NAS Schools SEND and Inclusion Policy – SO-01

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This policy replaces: NAS Special Educational Needs policy (SO-0134)

QUALITY OF LIFE FRAMEWORK

All NAS schools and Children's services follow our Quality of life (QoL) Framework. In implementing this framework, we listen to pupils, parents and the child's keyworker to understand what is important to them in relation to their quality of life. We then work as a transdisciplinary team to ensure we plan each child's education carefully and cohesively, shape each pupil's provision around their EHCP and agreed developmental goals in order to develop pupils' knowledge and skills now and for the future.

1. Purpose of this document

To outline NAS Independent schools' approach in identifying and responding to SEND and in order to support effective inclusion in our schools and communities. This policy outlines the framework for the school to meet its duty, obligation and principal equality values to provide a high-quality education to all of its pupils, all of whom have SEND.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff who work in National Autistic Society Independent schools 3. Approach

The United Nations (UN) states that education is a fundamental human right. However, autistic pupils continue to experience high rates of school exclusion. The NAS believes all children, including those with autism, have the right to education.

Our schools have high ambitions for all pupils to fulfil their potential and have a clear ethos of respecting each pupil, developing their strengths as well as equipping them with effective supports to help thrive in the face of challenges. Our schools put emphasis on opportunities for community-based learning in order to generalise and rehearse functional skills in real life settings and enabling pupils to participate in their local community. We focus on developing a broad curriculum that covers but not exclusively, academic skills, social skills, wellbeing and independent living skills to support pupils to make a successful transition into adulthood with the necessary skills to live independently, to gain paid employment – when possible and appropriate, and to participate in their local community. We recognise that each pupil with autism has unique needs and unique approaches to learning and therefore provide education strategies tailored to meet the individual needs of each pupil.

All pupils have the right to an inclusive education. In delivering on that entitlement, we promote the rights endowed by the Equality Act 2010 for each of the protected characteristics and prejudice against none. All of our pupils will be respected, supported to achieve beyond what is expected and be empowered to make positive choices about their own lives. Expectations for all pupils will always be high and realistic. Our planned provision will support pupils to make a positive inclusive contribution to their community, and through equipping pupils with the 'tools' and skills they need for different stages in their life. We will seek to improve the current and future lives of the pupils, their families and members of the local community.

The schools have an Accessibility Plan (as defined by the Equality Act 2010, Para 3 of Schedule 10) that details specific arrangements to improve accessibility for pupils with disabilities. The school will ensure it has appropriate disabled access, toilets and changing facilities. And these will consider the pupils' need for dignity and privacy. Furthermore, reasonable adjustments will be made according to the Equality Act 2010 in order to support pupils' individual sensory differences. We will ensure that there are clear and effective systems in place to meet the needs of all pupils in order that they make the necessary progress to fulfill their potential. In doing so we will:

- Provide all children with their legal entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is differentiated according to their individual needs, within the NAS Quality of Life Framework;
- Provide an education that enables pupils to achieve their best and develop in confidence individuals;
- Ensure the teaching and learning environment is effective by implementing autism specific practices and which will have a positive impact and improve the educational outcomes for all pupils;
- Ensure that there are planned, robust and transparent systems in place, that are understood by everyone, to support an efficient and consistent approach to the identification and assessment of all pupils' special educational needs
- Ensure we work in partnership with parents and maintain close links with external support services and professionals where appropriate
- Ensure the school environment and expectations of staff are designed to promote independence and provide appropriate level of challenge and support
- Provide effective assessment procedures to ensure early identification of any areas of difficulty and inform interventions.

- Nurture self-esteem and celebrate the success of all pupils
- Prepare pupils to make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education, training or supported living.

3. Operational delivery

Schools have local procedures that outline specific arrangements and approaches. The following elements of operational delivery are common to all schools:

- All pupils attending NAS schools will have an Education, Health & Care Plan and a diagnosis of autism / ASD as the primary diagnosis.
- All pupils are funded by their Local Authority.
- High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in our school's response to students.
- On entry to the young person's strengths and areas for development will be assessed and identified and used to plan support and provision.
- Pupils' views will be sought and considered from the beginning as core part of the QoL framework. This may involve a range of differentiated support tools.
- Families have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education and as such their views will be sought and they will be included in decision making.
- Our pupils will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriately individualised and differentiated curriculum.
- The school will manage its resources to ensure all pupils' needs are met.
- The school will have a transdisciplinary team which will work with all staff, parents and pupils to ensure all pupils needs are met.
- Provision and progress for our pupils will be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- Each school will have their own assessment procedures that support the quality of life framework (QoL). Each school will be supported in the understanding of individual differences and how best facilitate access to their learning and development.
- The school will collaborate with education, health and social care services to provide support.
- The responsibility for Education, Health & Care Plans will be reviewed regularly in line with statute and children's needs and this lies with the local authority.
- Transition planning will lead to successful entry into the school and successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.
- Pupils will be encouraged to participate in group, class, whole school and community activities.
- Where schools receive pupil premium they will publish their strategy for planned use and impact.
- The school will evaluate the success of its provision, considering:
    - the level of support pupils received and the amount of progress they make (including against EHCP outcomes)
    - the progress data of pupils
    - the success of pupil premium strategies
    - the impact of training and new approaches to meeting needs
    - the views of pupils and parents
    - the views of outside agencies

    - destination tracking
- Staff person specifications will include appropriate qualifications, and training will be provided for those involved in the implementation of the policy including where appropriate e.g. Safeguarding, Autism (Children) PGCert/MA/MEd/MPhil for leaders, Gateway Qualification Level 3 Award in supporting children and young people with autism, Ask Autism modules, and Studio 3 training, SPELL.
- Staff performance management processes will support the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that support effective provision for our pupils
- Training will cover the cognitive, social, emotional, communication, sensory, health and physical needs of pupils with SEND
- Arrangements for the fair admissions of pupils are outlined in the school's admissions policy and will be published on the school website
- The school will plan, deliver and monitor services against how well outcomes have been met in relation to Improved educational progress and outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- The school will adhere to the Data Protection Regulation 2018 and GDPR requirements, with regard to sharing and storage of information.
- Schools will use a range of autism specialist approaches as detailed in the school's Local offer. All approaches will be evidence based, ethical and individualised to each pupil.
- As detailed in the Residential special schools: National Minimum standards (2015) Specific therapeutic techniques are used only:
    - where there is a clear and widely accepted theoretical basis or evidence base underpinning their effectiveness;
    - with the continuing agreement of the child's responsible authority or a person with parental responsibility, and of the child concerned where the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision;
    - where additional specialist professionals (such as medical, legal, educationalists, psychologists, SaLTs, OTs and other therapists) are professionally qualified and, where applicable, registered by the appropriate professional body

4. Children with specific circumstances

LAC

Children at the school who are being accommodated, or who have been taken into care, by the LA are legally defined as being 'looked after' by the LA (LAC).

- The school recognises that children that have SEND are more likely to be 'looked after', and it is likely that a significant proportion of them will have an EHC plan.
- The school has a designated member of staff for coordinating the support for LAC.
- Where that role is carried out by a person other than the SENCO, designated teachers should work closely with the SENCO to ensure that the implications of a child being both looked after and having SEND are fully understood by relevant school staff.

EAL

The school gives particular care to the identification and assessment of the SEND of pupils whose first language is not English:

- It is necessary to consider the pupil within the context of their home, culture and community.
- Where there is uncertainty about an individual pupil, the school will make full use of any local sources of advice relevant to the ethnic group concerned, drawing on community liaison arrangements wherever they exist.
- The school appreciates having EAL is not equated to having learning difficulties. At the same time, when pupils with EAL make slow progress, it should not be assumed that their language status is the only reason; they may have learning difficulties.
- The school will look carefully at all aspects of a pupil's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of English that is used there or arise from SEND.
- The school will ensure appropriate strategies, support and intervention are put in place to support pupils with EAL.
- The school will seek where necessary the support of the local authority.

Pupils with Medical needs

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to make arrangements for supporting pupils at their school with medical conditions

Without effective support pupils with both medical conditions and SEND are at risk of being significantly disadvantaged.

Schools will ensure the impact of any medical condition is understood by all staff in addition to their SEND.

Where pupils with SEND also have a medical condition, their provision will be planned and delivered in coordination with the EHC plan.

BAME

There are limited studies into the area of BAME and SEN (see Skibe et al, 2008, Strand and Lindsay 2012, Strand and Lindorff 2018). However, the studies available indicate strongly that this is an area that should be prioritised for understanding and consideration within policy and planning and indicate that there is disproportionate number of Black pupils with SEN.

NAS schools will consider all aspects of provision to ensure it is effective for this group. Our organisation is committed to taking action to prevent discrimination and to support equality. This includes, but is not limited to, procedures for assessment and interventions, training of staff, curriculum, wellbeing and parent support.

Some NAS schools are located in areas of a higher BAME populations such as Vanguard school, Lambeth or Sybil Elgar school, Ealing. Schools will also work with

their local authorities with regards to understanding local need and ensuring strong provision.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of trustees are responsible for:

- The NAS Director of Education are responsible for this policy. They will ratify and regularly review this policy to ensure it conforms to relevant law and guidance

The School Governance Group (SGG) is responsible for:

- Ensure local procedures are in place to effectively implement this policy within the school.
- To keep themselves informed through regular meetings with staff and visits to the school.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and advise of NAS board of trustees of any necessary amendments.
- Appointing a governor who will review the effectiveness of implementation and report back to the SGG on a regular basis.
- To ensure that any issue that may be perceived as a potential reputational risk is referred to the NAS board of trustees.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensure all relevant staff are aware of this policy, receive appropriate professional development and local procedures are followed.
- The Principal will assign a member of the leadership team to act as SEN co-ordinator (SENco) and ensure the code of practice is effectively implemented as well as effective liaison with external agencies and coordination of annual reviews and appropriate training to meet individual need. The member of staff may or may not be hold the role titled SENco.
- All staff are responsible for providing all pupils with appropriate support and challenge to maximise their learning and independence through appropriate differentiation.
- Ensure the school produces and publishes an annual SEN Information report.
- Ensure the school contributes to the local authority's Local Offer on their website in line with this policy

Clinical Leads are responsible for:

- Professional supervision for clinicians in substantive posts.
- Providing clinical and professional leadership to the service across the NAS schools in line with professional standards
- Contributing to the development of a strategy for NAS SALT/Psych/OT services across schools.
- Being jointly responsible in collaboration with local senior leadership teams for the operational oversight of the delivery of SALT/Psych/OT services within schools.
- Working with school Principals on embedding a transdisciplinary intervention model across the whole school team to provide integrated therapeutic services for CYP.

- Providing professional advice and guidance to Principals on workforce planning and recruitment of clinical/therapeutic staff and assistant roles.
- Providing specialist advice, guidance, second opinions and case consultation regarding assessment for admissions and interventions/treatment where relevant
- Contributing to the clinical governance strategy for the continuation and future development of therapeutic services across NAS Schools.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Knowing pupils and their needs really well. This starts through forming effective relationships with pupils and their families.
- Planning and reviewing support for pupils with SEND on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, the member of leadership team responsible for SEN, where appropriate, the pupils themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- Ensuring every pupil is able to study the full national curriculum.
- Being accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided to any pupils they are working with.
- Keeping the leadership team up-to-date with any changes in behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern.

The SENCO / or Identified member(s) of the Leadership team is responsible for:

- Determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school with the principal and the School Governance Group (SGG);
- Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans;
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents and other agencies;
- Being aware of the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching;
- Liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a pupil is a looked after child;
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support;
- Advising on the deployment of the school's budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively;
- Liaising with NAS clinical leads, other early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies;
- Is a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services;
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned;

- works with the Principal and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- ensures that the school keeps the records of all pupils up to date;
- co-ordinate access to appropriate therapy services.

6. Evaluation of Policy

The policy will be evaluated in light of whether it is effective in eliminating discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and inclusion. This policy will be reviewed annually. Evaluations will be passed to the NAS Education Directorate for review and integration into any revised policy.

7. Equality impact assessment

In the design of this policy we have considered the complex inter-relating elements that impact on the effective support and identification of those with SEN. This policy seeks to promote the rights of people who have one or more of the protected characteristics (of which everyone does). This policy also seeks to focus on the impact of factors such as EAL and particularly the impact on staff, children and families. We alert users of this policy to the need to consider these specific factors alongside SEND. This policy aims to support equality and inclusion both within our schools and communities. Effective SEND provision will ensure any adverse impacts are identified and actions are taken to remove or mitigate.

Through the implementation of this policy we seek to lessen some of the known inequalities that exist in society, including, but not limited to race, disability and gender, through carefully designed provision and support that affords opportunities for people with those protected characteristics to excel.

8. The Legal Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation:

Article 24 of UN Convention or rights of people with disabilities
Children and Families Act 2014
Health and Social Care Act 2012
Equality Act 2010
Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
Education Act 1996
Education Act 2002
Mental Capacity Act 2005
Children Act 1989
Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
Local Government Act 1974
Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
Data Protection Act 2018

The General Data Protection Regulation 2018

This policy has regard to the following non-statutory guidance:
DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
DfE (2015) 'School admissions code'
DFE (2015) 'Residential Special schools: national minimum standards
The Children's homes (England) regulations 2015
DfE (2017) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
DfE (2021) 'KCSiE'
DfE (2022) 'KCSiE'

9. Related Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following schools' policies:

- Quality of Life Framework
- Assessment
- Positive Behaviour Support in schools and services (SO-0029)
- Supporting Behaviour in Schools (SO-0030)

10. Definitions

A child or pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or a disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The term EHC plan refers to an EHC plan

LAC refers to Looked after children

EAL: English as additional language

BAME: Black, Asian and minority ethnic

NAS refers to National Autistic Society Independent schools

EQD – Education Quality Development; CH – Children's Home; SGG – School Governance Group; HOSI – Head of School Improvement; EDL – Education Development Lead; RI / NI – Responsible Individual / Nominated Individual

11. References

Skiba et al (2008) Achieving Equity in Special Education: History, Status and Current Challenges. Exceptional Children, 74(3), 264-288

Strand & Lindsay (2009; 2012) Ethnic disproportionality in the identification of Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD): 2005-2011 (DFE RR 2012-247). London: Department for Education.

Strand and Lindorff (2018) The unequal representation of ethnic minorities in special education England: extent, causes and consequences.