BLENHEIM SCHOOLS

SEND AND INCLUSION POLICY

MOUNT HOUSE SCHOOL

SEND AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Terminology:

Please note that the terms:

“Our teams” and” “team members” include everyone working in Outcomes First Group’s settings and services in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, consultants, agency staff, trainees and contractors volunteers (Blenheim Schools).

“Parents and carers” refer to the person or people with legal parental responsibility for the child/young person

“Students” refers to all children and young people being educated and supported at the setting or service

1.0 KEY CONTACTS

SENDCO: Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde hillcoat-hyden@mounthouse.org.uk

Headteacher Mr J Cooper head@mounthouse.org.uk

SEND Governor Mr J Allen

Senior Deputy Head Mr R Cawley cawleyr@mounthouse.org.uk

2.0 CONTEXT

This policy reflects our commitment to creating an inclusive learning environment where all students can participate, belong, and achieve. Inclusion is everyone's responsibility, and every teacher is a teacher of students with SEND. We are committed to maintaining high expectations for all students alongside providing the support they need to succeed. Our approach is strength-based, needs-led, and relational, recognising that students thrive when they feel understood, valued, and supported. This policy applies across all aspects of school life, including lessons, enrichment activities, clubs, educational visits and any wraparound provision.

This policy also supports the school's wider approach to inclusion. Some students may experience barriers to participation, learning, or wellbeing without having SEND. This may include children who are looked after or previously looked after, young carers, students with medical conditions, students who speak English as an additional language and more able students. The school will respond to each student's individual circumstances and will refer, where appropriate, to its separate policies and procedures for safeguarding, looked-after and previously looked-after children, medical conditions, English as an additional language, attendance and more able students.

High-quality inclusive teaching is the foundation of our SEND and inclusion provision and is the first response to need. This includes adaptive teaching approaches such as scaffolding, visual support, predictable routines, processing time, multi-modal learning, and opportunities for over-learning. These strategies are expected within everyday classroom practice before additional interventions are considered.

3.0 POLICY & LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been developed with regard to the legislation, statutory standards and guidance relevant to special educational needs, disability and inclusion, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- the Equality Act 2010
- the Education Act 1996
- the Children Act 1989
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- the Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014

- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended
- the current Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, where the school includes registered EYFS provision
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- the current inspection framework and relevant inspection handbook used by:
  - Ofsted (Education inspection framework (EIF)), and/or
  - the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISS) (ISS: toolkit, operating guide and information and Guidance and resources) as applicable

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years is statutory guidance for the bodies specified in section 77 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Where the Code does not apply directly to the school, the school chooses to follow its key principles as a framework for good practice, including early identification, participation of students and parents, a graduated approach to support and the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review.

DfE identifies the Code as guidance for the bodies named in section 77 of the Children and Families Act 2014, including certain schools and early years providers. That supports distinguishing between a direct statutory duty and the school's voluntary adoption of its principles.

This policy must be read and applied alongside the school and group's other policies and plans, including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Pupil Attendance Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Medicines Policy
- Allergy Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- EAL Policy
- The School's Accessibility Plan covering the curriculum, the site, buildings and how the school provides information.

4.0 DEFINITION OF SEND

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they are likely to fall within this definition when they reach compulsory school age or would be likely to do so if special educational provision were not made for them.

Special educational provision is provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age.

Needs can be categorised in four key areas, as detailed in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

1. Communication and Interaction, autistic and language disorders
2. Cognition and Learning dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia, moderate learning difficulties and global development delay
3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, ADHD, ADD, attachment disorders, emotional difficulties, mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs, hearing or vision impaired

Some students may have difficulties in more than one of these four categories.

The school aims to:

- Work closely with parents and students to take into account their views and aspirations. Invite families to be involved at every stage of planning and reviewing of the SEND provision for their child.
- Ensure that students benefit from Adaptive Teaching: teachers assess, plan and teach all students to allow them to progress their learning. The school implements focused interventions to target particular skills.
- Have high expectations for all students.

A student does not have SEND because they are taught in a language different to the one used at home. The school may recommend that students whose first language is not English, receive support in English as an Additional Language (refer to the EAL policy).

5.0 OBJECTIVES

These objectives are in conjunction with the aims and objectives of the school:

- Help every student realise their potential and optimise self-esteem by providing access to a broad, inclusive and relevant curriculum, which is adapted to meet individual needs.
- Early identification, assessment and provision for any student who may have SEND
- Maintain student records detailing individual needs, interventions and progress
- Ensure all team members understand their responsibilities for identifying and supporting students with SEND
- Make information available to team members for their planning regarding students' SEND
- Regular training for team members in specific aspects of meeting the needs of students with SEND

- Promote an inclusive culture where neurodiversity, difference and individual need are understood, respected and supported
- An effective parent partnership with a joint learning approach at home and at school
- Links with relevant schools, organisations and outside agencies
- Links with the schools' governing body, in the development and monitoring of SEND

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- Day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for students with SEND
- Leading a termly multi-disciplinary meeting in which all leaders from departments (leadership, safeguarding, clinical, SEND, pastoral) meet to discuss and review individual and whole school progress and priorities.
- Informing the Governing body of SEND provision and practice

The Headteacher will work closely with the SEND Team and the Governor with responsibility for SEND.

The SENDCO has responsibility for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Coordinating provision for students with SEND and reporting on progress
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support – **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**
- Monitoring relevant SEND continuous professional development for team members
- Managing the SEND team
- Overseeing and updating the records of students with SEND
- Liaising with parents/carers of students with SEND
- Contributing to team member training
- A point of contact for external agencies
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals
- Liaising with next providers of education, inform students and their parents/carers about options and plan for a smooth transition
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for students with SEND
- Lead on the development of quality SEND provision as part of the school improvement plan
- Monitor and oversee Access Arrangements for students
- Working with the Headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and Access arrangements.

Team members have responsibility for:

- Reading the school's SEND and Inclusion Policy and understanding the procedures for identifying, assessing and provision for students with SEND
- Providing high-quality adaptive teaching to meet the needs of all students. This includes developing and reviewing strategies to identify and support students with SEND, and maintaining knowledge of common areas of need.
- Planning and facilitating SEND provision and individual targets in response to students' diverse needs, with the aim of reducing barriers to learning. This includes working with the SEND team to understand students' needs using teacher assessment, knowledge of the student, previous progress and attainment.

7.0 ADMISSIONS

Please also see the school's *Admissions Policy*

7.1 Process

The school is committed to a fair, transparent and inclusive admissions process. It will not unlawfully discriminate against an applicant or student in relation to admission or any associated decision.

Each application will be considered carefully and individually. The school will work with the student's parents or carers and, where appropriate, the student, previous setting, local authority and relevant professionals to understand the student's educational, pastoral, medical, accessibility and safeguarding needs.

Before reaching a decision, the school will consider:

- the information and professional advice available;
- the student's views, where appropriate, and the views of their parents or carers;
- whether identified barriers can be removed or reduced through reasonable adjustments;
- what staffing, training, equipment, environmental adaptations or other provision may be required;
- whether any proposed support is practicable, effective and sustainable; and
- whether the school can provide an appropriate education and meet the student's needs safely.
- the best interests of the child

Parents and carers are expected to provide accurate, complete and timely information that is relevant to the assessment of the student's needs. This includes any available EHC plan, professional assessment, medical information or report from the student's current or previous setting. If material information is later found to have been withheld or to have been materially inaccurate, the school will review the circumstances fairly and in accordance with the *Admissions Policy*, Parent Contract and its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Withdrawal of an offer or a review of a student's placement will not be automatic.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and students in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Parents will not be charged for an adjustment that the school is required to make as a reasonable adjustment. Where parents request additional provision that is not a reasonable adjustment the school may need to make a charge; any proposed charge will be discussed and agreed transparently and in advance, in accordance with the Parent Contract and the school's fees and charging arrangements.

7.2 Where the school is unable to meet a student's needs

The school will make every reasonable effort to understand and meet a student's needs and to remove or reduce barriers to participation and learning. If concerns arise about whether the school can continue to meet a student's needs safely and effectively, the school will ordinarily:

- review the student's needs, progress, current provision and agreed outcomes;
- consult the student' and their parents or carers;
- seek relevant professional advice and, where applicable, involve the local authority;
- review the reasonable adjustments and additional provision already made;
- consider whether further adjustments, team member training, specialist input or alternative arrangements could enable the placement to continue;
- assess any relevant safety, welfare or operational concerns;
- record the evidence considered and the reasons for the decision; and
- communicate the outcome clearly and in writing.

No decision will be based solely on a diagnosis, disability or the existence of SEND. Where the school concludes that it cannot meet the student's needs despite reasonable adjustments and appropriate consultation, it will work constructively with the family and relevant professionals to support an orderly transition. Any decision about continued placement will be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Parent Contract and the school's applicable policies and procedures.

8.0 IDENTIFICATION

The SENDCO, or delegated member of team members, will liaise with a child's previous school, where possible, where students have been identified as having SEND. During their first term at the school, students with or without SEND are monitored by teaching team members and the SEND Team to identify need and any provision. Early identification of a student's SEND is essential if progress is to be maintained or enhanced. Parents should inform team members to any concerns as students may mask difficulties.

The school will continue to monitor student progress to identify any future SEND needs.

Where teams notice that a student may be experiencing barriers to learning, they should refer to and follow the 'Procedure for raising SEN concerns' document. The SENDCO may assess a student to support identification and planning. Results will be shared with parents and a plan for support discussed.

Concerns expressed by parents will be acknowledged by the Teacher, Head or SENDCO. The SENDCO will decide whether an assessment is required. Results from any assessment will be shared with parents and Teachers.

Parents and carers are encouraged to speak to the SENDCO before commissioning an external assessment. Early discussion helps the school to provide relevant background information, explain the evidence already available and consider how any recommendations might be implemented. External reports will be considered alongside the school's own evidence, observations and knowledge of the student.

Students identified as having SEND will be recorded on the school's SEND Register. Information from the register will be made available to team members who need it to fulfil their educational, pastoral, medical, safeguarding or management responsibilities. Team member must handle this information confidentially and in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy, Privacy Notice and information-sharing arrangements.

The register will record information relevant to supporting the student, which may include:

- the student's name and year group;
- whether the student receives SEN Support or has an EHC plan;
- the student's primary and, where relevant, additional areas of need;
- identified strengths and barriers to learning;
- agreed classroom strategies and reasonable adjustments;
- additional or different provision;
- relevant professionals involved;
- review dates; and
- progress and outcomes

Access will be proportionate to the team member responsibilities. Team members will receive the information they need to support the student safely and effectively, rather than unrestricted access to all personal or health information held by the school.

9.0 SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH AN EHCP

Some students may require an assessment that could lead to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). An EHC assessment would be carried out in conjunction with the Local Authority (LA), for example, where the current levels of support and intervention are not leading to improved progress for the child and where further support might be needed to ensure the needs of an individual child are fully met. If the school has a registered student with an EHCP, it will work in accordance with the targets and strategies in the plan, convene an annual review of the plan with the parents and a LA representative.

10.0 PROVISION

Team members plan the curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students with adaptive teaching. Team members follow procedures for identification and assessment

of SEND, following a graduated response as outlined in the Code of Practice with the four-part cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

If a student continues to make less than expected progress, the SENDCO may re/assess the student. The assessment results will indicate further support, which may include additional reasonable adjustments, such as

- Further differentiation in the classroom
- Access to specific resources
- Pastoral support
- Additional specialist teaching
- Referral to external specialists where appropriate

The school can identify SEND, provide learning support but does not diagnose unless appropriate specialists are employed by the school. Parents are advised to contact their GP if they think their child may have an underlying medical condition or SEND. They may also contact external agencies for an assessment with support from the school.

