

## **Special Educational Needs Policy**

**Date:** July 2023

**Approved by:** FGB

**Review Period:** Annually

**Next review due:** Summer 2024



### **Introduction**

Springhallow School is the Local Authority's specialist provision for pupils aged from 4 to 19 with Autism. All pupils at Springhallow have a primary diagnosis of Autism and everything that is done in school takes account of these needs.

Pupils at the school also present with a very wide range of learning abilities. This means that the emphasis is on highly differentiated programmes that are tailored to meet the specific learning needs and abilities of the individual pupils.

### **Ethos and aims**

At Springhallow School every pupil is valued as an individual. Pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential, to develop an intrinsic desire to learn and to participate fully in school and the wider community.

We aim to:

- Develop pupils' personal, social and emotional skills, enabling them to enter into meaningful and fulfilling relationships with others.
- Raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, and to help and support pupils to strive towards independent living, wherever possible.
- Enable pupils to be flexible and adaptable and to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to adult life in a continually changing world.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum, centred on developmental, experiential and therapeutic approaches, which meets all pupils' special educational needs and which reflects their entitlement to the national curriculum.
- Provide equality of opportunity for all pupils to access a balanced, broadly based and relevant curriculum, which reflects the pupils' cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Respond to pupils' learning styles through the use of a variety of teaching methods, appropriate to the needs of pupils with ASD.

We strive to be a school that is welcoming and accepting, where:

- Everyone is working together.
- We provide a safe, secure and positive environment that values each pupil's development and progression.
- We promote effective and supportive relationships with parents, carers, school staff and other professionals, involved with our pupils; and
- We are recognised as a centre of expertise in the field of Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

In addition, the school aims to:

- Ensure that the school reflects the diversity of the pupils' cultural backgrounds and offers equal opportunities for all.
- Facilitate successful integration into mainstream or other school settings when agreed at a review meeting.
- Ensure that all staff have regular opportunities for professional development to help them better meet the needs of the children.

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum based within the framework of the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum but focusing on the communication, social interaction and learning needs of pupils with autism.
- Raise awareness and understanding of autism and associated communication disorders in the wider school community.
- Share knowledge and expertise about autism with colleagues from other schools, organisations and disciplines.

### **Facilities and Resources**

All staff teams have a good understanding of autism and why pupils behave in the way that they do. Additionally, all teams take note of how each pupil responds to their autism so that a personalised approach can be taken that will lead to the highest possible learning outcomes for each of our pupils. The Governors and staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils at the school achieve to the best of their abilities. In order to support this, the school draws on a range of specialist resources and facilities:

- Staff trained in the field of autism.
- Structured teaching groups with high staff/pupil ratio.
- Highly differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with autism and a very broad range of learning abilities.
- Individually planned programmes where appropriate to meet the needs of pupils with autism, in consultation with parents and other specialists.
- Play/leisure areas designed to develop gross motor skills and to encourage social interaction and imaginative play.
- Individual behaviour management programmes to address the challenging behaviours exhibited by some pupils.
- An Education Social Worker and Family Support Worker.
- Regular on-site speech and language therapy commissioned through the NHS.
- Regular on-site occupational therapy commissioned through the NHS.
- Access to Music therapy (referral basis).
- Access to Clinical psychology (referral basis).
- Regular visits from the link Educational Psychologist.
- An outreach service offering advice and training to other schools in Ealing working with pupils with autism.

### **Review Procedures**

All pupils have an annual review of their Education Health Care Plans (EHC Plans). This also serves as the annual report to parents. Transition plans are also prepared when pupils transfer to other provision.

### **Transition Arrangements**

Pupils' transfer to their next placement is carefully planned over time to ensure a gradual introduction and smooth transition to their new school, usually supported initially by familiar staff from their own class.

### **Staff and Parents**

High priority is given to close and regular liaison with parents through:

- Regular use of home/school contact books, telephone calls and informal visits to the school.
- Encouraging parents to take an active part in their child's learning in a wide range of ways
- Formal opportunities to discuss progress (Annual Reviews, Parents Evenings, etc).
- Offering parent support groups
- Offering family learning programmes, including Early Bird training, Cygnet, etc.

**Staff Training**

The school has a commitment to ensuring that all members of staff have access to high quality in-service training offered as whole staff, group or individual sessions, both in school and at other venues. All members of staff are trained in the field of autism and are aware of current developments in the field.

Related Policy documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Staff Induction Policy
- Behaviour Policy