you. We recommend that you discuss the difficulties with the Keyworker in the first instance. Alternatively, you can contact the SENCO directly. You are welcome to leave a message and we will return your call at the earliest opportunity.

Acorn offers Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) assessments to students showing signs of dyslexia, dyscalculia and/or dyspraxia. Please note however, that this is a buy-in service and we need to wait until someone is available to undertake these tests. If further assessment or diagnosis is required, we can refer the case to the appropriate agency on your behalf. Referrals to agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or the Community Paediatrician can also be completed by your GP.

- What tests do you administer on entry?

We are given a wide range of information by their mainstream school and will then assess as needed if concerns arise. We will administer tests if there are any concerns raised by staff or parents/carers. We will use the VSEND document to look at your child's needs and to use it as a tool to help us meet needs.

- My child is not dyslexic but has trouble reading and writing. What can the SEND department do?

Students who have reading or spelling issues will be identified, usually by their mainstream school, but also after some time at Acorn. They will then receive support within the lesson as class sizes are small compared to their mainstream setting. If your child's skills are particularly weak, we may withdraw him/her from lessons for additional literacy support with a trained Teaching Assistant. We will also provide in class support where possible. We will monitor academic progress and assign further support if sufficient progress is not being made.

- My child has been diagnosed with Dyslexia. What can the SEND department provide? What if you are concerned your child has dyslexia?

Students with mild Dyslexia receive support in class via differentiation from subject teachers and may also benefit from support from a Teaching Assistant. Their progress is monitored and additional support may be provided should progress be slow. Students with moderate or severe Dyslexia may be offered additional literacy support outside of the classroom. Staff receive guidance to support students with Dyslexia from the SENCO and via specific training.

A screening test is available if you are concerned your child has dyslexic tendencies. Once your child has completed the screening test we will discuss how to proceed with a diagnosis if one is necessary. We have the Lexia programme which your child can access which is 1:1 support in comprehension, grammar and word study.

- My child has an EHCP. How will Acorn ensure that he/she gets the support to which he/she is entitled?

The school has a responsibility to ensure that child's needs are met as outlined in the EHC plan. We will meet with parents regularly to discuss pastoral and academic issues and review profiles. Support

is provided to students in line with the recommendations of the EHCP or recent annual review. Staff receive specific advice for each student and are expected to deliver differentiation work during lesson times.

- How does Acorn manage the administration of medicines?

Medication is routinely administered by authorised staff. All medication is kept under lock and key in a central place in the Medical room. Medications are all clearly labelled to identify the student it belongs to and instructions for medication are kept with the medication/ Health Care Plan by reception or the medical room staff. Medication is administered by the authorised member of staff and this is witnessed by another member of staff.

- How will my child/ young person be able to contribute his or her views?

Pupils are invited to share their views with their named Keyworker and are also asked to attend Annual Reviews or Placement review meetings. Students are asked to complete a questionnaire about school, their learning and their well- being on a regular basis as part of the review cycle. Students with additional needs are also able to make their views known within the student feedback section of the annual review.



**Links with other policies and documents**

- Accessibility Plan

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Governing Body

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher