



Sheiling School Thornbury

SEN Report 2019/2020

This policy is in line with the Independent School Standards (Revised January 2015)

This policy is written in line with the requirements set out in Part 3 of the Pupils and Families Bill (2014) and associated regulations. The policy is fully compliant with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice: for 0 to 25 years (January 2015).

Sheiling School is an independent school and children's home for children and young people aged 6-19 with special educational needs and associated challenging behaviour. We offer day and residential placements for 52 weeks, termly and weekly boarders.

1. Our Mission Statement

The ethos of Sheiling School is based on the social, therapeutic and educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. Essential to the school is the recognition and belief that behind every disability, each young person's human integrity and spiritual wholeness are preserved. For Sheiling School, this means that every child, both because of and despite their individual needs, has something to give and something to learn in all of their relationships, with other children, staff, teachers, carers, friends, and family.

We believe that mutual recognition and acceptance, within a distinct community setting, enable both the individual independence and social connectedness that form the basis of growth and change. We believe that recognising each child's human and spiritual integrity means to educate and care for the whole child; intellectually, morally, spiritually and physically.

Sheiling School provides for pupils whose special educational needs fall broadly into one or more of the following areas:

- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Cognition and learning
- Communication and interaction

2. Identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs

Sheiling School provides education for a children and young people who have their needs identified by their Local Authority in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). At our school, we prepare each new pupil individually for transition into the school. We source and utilise a range of information from a variety of sources including parents/carers, previous educational settings and the child or young person. There are opportunities for every potential new pupil to visit the school. The school's initial process involves gathering information from a range of sources,

including the family, professionals, previous educational settings and, where appropriate, the young person. This information is then collated, discussed, and shared with the class teachers and supporting staff that will work directly with the pupil.

Further information on the admissions to and assessment within our school can be found on our website (see Admissions policies).

As a special school, we are not required to have a SENCo; families liaise directly with their child's teacher and Educational Leadership Team as appropriate.

3. Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN and involving them in their child's education

We endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers in the belief that their views are crucial in providing our children and young people with a suitable education. We run three parent's evenings each academic year in order to provide parents and carers with updates on school development, information on our approach and curriculum, as well as opportunities to meet with teachers and class teams.

Additionally, parents and carers are invited to attend Annual Review meetings to review yearly progress and progress towards the outcomes stated in EHCPs, and Pupil Clinics (chaired by a trained medical doctor with many years of SEN experience) to consider broader educational and therapeutic provision in conjunction with school professionals. In addition, there is a weekly phone call home from teachers to discuss the week's events, and home/school books to give brief details of any issues, successes or difficulties on a daily basis.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are shared with parents on a termly basis, along with suggestions for supporting the pupil's education in the home or care setting.

There is also a regular social media presence to celebrate and share pupil achievements, and regular newsletters to outline the highlights of each term.

4. Arrangements for consulting pupils with SEN and involving them in their education

Our aim is that all children and young people in our school feel that they are listened to and respected. Pupils have the opportunity to voice their concerns, opinions, wishes, and ideas to the Educational Leadership Team (ELT) at any given opportunity, but specifically in a timetabled 'Pupil Voice' session on a Monday morning. Additionally, the annual review process of EHC Plans includes the choices and views of pupils/students which is vital in the planning of future educational provision and transitions.

Pupil Progress Meetings are arranged three times a year to discuss progress, areas for development, and upcoming transitions. In Pupil Progress Meetings, the teacher addresses the pupil directly in a one-to-one scenario with a strong emphasis on the pupils own preferences and opinions. Facilitated communication is used to support non-verbal pupils.

5. Arrangements for assessing and reviewing pupil's progress towards outcomes.

Every pupil in the school has an EHCP, which sets broad targets across a range of academic skills and areas of personal development. The EHCP outcomes are then reviewed every 12 months in the Annual Review of the EHCP. Within the school, Class Teachers will use the broader outcomes that are outlined in EHCP to form Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets. Progress towards the outcomes is reviewed through termly Pupil Progress Meetings (teacher and pupil), Class Progress Meeting (a member of the Education Leadership Team and the Teacher), and through liaison with parents/carers and other professionals across the year.

6. Arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood.

All transitions are well planned for throughout school as children move from class to class and phase to phase. It is a feature of Pupil Progress Meetings that upcoming transitions are discussed and pupil preferences and opinions sought and facilitated. In the event of a pupil changing teacher, parents/carers have the opportunity to meet the new teacher and class staff at parents' evenings and, where requested, at meetings called specifically for this purpose.

From the age of 14, the LEA transition teams are invited to attend pupils' Annual Review of the EHCP, to begin preparation for upcoming transitions. For our KS4 and post-16 students, our curriculum has a specific focus on preparing pupils for life beyond the Sheiling School. KS4 pupils are introduced to a range of topics relating specifically to understanding their rights and responsibilities as a citizen, the practicalities of independent and semi-independent living, and the particular skill sets they will need to maximise their independence in the outside world. The key focus of our sixth form provision is independence and life skills, with work experience and community based activities playing a central role.

7. The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

Teachers are responsible for high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. At Sheiling School, we regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils, supporting and enhancing teaching skills and subject knowledge with regular training and Faculty support, and providing training to enrich their understanding of the SEN and associated challenging behaviour most frequently encountered.

Our approach to teaching is founded in Rudolf Steiner's insights on child development. According to Steiner, a child's dominant learning style and readiness for incremental educational concepts is related to his or her phase of development. Broadly speaking, the child's first three seven-year phases of life correspond with the predominance of the need for Doing (0-7 – the importance of imitation, play, and activity), Feeling (7-14 – the importance of creativity, imagination, morality and a

sense of awe and wonder) and Thinking (14-21 – the importance of forming independent judgement by way of access to a multiplicity of theories and research methods, and the ability to explore a variety of standpoints). This is not to say that all three aspects are not present throughout life; only that, for the small child his/her Thinking and Feeling is predominantly bound up with activity or Doing; for the 7-14 year old his/her Feeling life tends to dominate both Doing and Thinking; and for the 14-21 year old, there emerges the possibility of purely abstract Thinking that can inform and guide both the realms of Feeling and Doing.

Our teaching approach, along with the structure and order of the curricular subject provision, is guided by these developmental insights. The aim is to engender a harmonious balance of the Thinking, Feeling and Doing.

Alongside this pedagogical methodology, teaching at Sheiling School is rigorously monitored in terms of learning objectives and the implementation of key subject skills. We apply formative assessment at every level of educational practise to ensure that learning is meaningful, incremental and consolidated.

8. How adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with SEN

Sheiling School follows the Steiner/Waldorf Curriculum, carefully adapted to meet the special educational needs of our learners. The Sheiling School 3D Curriculum works on the premise that learning happens not only in the classroom, but in every social setting throughout the day. We understand that without preparing the way for learning by addressing the pupil's emotional well-being, social skills, skills for life and self-esteem, we cannot expect to maximise academic progress. As such, every moment spent with a pupil is regarded as an opportunity for learning, and staff are trained to understand the impact of their words, their bearing, their use of humour, and even the way they dress. Learning environments are kept deliberately uncluttered, with a focus on art and aesthetic beauty as well as impactful displays relating to topics under discussion. And crucially, the Sheiling School utilises its many acres of remarkable natural countryside to support a therapeutic focus on harmony, to allow each individual pupil space where he or she needs it, and to host a wide range of outdoor games and work activities. There are a broad range of outdoor crafts (including green woodwork and horticulture) that support the strongly held pedagogic belief in the value of 'learning through doing'.

