RUSSET HOUSE SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY

Contents

1. Aims and Objectives
2. Vision and Values
3. Legislation and Guidance
4. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities
5. Definitions
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. SEN Information Report
8. Attendance
9. Safeguarding
10. Expertise and Training of Staff
11. Links with External Professional Agencies
12. Admission and Accessibility Arrangements
13. Complaints about SEND Provision
14. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements
15. Links with Other Policies and Documents

1. Aims and Objectives

Introduction

Russet House is proud to be a Local Authority Special School for autistic pupils aged 3 to 11 years from across the London Borough of Enfield.

We provide a high quality, specialised education in a happy, purposeful and nurturing environment. We understand the differences experienced by autistic young people (as identified by the Autism Education Trust) in the areas of:

- social understanding and communication
- sensory processing and integration
- flexible thinking and information processing.

Our Aims

- **Comprehensive Support:** Provide tailored support and provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- **Legislative Compliance:** Fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- **Inclusive Access:** Ensure pupils with SEND can access all aspects of school life and engage in activities alongside their peers
- **Achievement Focus:** Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their personal best
- **Confidence Building:** Support pupils to become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- **Transition Preparation:** Help pupils make successful transitions into their next educational phase and ultimately into adulthood, able to contribute to society and live with purpose
- **Partnership Approach:** Communicate effectively with pupils and their families, collaborating on decisions about support and provision
- **Clear Accountability:** Define roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- **Consistent Implementation:** Ensure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and Values

Be Kind

Be Responsible

Be independent

Be Positive

Work Hard

Work Together

Russet House School is a centre of excellence for the education of autistic learners.

Russet House School is an inclusive, relationships driven community where strengths and differences are celebrated so that pupils develop self-regulation, self-worth and can thrive.

Russet House School prepares pupils for the adults they will become though a specialised, research informed, strengths-based curriculum that focuses on functional life-skills and knowledge.

Russet House School promotes inclusion and opportunity for all its pupils by challenging expectations, listening and responding to every voice (communication) so that ***everyone learns and grows together***.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance including the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

Key Legislation:

- **Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3):** Sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014:** Defines responsibilities for EHC plans, SENCOs and SEN information reports
- **Equality Act 2010 (Section 20):** Outlines duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149):** Responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and advance equality
- **School Admissions Code:** Obligations regarding admission of pupils with EHC plans
- **Governance Guidelines:** Governors' responsibilities for pupils with SEND

4. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We embrace the differences experienced by autistic people in social understanding and communication, sensory processing and integration, flexible thinking and information processing (as identified by the Autism Education Trust - AET) and adjust our curriculum and teaching strategies in light of these. For some pupils, these differences may result in higher levels of stress, anxiety and or difficulties with emotional regulation leading to behaviours that challenge. Pupils are supported with this through a school-wide positive, trauma informed approach which is rooted in promoting wellbeing.

In addition, pupils at Russet House School have significant and complex needs relating to cognition and learning.

Our school curriculum incorporates subject learning alongside an emphasis on the learning of life skills necessary to prepare pupils for the next stage in their learning and in preparation for adulthood. Social communication and self-regulation are taught on an ongoing basis and represent the core of our curriculum. We utilise a range of recognised specialist strategies and approaches which support the learning of autistic pupils. To aid communication, a Total Communication approach is used including gesture, pictures, symbols, simple language and sign. We work alongside internal and external multi-agency professionals in order to maximise pupils' progress in all areas. We believe that all times throughout the school day provide opportunities for applying learning and generalising skills. In addition, our pupils participate in learning beyond the school through educational visits and swimming lessons and local authority music and P.E. events with mainstream settings.

Area	Description
Communication and Interaction	Difficulty communicating with others, understanding language, expressing themselves, or using social communication rules. Often includes autism spectrum needs.
Cognition and Learning	Learning at a slower pace than peers, including specific learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia), moderate, severe, or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Mental health difficulties, ADHD, attachment disorders, or effects of adverse childhood experiences. May manifest as challenging behaviour or withdrawal.
Sensory and/or Physical	Vision, hearing, multi-sensory or physical impairments requiring ongoing additional support and equipment.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special Educational Needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability requiring special educational provision. This includes:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than others of the same age
- A disability preventing or hindering use of educational facilities generally provided for others of the same age

5.2 Disability

Pupils have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment with substantial and long-term adverse effects on their ability to carry out normal daily activities.

