

Whispering Trees



Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy

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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure Whispering Trees fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding participants with SEND
- Set out how Whispering Trees will:
 - Support and make provision for participants with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide participants with SEND access to all aspects of Whispering Trees life so they can engage in the activities of the Whispering Trees alongside participants who do not have SEND
 - Help participants with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help participants with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help participants with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
 - Communicate with participants with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil

- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for participants with SEND
- Communicate with, and involve, participants with SEND and their parents or carers in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and values

At Whispering Trees we will provide all participants with access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

We are committed to making sure all our participants have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.

We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of participants, no matter how varied.

3. Legislation and guidance

This 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 Whispering Trees' responsibilities for participants with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and Whispering Trees' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the Whispering Trees's duties to make reasonable adjustments for participants with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the Whispering Trees's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Whispering Trees Admissions Code](#), which sets out the Whispering Trees's obligation to admit all participants whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names Whispering Trees, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

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

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At Whispering Trees we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all participants, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all participants the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to activities and the Whispering Trees environment to make sure that participants with SEND are included in all aspects of Whispering Trees life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires 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 most 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 Whispering Trees

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 Whispering Trees.

5.2 Disability

Participants are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The Whispering Trees will make reasonable adjustments for participants with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of participants with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Participants can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	Participants with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Participants who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Participants with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where participants are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Participants may have: • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.

AREA OF NEED	
Sensory and/or physical	Participants with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Participants may have: • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment These participants may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Our Whispering Trees's Lead will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the participants needs and any provision made
- Work with the Head of Service and the Advisory Board to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the Whispering Trees
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual participants with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that participants with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality activities
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated communication methods appropriate for individual participants
- Advise on the deployment of the Whispering Trees's delegated budget and other resources to meet participants' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pu and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different Whispering Trees or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, Whispering Trees or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the Whispering Trees advisory board to make sure the Whispering Trees meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure Whispering Trees keeps its records of all participants with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the Head of Service, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the Whispering Trees's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Head of Service, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support Whispering Trees offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the Whispering Trees's SEN information report and any updates to this policy

- With the Head of Service and staff, identify any patterns in the Whispering Trees's identification of SEN, both within Whispering Trees and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of the provision.

6.2 The advisory board for Welden Whispering Trees

The advisory board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every participant with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that participants with SEND engage in the activities of Whispering Trees alongside participants who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the Whispering Trees is making special provision for their child
- Make sure that Whispering Trees has arrangements in place to support any participants with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced choice of activities
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for participants with SEND
- Publish information on the Whispering Trees website about how Whispering Trees is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and Whispering Trees's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a designated staff member with responsibilities for SEND at Whispering Trees and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of participants with SEND

6.3 The SEND link advisor

The advisory board

The Advisory Board will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at their board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within Whispering Trees and update the board on this
- Work with the Head of Service to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in Whispering Trees

6.4 The Head of Service will:

- Work with the SEND link advisor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within Whispering Trees
- Work with the SE Whispering Trees advisors to make sure Whispering Trees meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for participants with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the Whispering Trees's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual participants
- Make sure that the SEND advisor has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of participants on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a participant needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SEND advisor, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into Whispering Trees's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Head of Service, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support Whispering Trees offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SEND advisor and staff, identify any patterns in Whispering Trees's identification of SEN, both within Whispering Trees and in compare with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of the provision offered.
- Working with the SEND advisor to review each participants progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the participant and Whispering Trees
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the participants.

6.6 Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform Whispering Trees if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a participant on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the participants SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside Whispering Trees and any changes in the participants needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with Whispering Trees staff, agree their aspirations for the participant
- Given a half termly report on the participants progress

Whispering Trees will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the participant.

6.7 The participant

Participants will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the participant:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are

- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The participants views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The Head of Service will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into Whispering Trees's plan for continuous professional development.

8. Links with external professional agencies

Whenever necessary Whispering Trees will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Social services

9. Admission and accessibility arrangements

Please see Whispering Trees admission policy document

10. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about Whispering Trees's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with Georgina Pearson, Head of Service. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in Whispering Trees should be made to The Advisory Board Where it will be handled in line with the Whispering Trees's complaints policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the Whispering Trees's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

11. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

11.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of participants with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- Participants' progress and attainment
- Whether participants with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the Whispering Trees community
- Comments and feedback from participants and their parents

11.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the full advisory board.

12. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents

- Admissions policy
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting participants with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy