

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



Special Educational Needs Policy

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Widford Lodge Special Educational Needs Policy

The term 'Special educational needs' can be misleading and can lead to the assumption that children with special educational needs are an easily defined group with common characteristics, and that they will continue to be so throughout their school career. However, the term encompasses a variety of problems including learning difficulties, physical impairments and emotional problems. Many children may only need to be on the Special Needs Register for a short period of time whilst for others it may be ongoing.

The legal definition of special educational needs is, that if a child has:

- * a learning difficulty (i.e. a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age) or a disability which makes it difficult to use the educational facilities; and if that learning difficulty calls for:
- * special educational provision i.e. provision additional to, or different from, that made generally available for children of the same age.

(Excellence for all children- Meeting special educational needs. Green paper, October 1997)

In an independent school the boundaries of this definition are not rigid and children with other problems may fall under the remit of special educational needs.

Objectives

As a small school Widford Lodge is well positioned to identify special educational needs at the earliest opportunity and we concur with the view that the best way to tackle educational disadvantage is to diagnose early and put remedial measures in place. We believe that early diagnosis and appropriate intervention does improve children's prospects.

It is our aim therefore that every child at Widford Lodge should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in a happy, caring environment where their educational, social and emotional needs are met in accordance with the Every Child Matters policy.

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The school endeavours to meet the principles laid out in the *Code of Practice*,

- a child with special educational needs should have their needs met
- the views of the child should be sought and taken into account
- parents have a vital role in supporting their child's education

- children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education...

In accordance with the school's accessibility plan, Widford Lodge aims to make reasonable adjustments to allow children with physical disabilities to attend accessible parts of the school.

The named SENCo in the school is Mrs Jo Bisset-Smith and with the headmaster, Mr Simon Trowell and the Director of Studies, it is their joint responsibility to supervise the Register of Special Educational Needs and to monitor and evaluate special educational needs provision throughout the school.

Admission

The admission of children with special educational needs will be at the discretion of the Headmaster in conference with the SENCo and will take into consideration the needs of the child and the school, and whether the school will be able to provide best for the child's needs. Any admission therefore must include all relevant information, partnership with any outside agencies already involved and full medical disclosure where appropriate.

Identification

Early identification should start from the time a child enters early education and consequently at Widford Lodge, special educational needs identification, assessment and provision commences in Pre-school, where deemed appropriate.

During their first year in the Kindergarten, children are assessed using the Foundation Stage Profile, which is ongoing throughout the year. This in itself will not establish whether individual pupils have special educational needs but will be crucial in helping to show where a child has problems which require attention. It should show those pupils who need a targeted teaching strategy or further classroom-based assessment. Children are monitored closely by their class teachers and appropriate action will be implemented in the classroom.

Children will sit their National Curriculum SATS at the end of Form 2, and the information gained from these is included within any identification of special educational needs. Throughout the school the children take annual N.F.E.R. tests and these are also used as an indication for special needs assessment.

It is ultimately the role of the class teacher to identify any child they believe may have special educational needs and who they feel meet the criteria.

Assessment

Once the child has been referred to the SENCo and parental permission has been obtained, appropriate assessments will be undertaken and the results of these will determine what further action, if any, needs to be taken. A variety of assessments are used, including the Aston Index, the Dyslexia Screener and the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability. The school operates in accordance with the Code of Practice, with certain adjustments to reflect the circumstances of Widford Lodge.

In summary, the model consists of:-

School Action where a class teacher or SENCo identifies a child with special educational needs and provides interventions that are *additional to* or *different from* those that are provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.

School Action Plus where a request for help from outside services may follow a decision taken by the SENCo and colleagues, in consultation with parents, at a meeting to review the child's IEP.

The majority of children at Widford Lodge will not need to progress beyond "School Action" and by the end of their school career at Widford Lodge may even have ceased this.

However, in certain circumstances where it is felt that a child's needs are more severe than the school's resources can cater for, or a child is leaving to enter the state education system, it may be necessary to progress to "School Action Plus" and to consider whether the child is likely to meet the criteria for Statutory Assessment by the Local Education Authority.

Provision and Monitoring

Initial provision of special educational needs teaching is provided by the class teacher although in certain circumstances small group work and individual work may be carried out by a classroom assistant, in the Pre-prep department, under the guidance of the class teacher and the SENCo. Within the classroom context there will be differentiation in all work set and through the IEP specific targets will be set for the child.

For those children reaching "School Action Plus" the above will also apply, however it may be recommended to the parents that the child would benefit from external help, such as a special educational needs tutor or attending lessons at the British Dyslexia Institute.

Children with special educational needs in the Pre-prep and the Prep will attend regular sessions with the Learning Support Teacher or the SENCo.

Progress will be monitored initially by the class teacher who will have the responsibility of reporting back to the SENCo. The termly exam and reading age system, also the annual NFER tests will give some indication of the child's progress. There will be a termly/ half-termly review of a child's progress which will decide whether the child is receiving the correct assistance and whether his/ her needs are being met. Individual Education Plans are reviewed termly and evaluated by staff and parents. At this time new targets will be set or existing ones reinforced. These reviews will include input from the class teacher, the SENCo and other learning support teachers, any outside agencies involved and the head teacher where necessary.

All children with special educational needs will be listed on a Special Educational Needs register which will be updated termly by the SENCo. Each child will also have a file containing assessments, IEP's and other relevant information.

Curriculum

Children with special educational needs require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education, including the National Curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that special educational needs children have full access to the curriculum but to be sensitive to the areas in which the child may experience difficulty i.e. recording work, completing work in a set time, copying from the board, reading and understanding work etc. However, most of the problems can be overcome and work can be presented in a way appropriate to the child's needs through the use of worksheets etc. The SENCo will give advice, where appropriate, to class teachers on how a child's special educational needs may best be met. The use of computers in the classroom may be beneficial to some children. The studying of French may be particularly problematic to children with dyslexia and oral work is more within their capabilities than written work. All special educational needs children at Widford Lodge are fully integrated into the school. Where necessary, children with special educational needs may require extra time or assistance with reading text/questions during school exams.

This policy document is subject to an annual review by the Headmaster, Director of Studies and the SENCo. The criteria for evaluating the success of the Special Educational Needs policy will include the progress children are making, identification of special educational needs and whether the policy adequately reflects the needs of pupils at Widford Lodge. Through a constant review and monitoring of this policy our objective is to identify a child's special educational needs at the earliest opportunity and to provide for those children's needs.

Complaints

We encourage parents to work closely with the child's teacher and the SENCo. Through establishing good lines of communication and keeping parents well informed we hope to defer any cause for complaints. Parents are encouraged to express their concerns firstly to their child's teacher and then to the SENCo or Headmaster if felt necessary.

Complaints will be dealt with confidentially and with discretion.

Outside Agencies

The school has developed a very good relationship with the Dyslexia Institute in Chelmsford, and there are regular consultative meetings to monitor our pupils who have lessons there. Apart from this, the school uses a variety of other professionals. These include:

Educational Psychologists: Christine Sheppard
Margaret Evans

Speech Therapist: Wendy Kibblewhite

Visual Perceptual Diffs. : Aquila Optpmetrists, Billericay

Dr. Bruce Evans, Cole and Tregaris Optpmetrists,
Brentwood

Revised March 2009 - J. Bisset- Smith