5.3 The Four Areas of Need – SEND Code of Practice (2014)

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Governing Body

Responsibilities include:

- Co-operating with LA in developing the local offer
- Ensuring every pupil with SEND receives appropriate support
- Providing broad and balanced curriculum access
- Publishing SEND information report annually

- Ensuring Phase Leaders/Senior Leadership Team are effective in completing the roles and responsibilities typically carried out by the SENCo.
- Determining resource allocation for SEND support
- Monitoring quality and effectiveness of SEND provision

6.2 Senior Leadership Team (Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers)

Responsibilities include:

- **Legal Compliance:** Ensure school meets Equality Act 2010 responsibilities
- **Overall Responsibility:** Maintain a provision for pupils with SEND and monitor their progress
- **Strategic Leadership:** Work on strategic development of SEND policy and provision
- **Budget Management:** to deploy financial resources to maximise outcomes for pupils with SEND, based on need
- **Staff Development:** Monitor training needs and incorporate into CPD planning
- **External Liaison:** Act as point of contact and advice for external agencies, especially LA and support services
- **Quality Assurance:** Monitor and evaluate breadth and impact of SEND support on learning

6.3 Phase Leaders (including Senior Phase Leader)

Responsibilities include:

- **Daily Operations:** Coordinate specific provision for individual pupils with SEND, including those with EHC plans
- **Professional Guidance:** Provide guidance to colleagues and liaise with staff, parents and external agencies
- **Graduated Approach:** Advise on SEND support and adapted teaching methods
- **Transition Planning:** Ensure smooth transitions between educational phases
- **Management of Time:** To use additional time effectively

6.4 Class Teachers

Responsibilities include:

- **Quality Teaching:** Plan and provide adapted, high-quality teaching through graduated approach
- **Progress Monitoring:** Assess progress and development of every pupil in their class
- **Collaborative Working:** Work with teaching assistants and specialists to plan and assess
- **Policy Implementation:** Follow SEND policy and SEN information report requirements
- **Parent Communication:** Regular communication with parents including outcome setting, progress review, and celebrations of success

6.5 Parents and Carers

Responsibilities include:

- **Information Sharing:** Inform school of concerns about child's progress or development or any changes in circumstances
- **Annual Review Participation:** Attend annual reviews of EHCPs and contribute their views, including sharing concerns and agree aspirations for their child
- **Annual Reporting:** Receive annual progress reports

- **Decision Involvement:** Participate in all decisions affecting their child

6.6 The Pupil

Participation Rights:

- **Pupils Voice:** Staff will facilitate opportunities for pupils to express views about who they are, their likes and dislikes
- **Strength Recognition:** understand their strengths and interests

7. SEN Information Report

- The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.
- The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

8. Attendance

8.1 SEND and Attendance

We recognise that pupils with SEND may face complex barriers to attendance. Our approach includes:

- **Individual Support Plans:** Tailored strategies for attendance challenges
- **Multi-agency Working:** Collaboration with health, social care, family support services and Educational Welfare Service.
- **Transport Support:** Coordination with transport providers for consistent routines

8.2 Monitoring and Support (see attendance policy for further information)

- Daily attendance monitoring with immediate follow-up
- Regular analysis of attendance patterns and triggers
- Early intervention strategies for emerging difficulties
- Family support and guidance
- Professional referrals when appropriate

9. Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND, particularly autistic pupils, face additional safeguarding challenges:

Increased Vulnerabilities:

- Communication difficulties may prevent disclosure of abuse
- Social naivety may increase exploitation risk
- Behaviours that challenge may mask signs of abuse or distress
- Changes in presentation could be attributed to SEND, therefore safeguarding concerns not explored further
- Difficulty understanding appropriate boundaries and relationships
- Potential for misinterpretation of social situations
- Increased dependency on adults may create power imbalances

Environmental Safeguards:

- Structured environments reducing anxiety and confusion
- Consistent routines to help pupils feel secure
- Small team of consistent adults who know the pupils
- Safe spaces available for regulation and de-escalation

Staff Training:

- Appropriate safeguarding training for all staff
- Training on supporting pupils who may find reporting concerns a challenge
- See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information

10. Expertise and Training of Staff

All staff receive extensive induction and ongoing professional development to effectively support pupils. Our training recognises that autism-specific expertise is essential for meeting pupil needs.

11. Comprehensive Training Framework

Core Autism Training Programme

Autism Awareness and Understanding:

- The majority of school staff have completed the *Good Autism Practice in Schools* training from the Autism Education Trust. Many staff have completed further modules.
- Comprehensive induction and ongoing training covering:
    - autism characteristics and strengths-based approaches
    - Understanding sensory needs and processing differences
    - Impact of autism on learning, communication, social interaction and behaviour
    - Neurodiversity awareness and acceptance

Communication Strategies:

Total Communication:

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), including PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), language boards, core boards, Widget Go software
- Makaton signs and gestures
- Adapting and simplifying language
- visual timetables and using objects of reference
- Modelling and supporting non-verbal communication effectively

Structured Teaching Approaches:

- TEACCH methodology including Structured work systems and visual organisation
- Creating low-arousal, autism-friendly classroom environments
- Environmental prompts for optimal learning

Positive Behaviour Support:

