

Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion Policy and report



October 2024

Ratified by the Full Governing Body on: 14th October 2024

Chair of Governors Signature: *Wendy Sartain*

As a rights respecting school, we uphold the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our behaviour policy is underpinned by article 3: the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children

Introduction

The Pines School is a day special school educating pupils who have a diagnosis of ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition). Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world. Our pupils all have associated learning and communication needs.

Some pupils present with a complex learning profile but ASC is their primary area of need. All children are admitted to school with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in line with the school's Admission Policy.

School Vision

Our vision is to create a safe and happy environment for our children to develop life-long communication skills to become a valued member of modern-day society.

Protect	<i>We endeavour to create an atmosphere where our pupils feel safe.</i>
Inspire	<i>We inspire our children to be the best they can.</i>
Nurture	<i>We nurture our children's individuality.</i>
Embrace	<i>We celebrate our differences and give everyone a chance. Everyone is precious and included in our school.</i>
Succeed	<i>We celebrate all achievements, no matter how big or small!</i>

Through a graduated response, and robust support systems, we ensure that appropriate activities are modified, and reasonable adjustments are made so that every child has the opportunity to achieve.

Our school community is culturally diverse, and this diversity is valued for the richness it brings. The Pines School is committed to working in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals who are significant in the pupils' development and well-being to enable the pupils to achieve their potential

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of our special needs provision are:

- to secure appropriate and effective facilities and resources to enhance the learning opportunities of all pupils
- to involve the child as far as possible in their own education
- to involve parents and carers in their child's Assessment, Annual Review, Education, Health and Care Plans and Individual Education Plans
- to secure support from appropriate external agencies and professionals to ensure that each child's individual needs are addressed as fully as possible
- to work in partnership with our network of special schools
- to promote education in a safe and secure environment within a happy atmosphere where children can learn effectively, improve their confidence, build up their self-esteem and develop their independence as individuals within the community
- to afford pupils with life skills that prepare them for the next stage of learning
- to engage and help parents and guardians in the care
- to ensure that each child has equality of access to a highly differentiated and individualised curriculum which effectively meets their individual special educational needs and disability
- to explore and extend all opportunities for community involvement

As a maintained school, we follow our statutory duties under the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' from the DfE, last updated in 2024.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

At The Pines School educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of staff

The headteacher and senior leaders will:

- ensure that all staff are informed of their responsibilities and receive appropriate training and support to deliver the curriculum and to fulfil their roles
- liaise with and advise colleagues
- manage the teams within the school
- coordinate the provision for pupils with SEN
- communicate with parents, guardians and carers of pupils with SEN
- liaise with external support agencies
- ensure transition points are effectively managed and effective for all pupils

The SENCO will:

- have day-to-day responsibility for the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN and EHC plans
- monitor that the school environment to ensure inclusive practice and that provision led by need
- advise on the graduated approach to teaching and learning
- be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services with regards to provision

Teachers and support staff will:

- contribute to the vision of the school
- plan lessons carefully, varying activities and pace to meet the needs of all pupils
- will create a happy, secure and stimulating learning environment where everyone will be inspired to do their absolute best
- promote effective communication between home and school and other external agencies
- ensure all pupils are included in all aspects of school life
- engage with CPD as appropriate providing outstanding teaching and learning opportunities
- work collaboratively with parents so that they can engage with school and be partners in their child's learning
- work with the senior leaders to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- ensure they follow this SEN policy

The Governing Body will:

- monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of this policy using the outcomes to inform future developments
- monitor the progress of pupils through reports presented by the headteacher and visits to the school

In monitoring and evaluating the success of its provision the Governing Body recognises the difficulties encountered in establishing relevant performance criteria and is committed to acknowledging and celebrating all successes within the school. In addition to the outcomes of target setting, OFSTED Inspection and school improvement they consider feedback from pupils, parents and other professionals as valuable indicators.

2. Curriculum

The Pines School curriculum aims to provide a stimulating and safe learning community in which we all work together to nurture and maximise the potential of everyone and celebrate their

achievements. We offer a curriculum that includes individualised learning and follows the National Curriculum, at an appropriate level to the learners needs. Teachers' planning ensures that pupils take part in activities which are meaningful and interesting for them and through which they address relevant and challenging learning outcomes. This enables all pupils to maximise their progress.

At The Pines School the curriculum supports the ethos of the school and strives to provide the context within which pupils with autism are given the opportunity to achieve ambitious standards. In line with the National Curriculum aims, we aspire that all children will

- be confident to communicate with a wide range of people
- make successful transitions into adulthood, living as independently as possible
- enjoy learning in the school environment and beyond
- feel confident and self-assured
- be able to manage change by self-regulating their emotions
- be able to forge positive relationships with other young people and adults
- be proud of their achievements
- respect other cultures, religions and genders
- have reached appropriate levels of functioning in the core skills

3. Organisation

The Pines School is founded on two distinct pathways extended curriculum and main curriculum. Whilst we recognise that pupils may make progress at a different rate, we still maintain high expectations and aspirations for all pupils. Opportunities for classes to join together are catered for where appropriate. The pupils in the Extended stream have a greater complexity of need and need a clearly differentiated approach to teaching and learning. As our most complex learners they are in a smaller group (maximum of 8 pupils) with 4 members of staff. In EYFS classes are mixed ability.

Our main class pupils still require a specific approach to teaching and learning; however, they have a greater ability to access whole group sessions and can access learning in a slightly larger group of 12 pupils with at least 2 adults – although the majority have 3. These ratio's change dependent on the group.

As the school has grown there is also a mixed pathway in place that allows teachers to identify and use elements of both pathways.

Extended curriculum class:

The curriculum recognises that many of the pupils have a range of complex learning needs associated with autism. The curriculum is designed to meet learning needs by a personalised learning approach. The needs of the pupils within this group can be broadly characterised in the following ways

- The majority of the pupils will be working within the P levels with some accessing the bridging the gap level.
- Pupils will have significantly limited functional language and communication.
- Pupils' engagement is emerging or fleeting, they require a higher level of staffing to ensure progression in learning.
- Repetitive verbal and physical behaviours are frequent requiring a high level of support to regulate their emotions.
- Sensory differences impact on learning on a daily basis. Planned breaks for rewarding activities or activities to address sensory differences
- There are significant difficulties with short and long term memory, sequential memory and have limited working memory

- Pupils have bespoke learning plans that often incorporate therapeutic support and intervention such as structured and frequent learning breaks.
- The curriculum is based around physical and sensory learning activities that build on prior understanding and learning.

Main curriculum class:

The curriculum recognises that many of the pupils have a range of learning needs associated with Autism. The curriculum is designed to meet learning needs incorporating a range of learning opportunities and experiences. The curriculum will be a combination of whole group, small group and sometimes individual teaching. The needs of the pupils within this group can be broadly characterised in the following ways

- Pupils work through the pre-National Curriculum (PNC) levels and over time can access National Curriculum expectations over time
- Pupils will have limited functional language or communication; pupils use communication intentionally and seeks interaction although not always appropriately
- Pupils engage for short periods of time on learning tasks with differing levels of support
- Pupils need clearly defined roles and expected behaviour as they may lack understanding of classroom conventions
- A higher level of support for emotional regulation and sensory needs at times
- Curriculum requires significant differentiation, adaptation, and individualisation to account for difficulties pupils encounter in accessing learning
- Pupils will make progress at a good rate from their starting point
- Pupils will need to access an environment that is sympathetic to their needs, incorporating visual cues to enable them to make sense of the world around them and the expectations in place.

4. Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

At the Pines School we adapt our curriculum and learning environment to meet the needs of a range of pupils with differing needs. We do this by:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils can access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson,
- Providing a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays,
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary
- Ensuring the communication systems for pupils are robust and consistent, including (but not limited to) symbols, Makaton, visual timetables, objects of reference ALD boards (Alternative Language Displays) PECs (Picture Exchange system) now and next boards
- Utilising Autism specific strategies such as social stories, TEAACH style work, attention autism sessions
- Developing sensory neutral spaces where possible

5. Additional support for learning and multi-agency working

At The Pines School, we have different staffing levels in place that are dependent on the needs of the cohort. As a minimum each class will have a qualified teacher, 1 level 3 teaching assistant and 1 Level 2 teaching assistant.

A number of children are supported on a 1:1 basis and this is funded by the local authority where a child has exceptional educational needs. We are unable to provide 1:1 support as part of our core offer.

The school has developed good working relationships with a wide range of outside agencies. The Governing Body acknowledges that a broad spectrum of expertise is essential to address the needs of all pupils including

- Educational Psychology Service,
- Specialist Support Service (in particular the hearing and vision impaired services),
- Independent Speech and Language Therapy West Midlands,
- Independent Occupational therapist (0.6)
- Music Therapist (0.2)
- Mental health mentor (0,7)
- FTB (forward thinking Birmingham)
- Schools Community Medical Officer, Paediatricians of local hospitals, Community Nurses
- Occupational Therapist,
- Learning Disability Team, and various other Social Care and Health and other Children's Services.

The school also gains support from being a member of the Birmingham Special Schools Cooperative Trust.

6. Securing equipment and facilities

The school was opened in 2016 and is a refurbished college site. Our school environment is designed to support the needs of pupils with ASC and pupils benefit from a communication rich environment, designated teaching spaces, low arousal areas, the use of workstations and a safe and predictable environment to enable pupils to learn.

In addition to the classrooms we have:

- 1 sensory room for primary
- 1 sensory room for EYFS
- 1 reflection room for KS2 (Key Stage 2) (a safe space)
- 1 reflection room for KS3 (Key Stage 3) E classes (a safe space)
- 1 mental health room – therapeutic support
- SALT room – used by whole school as necessary
- 1 occupational therapy room (sensory circuits) used for whole school
- Food technology room –in each Key Stage (life skills)
- 1 ICT room
- 1 Hall
- 1 Small hall
- 1 dining room
- 1 First aid room, whole school
- 1 music therapy room, whole school

The allocation of resources within the school is based on priorities identified by the School Improvement Planning process.

A wide range of books, materials and equipment is available in school to suit the differing needs, abilities, and cultures of pupils. ICT facilities include touch screens, interactive white boards, iPads and a range of software which is appropriate for non-verbal and language disordered children.

Resources and materials are specifically chosen to reflect positive images of gender, disability, and ethnic background.

7. Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry to school, using information from previous settings where appropriate. Baseline assessments will be carried out using the Pines assessment system, PNC scales and end of year expectations.

We acknowledge that for some of our pupils we may need to identify progress from other areas including communication, independence and self-help skills, social needs, and behavioural information.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

8. Enabling pupils with SEN to engage in activities available in the local and wider community

All of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils and are designed to enhance the curriculum and enable community access at a level that is appropriate to the individual pupil.

All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day/special assemblies/special workshops/visits by music and drama specialists and these are delivered by people who have experience of working with pupils with Autism.

The school have links with Birmingham Hippodrome, and this enables pupils to experience relaxed performances at the theatre.

We have a plot on the local allotment, and this enables pupils to work in a different environment. The pupils understand how to care for the plants and actively keep the plot active and well cared for.

9. Support for improving emotional and social development

We provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils are encouraged to be part of the Pines parliament and there are elections held annually.
- Staff are skilled in responding to pupils' emotions and feelings
- We employ a mental health mentor 3.5 days per week
- Providing opportunities to express feelings e.g. using 'talking mats'
- An individualised approach to learning
- All pupils are supported to develop relationships with their peers and to have a 'voice'
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- Positive links with parents and carers

10. Transitional support

At transition points, internally, information will be passed on to the class team through scheduled handover meetings and accurate paperwork including risk assessments, curriculum access and behaviour plans as appropriate. The class team will support the transition plans for any pupils that have significant challenges. To ensure a smooth transition to the next year, pupils have transition sessions with their new classes and parents and carers are invited to meet the new class team.

When a young person joins The Pines School, they will be part of the class charter which make up the rules for the class. Behaviour expectations will be reinforced by all staff, verbally and visually as appropriate.

The Pines School staff will ensure that parents are part of this process at induction and will contribute to a profile that shares their child's preferences to help staff engage positively.

We will share information with the school or other setting the pupil is moving to. Transition involves:

- Formal response from LA regarding placement
- Liaising with professionals at named school
- Series of visits to new school with current staff
- Photo, video, social story to aid pupils understanding of transition
- Leaver's graduation assembly
- Common file transfer
- Transfer of safeguarding files
- Where possible a member of staff will complete a post transfer meeting with pupil

11. Birmingham's local offer

Birmingham has 27 Special schools. Information regarding this can be found on the local offer page. <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/>

12. Evaluating the effectiveness of provision

We provide specialist provision and evaluate the effectiveness of provision for all pupils with Autism

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term – termly pupil progress meetings
- Parent questionnaires
- Staff questionnaires
- Monitoring by the senior line managers and SENCO
- Tracking individual pupils progress through the curriculum
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans

13. Procedures

All pupils will have an Annual Review meeting to discuss and review the child's EHCP and progress towards targets. This meeting takes place within the school day and parents play a vital role in determining any amendments to the statement or EHCP. If there are concerns about pupil placement, the Educational Psychology (EP) service must be involved.

The Local Authority maintains the EHCP with support and guidance provided by the school

14. Integration and Inclusion

It is the policy of The Pines School that wherever the appropriate match of aptitude and ability occurs, or where specific social integration is required, and parents/carers agree, children are integrated into mainstream schools, in order that they may be included into their neighborhood community. In order to facilitate this process good working relationships have been developed with several local mainstream primary schools.

Pupils who begin integration are monitored initially by a class teacher or teaching assistant, in addition to the senior member of staff who has overall responsibility for the co-ordination of inclusion. Progress is closely monitored and reviewed, and any advice or in-service support required by the host school is provided.

We offer opportunities for staff from other schools to observe practice and give advice on SEND strategies to support diverse needs.

15. Inclusion and equal opportunities.

The principle of inclusion is one which is firmly established in the education of pupils at The Pines School, and involves the setting of appropriate challenges, responding to pupils' diverse spiritual, moral, social and cultural and educational needs and overcoming potential barriers to success for all individuals and groups of pupils. This is adhered to irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religion, non-religion, disability, culture or socio-economic background, or circumstances of home or public care.

Any complaints concerning the special needs provision at The Pines School should be raised in the first instance with the headteacher, as outlined in the school's Curriculum Complaints and Complaints Policies.