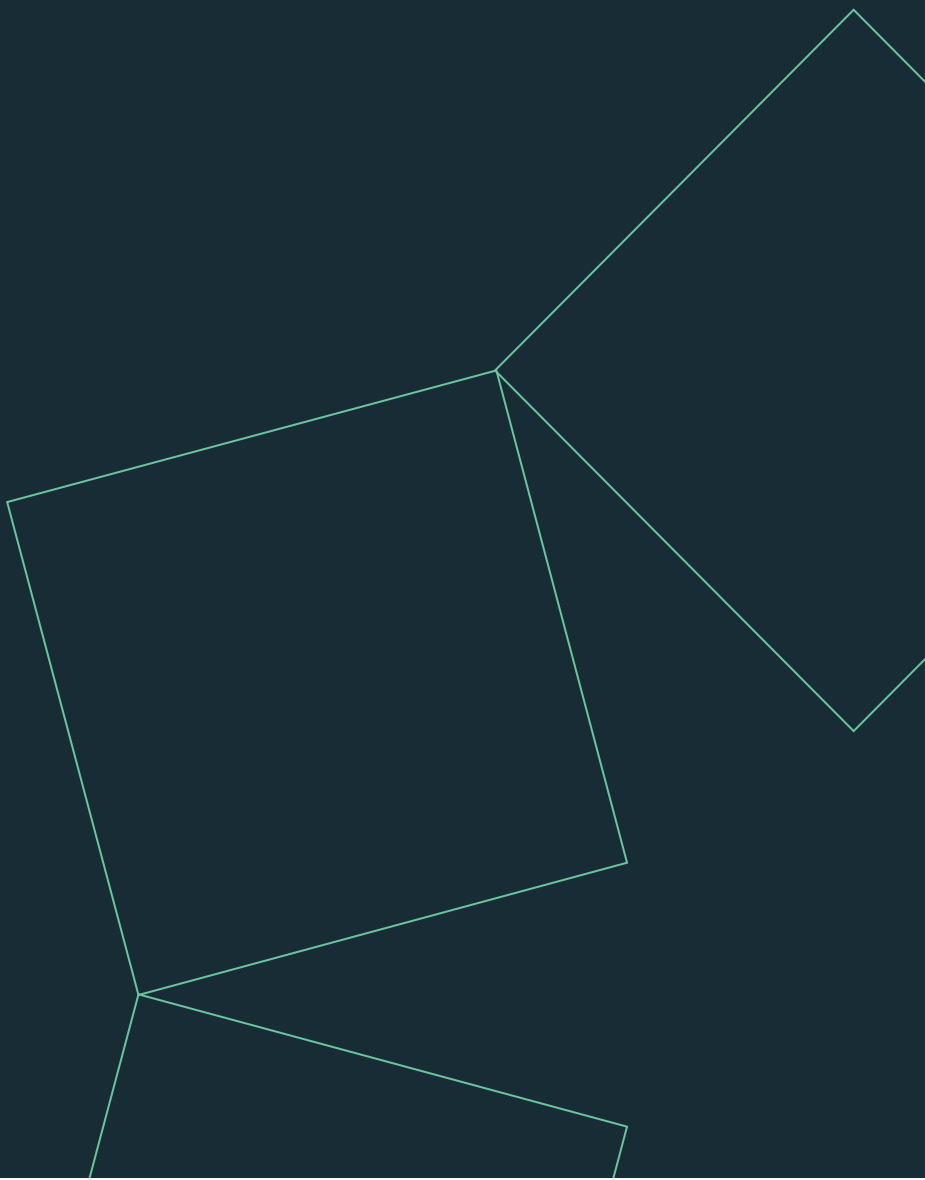




OFG
Education

SEND POLICY





SEND Policy

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Terminology

- “Our teams” and” “team member/s” 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. For Option Higford school, volunteers are included in this definition.
- “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 INTRODUCTION

Options Higford is an independent day school for children and young people aged 5 – 19 years. We specialise in meeting the learning needs of students with Autism and additional needs including Learning Disability, and the behaviours that may challenge resulting from those diagnoses. All of our pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and all pupils have an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP).

Options Higford offers a bespoke curriculum with personalised timetables within small class groups (maximum 5 students) supported by high levels of skilled staff. Our offer includes an in-house Clinical Team, comprising Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy, to ensure all aspects of a child's EHCP are fully met.

Options Higford School, based near Shifnal is set within 28 acres of Shropshire countryside.

Implementation: It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff members are aware of and understand this policy and any subsequent revisions.

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*. This policy is written with due regard to the SEND Code of Practice, published 11 June 2014 and last updated 12 September 2024.

2.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- a. has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- b. has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Special education provision means: educational provision which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area. *Taken from the SEN Code of Practice (DfE, 2015)*

Pupils are placed at Options Higford following consultation with the relevant Local Authority and agreement that the school can meet the needs and provision identified in the EHCP.



3.0 THE SEN AIMS OF THE SCHOOL (INTENT)

Our aims are:

- To ensure that all pupils and pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to their individual needs
- To make sure all staff have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils
- To provide an adapted curriculum appropriate to the individual needs, ability and interests of each pupil
- To ensure that all pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- To ensure that parents/carers of all pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- To actively seek and give due weight to each pupil's views in decisions affecting their future provision, using an appropriate communication method.
- To ensure that all pupils are prepared for life beyond Options Higford and their future aspirations.

Whilst many factors contribute to the range of difficulties experienced by our pupils, we believe that much can be done to overcome them or lessen their effect by parents/carers, teachers and pupils working together.

4.0 PRINCIPLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The School has a named SENCO and Designated Teacher (Keeley Jaworski).

The SENCO is fully supported by our clinical team including speech and language therapists, clinical psychologists and occupational therapists.

Provision for the pupils is a matter for the school as a whole. The Head teacher and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities.

The headteacher has responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of the school's work. Oversight of the school's work is provided through the Board of Governors.

All education staff are involved in the development of the school's policy and are aware of the school's procedures for making SEN provision, and monitoring and reviewing that provision inline with the guidance in the Code of Practice.

The school has a team of skilled teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are allocated to classes to make sure children are supported consistently. The role of the teaching assistants is to provide support at the point of learning. This can be within the classroom, the grounds or during off site activities. They are expected to



know the needs of their pupils and their EHCP targets and evidence progress towards these outcomes. This evidence is recorded alongside pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEP). Each child has a personalised folder, outlining their SEND needs and EHCP targets. These are carefully considered by all teaching and support staff when planning learning opportunities for pupils.

Teachers remain accountable for pupils' learning and progress, including when support or interventions are delivered by teaching assistants or therapists. However, all parties involved are accountable for the implementation of strategies on a day-to-day basis. These parties include

- Proprietor/governance oversight
- Headteacher
- SENCO
- Teachers/tutors
- Teaching assistants
- Clinical team
- Parents and carers
- Pupils and young people

At Options Higford we recognise that we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable all students to access the planned curriculum. This includes a commitment to preventing disability discrimination, making reasonable adjustments for individual students, providing auxiliary aids and services where required and promoting participation in the curriculum, enrichment and wider school life.

Concerns about SEND provision should initially be raised with the class teacher or tutor. If the matter is not resolved, parents and carers may contact the SENCO or Headteacher. Formal complaints will be considered under the school's Complaints Policy.

For more information, please refer to our Accessibility Plan and Equality Policy.

5.0 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS & INCLUSION

Options Higford is an independent day school for children and young people aged 5 – 19 years. We specialise in meeting the learning needs of students with Autism and additional needs including Learning Disability, and the behaviours that may challenge resulting from those diagnoses. All our pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and all pupils have an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP).

Options Higford believes that the admissions criteria should not discriminate against pupils with SEN and has due regard for the practice advocated in the Code



of Practice, in that all schools should admit pupils with already identified special educational needs. Please refer to our Admissions Policy and Procedures for more information.

6.0 PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS

Options Higford firmly believes that partnership with parents plays a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation between parents, schools, Local Authorities, and others. This is important in enabling our pupils to achieve their potential.

Parents should be supported so as to be able and empowered to:

- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents and play an active and valued role in their child's education
- Have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the SEN framework
- Make their views known about how their child is educated
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special education provision

Communication is the key to success and progress. Parents receive a progress report every half term which is discussed in a meeting with the form tutor. Senior leaders are also available to meet with their parents. SEN provision and pupils' progress towards EHCP aims are also discussed at half-termly parent carer conference meetings.

In addition, parents are also able to contact class teachers and all staff via email or text message. This is also a useful platform used to share important information.

Throughout the academic year, many events will also be held, including summer and Christmas Fairs. We encourage parents to attend where possible.

7.0 PUPIL PARTICIPATION

Where possible, pupils at Options Higford participate in all the decision-making processes that occur in education, including the setting of Individual Education Plans (IEP.) Pupils are encouraged to contribute to review meetings and any transition processes in whatever way is deemed to be most suitable for that individual. As pupils at Options Higford might have severe communication difficulties, ascertaining their views may not always be easy, but the principle of seeking and taking into account the ascertainable views of the young person is important.

Views will be gathered through accessible and individualised approaches, including

AAC and communication systems, symbols and visuals, observation, Talking Mats or choice-making and contributions from adults who know the pupil well

Pupils with SEND may experience additional safeguarding vulnerabilities, including communication barriers, dependence on adults, intimate-care needs, difficulty recognising risk and behaviour being misinterpreted.

For more information, please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy and Intimate Care Policy.

8.0 ASSESSMENT & PROVISION

Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is a matter for the school as a whole. The school is aspirational, maintaining high expectations while recognising that progress and achievement will look different for each pupil. Learning is comparable in breadth and ambition. Assessment for each subject enables the school to consider individual pupil attainment and progress. Holistic learning is therefore personalised to meet the individualised needs of pupils.

Teachers can at any time request additional SEN support using the referral system within the school. Teachers can fill in an intervention form if they feel that a pupil is behind target in a specific area. Teachers are expected to demonstrate strategies they have already tried to ensure that support is targeted appropriately. The SENCO will then review this form and support the teacher to put an intervention in place using a graduated approach. This will usually commence with a classroom visit and an observation. The SENCO will then liaise with the class teacher and allocated teaching assistants to plan any intervention needed. Interventions are monitored and reviewed regularly in order to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of planned intervention strategies.

Students who attend Options Higford are supported by an onsite clinical team comprising of psychology input, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and a number of therapy assistants. The input they receive is inline with their EHCP. The clinical team meet the provision of the EHCP prescribed before entering Options Higford, support all school staff in meeting the needs of the EHCP, liaise with the school SENCO in meeting the changing needs of the pupils and have regular meetings with senior leaders to discuss the emerging needs of the pupils. Pupils access the clinical team on an individual or small group basis or indirectly through an assessed or observed need by school staff. Any staff in school can make a referral to the clinical team and the whole school works collaboratively to meet the SEND needs of the pupils.

Assess–Plan–Do–Review

Throughout the school year teaching staff undergo a continuous process of assessment. This includes the following;

1. Assess the pupil's needs and progress.



2. Plan outcomes, provision and adaptations.
3. Deliver the agreed provision.
4. Review impact and refine the plan.

Even though every pupil has an EHCP, this cycle remains useful for monitoring provision and responding to emerging needs.

For more information, please refer to our Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

9.0 ANNUAL REVIEW

All Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are reviewed at least annually. These reviews focus on what the pupil/pupil has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved (for more information please refer to our Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy).

The Annual Review aims:

- To assess progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement
- To assess progress towards the targets in the IEP set at the previous review
- To review any special provision made.
- To provide a profile of current levels of attainment in literacy, numeracy and life skills, and a summary of progress achieved in other areas of the curriculum
- To consider the continuing appropriateness of the EHCP.
- To set new targets for the coming year

The Headteacher and/or SENCo initiates the review process upon receipt of the termly list of annual reviews for the Local Authority. The Headteacher can delegate to a qualified teacher at the school any or all of the duties and functions given to them in the regulations.

In preparing for the review meeting, the Headteacher must request written advice from:

- Pupil's parents
- Anyone specified by the authorities
- Anyone else the Headteacher considers appropriate

The Headteacher or SENCo must also circulate a copy of all advice received to all those invited to the review meeting at least two weeks before the date of the

meeting, inviting additional comments, including comments from those unable to attend the review meeting.

The Annual Review meeting is chaired by the SENCo (Designated Teacher). In the absence of the SENCo the meeting can be chaired by the Headteacher.

The Headteacher or SENCo provides the Local Authority with a report following each Annual Review meeting before the end of the term, or 10 school days after the meeting takes place if that is any earlier. The report summarises the outcome of the review meeting, setting out the assessment of the main issues discussed at the meeting, the recommendations about educational targets for the coming year and any other steps that ought to be taken.

Annual Review in Year 9

The annual review held in year 9 is particularly significant in preparing for the pupil's transition to the further education sector, work-based training, and adult life.

The aim of the annual review in year 9 and subsequent years is to:

- Review the young person's EHCP
- Draw up and subsequently review the Transition Plan

The annual review of the EHCP held in Year 9 should involve the agencies that may play a major role in the young person's life during the post-school years including the Careers Service from the placing authority.

The SENCO must ensure that a Transition Plan is drawn up which draws together information from a range of individuals within and beyond school in order to plan coherently for the pupil's transition to adult life.

10.0 LINKS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES/ORGANISATIONS

The school recognises the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide for our pupils.

Important links are in place with the following organisations:

- Local Authorities
- Social Services
- CAMHS
- Local Authorities Careers Guidance

This policy is reviewed annually



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