The Sheiling School 3D Curriculum views curricular provision as extending beyond the specification of subject matter to be taught and learned. The 3D Curriculum places equal emphasis on the *reasons* for teaching a particular subject at a particular time, as well as the *method* of delivery and the kinds of resources that are utilised. In other words, the 'how' and 'why' of the curriculum are considered as essential as the 'what'. The 'how' belongs very much to the Steiner-inspired approach of a strong focus on creativity and imagination, the use of natural or organic products, the importance of modelling healthy and morally upstanding social relations, the need for a balance between head, heart and hands (thinking feeling and doing), and the necessity of bringing only educational content that is truly meaningful for life. The 'why' belongs with the specific understanding of child development that underpins the choice and order of the subjects brought in the Steiner/Waldorf Curriculum,

where shifts in the child's consciousness and social-emotional development allow for (and necessitate) different pedagogical approaches and subject content.

Under the guidance of the school's Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapy is embedded into the 'learning through doing' approach throughout the school day, as well as being offered in discrete personal programmes that support pupils' sensory self-management. Similarly, each pupil is regularly assessed by our Speech and Language Therapist for personalised speech and language programmes that are embedded into all pedagogical and therapeutic practise. Augmented communication methods are utilised where they support and enhance the pupil's communication needs and promote emotional literacy.

9. Additional support for learning that is available for pupils with SEN

The high staff-to-pupil ratio at Sheiling School allows for specific child-led support and differentiation. Under the guidance of the Class Teacher, Learning Support Assistants are available to offer as much support as necessary (both at an academic and social-emotional level), but always with the goal of increasing the pupil's independence skills, resilience and self-esteem. In cases where the pupil struggles to access classroom-based learning (and subject to funding), Assistant Teachers or Learning Mentors may oversee an individual curricular provision with the goal of gradual integration into a peer group. This may be based in a smaller 1:1 classroom, or else utilising a variety of outdoor spaces.

Sheiling School has a team of therapeutic specialists in the areas of Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Art Therapy, Drama Therapy, Eurhythmly (a movement based therapy specific to Steiner Education) and Massage Therapy. Therapeutic input is determined in Pupil Clinics under the guidance of a trained medical practitioner with many years of SEN experience.

10. Training staff to support pupils with SEN.

Sheiling School is highly committed to the ongoing training of staff at all levels and recognises the importance of 'upskilling' in order to promote the highest standards of pupil progress. The Educational Leadership Team (ELT) coordinates the training and professional development of staff in line with needs identified through school self-evaluation and the School Improvement Plan. ELT tracks all staff training, ensuring it is up to date and statutory duties are met. All staff have clear job descriptions which detail the required qualifications for each post in school. All staff have a core training programme related to their work. Training is specifically related to the needs of pupils in our school and also as required by statutory guidance. Other staff continue to gain a range of certificates to mark their commitment to courses such as a qualification in Mental Health First Aid, specific learning difficulties, and Safeguarding.

10. Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEN

The effectiveness of the provision is evaluated regularly by SLT, ELT, and the school governors. Outcomes are individually agreed for each child, and progress towards these outcomes is regularly reviewed. Sheiling School has its own bespoke

Assessment Tool, the Ariadne Assessment, which evaluates progress in each of the following areas: Being Safe; Education and Learning; Communication; Confidence and Self Esteem; Choices and Behaviour; Sensory Difficulties; Physical Health and Self-Care; Living skills; Friends and Relationships. Specific academic progress in Literacy and Numeracy is evaluated separately. All evaluation data is collated and analysed by ELT three times a year to ensure that teaching and learning is maintained to the highest standards. Feedback is given to Teachers in regular Class Progress Meetings, and Teachers feed back to pupils in Pupil Progress Meetings. The Annual Review Report written by teachers for each individual pupil condenses the year's progress into a single document that forms the basis of the Annual EHCP Review, where all associated professionals, the parents/carers of the pupil in question, the Class Teacher and a member of ELT evaluate the success of the provision and revise educational outcomes where appropriate.

Policy	Date	By
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