- Proactive, preventative approaches to behaviour support
- Understanding the function and communication intent of behaviour
- De-escalation techniques and crisis intervention
- Developing and implementing Positive Behaviour Support plans with a focus on primary intervention
- Sensory integration strategies
- Understanding the pupil through a Trauma Informed approach
- All staff trained in Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment (PRICE) principles and techniques and used in a legal and ethical way to reduce the need for restraint

Specialist Training Areas

Medical and Health Needs:

- Epilepsy awareness and seizure management

- Asthma awareness
- Allergy awareness and response
- Medication administration and monitoring
- Emergency procedures and first aid
- Working with healthcare professionals

Safeguarding:

- Recognising safeguarding risks
- Supporting pupils who may have difficulty communicating concerns
- Understanding vulnerability factors
- Personal and Intimate Care

Training Delivery Methods

Structured Learning Opportunities:

- Annual whole-school PLD days focused on autism best practice
- Regular staff meetings
- External expert-led training (speech and language therapists,)

Ongoing Professional Development:

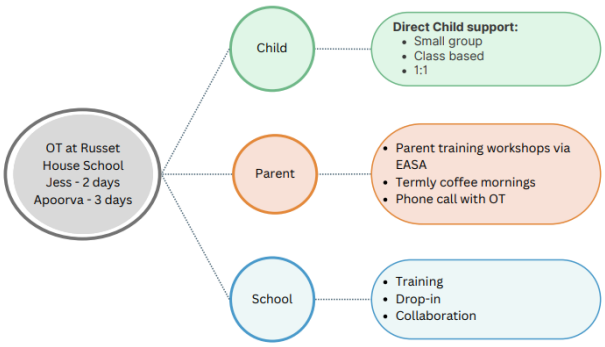
- Individual training needs identified through appraisals and class observations (Good Practice Reviews)
- Staff training log maintained for compliance tracking

12. Links with External Professional Agencies

Health and Therapy Services

Occupational Therapy Services:

- Individual and group programmes



Speech and Language Therapy:

- Individual and group communication programmes
- Total communication environment development
- AAC system implementation and training
- Staff training in communication strategies

Educational Support Services

Specialist Teachers:

- Hearing Impairment support
- Local Authority improvement partner
- Enfield Advisory Service for Autism (EASA)

Social Care and Family Support

Social Services Collaboration:

- Child protection and safeguarding coordination
- Family support service referrals
- Service for Disabled Children (Cheviots)

Mental Health

- Enfield CAMHS-SCAN (Service for Children and Adolescents with Neurodevelopmental conditions) providing mental health assessment and support
- Positive Behaviour Support – Behaviour Analysts
- Medication monitoring and review
- E-TIPSS Champion
- Talking Therapies

13. Admission and Accessibility Arrangements

Admission Arrangements

Eligibility Criteria: Russet House provides specialist education for pupils aged 3-11 – see Enfield Admission Guidance for further information.

Accessibility Arrangements

Physical Environment:

- Fully accessible single-story building with wide corridors
- Wheelchair accessible entrances and facilities
- Accessible toilets with changing facilities
- Sensory room with specialist lighting and equipment
- Sensory gym with therapeutic equipment
- Quiet spaces for regulation

Curriculum Access:

- Adapted curriculum delivery for all ability levels, taking in to account spiky learning profiles
- Multiple communication methods (verbal, visual, AAC)
- Sensory-friendly learning environments
- Technology integration for learning support
- Motivating and engaging

Accessibility Plan

Our comprehensive Accessibility Plan covers:

- **Curriculum Participation:** Increasing extent to which disabled pupils can participate
- **Physical Environment:** Improving access to education, facilities and services
- **Information Access:** Improving availability of accessible information

The plan is reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

14. Complaints

A Complaint is defined as "an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action". The school intends to resolve complaints informally where possible, at the earliest possible stage. See School Complaints Policy for further details.

Informal Resolution

We encourage parents and carers to raise concerns informally in the first instance:

Initial Contact:

- Speak directly with class teacher about day-to-day concerns
- Speak to Phase Leader
- Approach headteacher for serious or unresolved matters
- Use multiple communication methods (phone, email, face-to-face, written)

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1 - Formal Complaint to School:

- Written complaint submitted to headteacher

Stage 2 - Governing Body Review:

- Complaint submitted to Chair of Governors

Stage 3 - External Review:

- Complaint to Local Authority if school-maintained

Local Authority Complaints:

- Complaints about EHC needs assessment process
- Concerns about Local Authority SEND services
- Disagreements about provision or placement

15. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

This policy and The SEND Information Report will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team annually. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the governing body.

16. Links with Other Policies and Documents

Educational Policies

- SEN Information Report
- Equality Statement and Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Guidance for Special Schools in Enfield
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Medical Conditions Supporting Pupils Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy

Approved by: V S Manning

Date Written: June 2025
Next review due by: September 2026