11.0 SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Emotional literacy, regulation, and wellbeing are important parts of child development and learning. Behaviour that presents as distressed, dysregulated or difficult to understand should be considered within the wider context of the student's needs, experiences and environment. Behaviour itself is not classified as SEND; however, it may be a form of communication and may indicate an underlying unmet need, including social, emotional or mental health needs. Where a student shows a pattern of behaviours that cause concern, the class/form teacher will work with the SENDCO and pastoral team to understand the student's needs, taking account of family circumstances, developmental history, known SEND, trauma, bereavement/parental separation or other relevant experiences. Where appropriate, the school may seek support from external agencies to support the student and family. If parents/carers and school are concerned that the student may have mental health needs, parents should speak to their GP. The school can also make a referral to the local pathway through an Educational Psychologist.

For students experiencing emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), support should be individualised, carefully planned and reviewed over time. This may include a temporary personalised timetable, phased return, trusted adult support, adapted expectations and coordinated work with parents/carers and relevant professionals. Any adjusted timetable should be used as part of a purposeful plan to rebuild safety, belonging, confidence and attendance, with clear steps towards increasing access to learning and school life. The school will carefully consider whether it can meet the student's needs safely and effectively, including the level of support, staffing, environment and reasonable adjustments required. Please see the *Pupil Attendance Policy* for further information.

12.0 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The school is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities, special educational needs, medical conditions or temporary difficulties are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in examinations and assessments. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school will consider and implement reasonable adjustments and examination access arrangements where appropriate, enabling students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding on an equal basis with their peers. Access arrangements are intended to remove barriers to assessment without compromising the integrity or assessment objectives of the qualification.

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment or examination. Their purpose is to enable a student with a disability, learning difficulty or temporary need to access an assessment without changing the demands of that assessment.

Where the school offers qualifications governed by the Joint Council for Qualifications, applications and supporting evidence will comply with the current JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations and any requirements of the relevant awarding body. JCQ requirements are updated regularly. The school will therefore not reproduce detailed assessment thresholds or evidential criteria in this policy.

The school is committed to identifying students who may require access arrangements at the earliest opportunity. Team members should refer concerns to the SENDCO, or other designated team member. Arrangements should, wherever required by the applicable regulations, reflect the student's normal way of working and be supported by evidence gathered over time.

We encourage parents and carers to speak to the school before commissioning an external assessment intended to support an application for access arrangements, so that the assessment, assessor's qualifications, supporting evidence and application satisfy the current requirements.

The SENDCO and, where applicable, the Examinations Officer will:

- identify the regulations applicable to the student and qualification;
- coordinate any required assessment;
- gather evidence of need and the student's normal way of working;
- ensure that applications are submitted within the required timescales;
- maintain the records required for inspection by the awarding body; and
- ensure that agreed arrangements are communicated to relevant team members and used appropriately.

In year groups that do not offer public examinations, reasonable adjustments for internal assessments will be determined with reference to the student's established needs, normal classroom practice and the purpose of the assessment.

Please contact the SENDCO for more detailed information.

13.0 ACCESS TO EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The school works to ensure that every student can access and fully engage in activities and trips and that reasonable adjustments are made. The main concern is for the safety and wellbeing of all students. Any concerns will be risk accessed and if it is considered unsafe for a student to take part in a specific activity this will be discussed with the student's parents/carers.

Please also see the *Educational Visits Policy, Allergy Safety & Medicines Policy, and the Medicines Policy*

14.0 TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Transition arrangements will be tailored to the student's age, stage of education and individual needs. This may include transition into the school, between classes or key stages, between different parts of the school, or to another school, college, training provider or post-16 destination. Support may include additional visits, meetings with key team members, visual information, social stories, travel training, phased arrangements, student passports and coordinated information-sharing with parents, carers and relevant professionals.

15.0 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The knowledge and first-hand experience parents have regarding their children contributes to their child's education. Parents are partners in the educational process. The SENDCO, other pastoral team members and class teachers are available to discuss parental concerns. Specialist assessments should be shared with the SEND team.

Initial enquiries about a student's progress should be addressed to the class/form teacher.

Please also see the *Parent-School Communication Policy*

16.0 SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS WITH SEND

The school recognises that students with SEND or certain health conditions may face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers to recognising or reporting abuse, neglect or exploitation. These may include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, including changes in behaviour, mood or presentation, relate only to the student's disability or condition
- difficulties with communication or reporting concerns
- being disproportionately affected by bullying, including child-on-child abuse, without outwardly showing signs; and
- additional isolation or vulnerability arising from dependency on adults for care or support.

Team members must maintain professional curiosity and must not attribute a safeguarding indicator to SEND or disability without appropriate consideration. Any concern about a student's safety or welfare must be reported immediately in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SENDCO will work together where safeguarding concerns involve a student with SEND.

17.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The SENDCO promotes the sharing of knowledge, expertise and good practice. The department keeps up to date through continuous professional development with recent educational developments. Team members are provided opportunities to develop their knowledge of SEND.

18.0 COMPLAINTS

The school will work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity. Any concerns regarding SEND provision should normally be raised initially with the SENDCo and, if necessary, through the school's Complaints Policy.

Parents and carers should be aware that some SEND-related matters may be subject to separate statutory procedures. Depending on the nature of the concern, information, advice and support may also be available from the local authority's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). Matters relating to Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessments, EHCPs and certain local authority decisions may be pursued through disagreement resolution, mediation or appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Complaints alleging disability discrimination may be pursued through the appropriate legal routes in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

19.0 EVALUATION OF SEND AND INCLUSION POLICY

The Headteacher, SENDCo and Governing Body will monitor and evaluate the implementation, effectiveness and impact of this policy. Evaluation will focus on both the quality of the school's systems and processes and the outcomes achieved for students with SEND.

Evidence considered may include:

- termly meetings between the SENDCo, senior leaders and relevant staff to review student progress, SEND data and the SEND Action Plan
- the accuracy and currency of the SEND Register and associated records, including information held on iSAMS
- the effectiveness and timeliness of identification, assessment, support and review processes
- evidence that concerns are appropriately followed up and that parents/carers are informed and involved
- progress and attainment of students with SEND from their individual starting points;

- progress towards outcomes identified in support plans and Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP)
- students' understanding of their targets and the support that helps them learn successfully;
- staff knowledge of students' strengths, needs and support arrangements;
- staff awareness of SEND procedures and responsibilities;
  - evidence of sustained student progress over time;
  - attendance, persistent absence and suspensions involving students with SEND;
  - participation in the curriculum, enrichment activities, educational visits and wider school life;
  - students' views regarding their support, inclusion, belonging and participation;
  - parents' and carers' views regarding the effectiveness of SEND provision;
  - the impact of interventions and whether they are continued, adapted or discontinued in response to evidence;
  - the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments and accessibility arrangements;
  - the effective use of staffing, resources and specialist provision;
  - SEND-related professional development and staff confidence in meeting students' needs;
  - successful transitions into, within and beyond the school;
  - safeguarding concerns involving students with SEND and any lessons learned;
  - SEND-related complaints, concerns and emerging themes; and
  - progress against the school's Accessibility Plan and inclusion objectives.

Information gathered through self-evaluation activities will be analysed to identify strengths, patterns, inequalities and priorities for improvement. Findings will inform the School Improvement Plan, SEND Action Plan, staff development priorities and reports to the Governing Body and, where applicable, Outcomes First Group and other relevant stakeholders.

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