**YOUNG FOUNDATIONS**

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY**

**Mortimer House/Valley House**

**Stepping Stones**

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| **YOUNG FOUNDATIONS LIMITED – EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** **TITLE: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ISSUE 3: Oct 18**    **COMPILED BY: POLICY TEAM/HEAD OF ED REVIEW DATE: Aug 2021** |

**Introduction:**

This policy is constructed in line with the requirements set out in Part 3 of the Student’s and Families Bill (2014) and associated regulations The policy is fully compliant with the Draft Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice: for 0 to 25 years (January 2015)

For the purposes of Stepping Stones School, the **Head Teacher** operates as the school SENco and is referred to as such for the purposes of this SEN policy.

**Basic information about the school’s SEN provision:**

Stepping Stones School is an independent school that caters for students and young people aged 12-18 with SEMH, ASD/complex needs and Learning difficulties.

The school provides special educational provision for students who require:

“special educational provision, that is provision different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age.”

Stepping Stones School identifies students as having Special Educational Needs if they meet the definition as set out in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (**DfE, SEPT 2015**).

This defines SEN as;

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

has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

* Many students and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘…a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The school provides for students whose special educational needs broadly fall into the 4 areas of:

* Communication and interaction
* Cognition and learning
* Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
* Sensory and/or physical needs

**Guiding principles:**

* At Stepping Stones School we believe that all of our students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability, disability or sexuality are entitled to a high quality education that will maximise their life chances.

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All students are entitled to an education that enables them to:

* achieve their best
* become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
* make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

**Objectives of the school’s SEN policy:**

We will ensure that a student or young person with SEN will have their needs met through a rigorous programme of identification, assessment, planning and support. To achieve this;

* the views of the student will be sought and taken into account
* our parents have a vital role to play in supporting their student’s education
* our students with SEN will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum
* The school will manage its resources to ensure all students’ needs are met
* A student’s special educational needs will be identified early
* Provision and progress for our SEN students will be monitored and reviewed regularly
* The school will involve outside agencies when appropriate
* Education, Health & Care Plans will be reviewed regularly in line with regulations
* Appropriate training will be provided for those involved in the implementation of the policy.

Where a SEN is identified, the school will put appropriate evidence-based interventions in place. These will be provided as part of a needs led response, which includes regular review of the progress made and adaptations to the support provided as required.

### **How the policy will contribute to meeting the objectives:**

The effectiveness and appropriateness of the policy will be continuously monitored by the Head/Seniors in conjunction with the Directors. The use of resources, identification, programme planning, effectiveness and quality of individual planning, student progress, student participation, parents as partners, statutory reviews, referrals for statutory assessment, the identification of training needs and the use made of support services will be monitored and evaluated regularly.

In addition the school will annually undertake a self-evaluation of the effectiveness of its policy in order to both update the policy and to plan further improvements and development.

**The arrangements that have been made for coordinating the provision of education for students with SEN at the school.**

The school’s provision to support all SEN will be coordinated by Head/Deputy.

The Head teacher, SLT and governing body all have an important role to play, in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school.

The Head teacher has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEN(to include Mental Health), including those who have EHC plans.

The Head provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies. The Head is able to work with professionals providing a support role to the family to ensure that students with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.

The key responsibilities are:

* overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school’s SEN policy
* coordinating provision for students with SEN
* advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
* advising on the deployment of the school’s delegated budget and other resources to meet students’ needs effectively
* liaising with parents of students with SEN
* liaising with hospital schools, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
* being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
* liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
* working with the Directors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
* ensuring that the school keeps the records of all students with SEN up to date

In addition to the Headteacher, all teachers at Stepping Stones School are responsible for the SEN provision within their classes and act as the ‘Headteacher’ in that specific setting. Their roles and responsibilities include:

* liaising with parents/carers
* liaising with other professionals
* advising and supporting other practitioners in the setting
* ensuring that appropriate ILPs are in place
* Meeting the needs of the individuals in the class
* ensuring that background information is collected, recorded and updated
* taking the lead in further assessment of a student’s strengths and weaknesses to guide future planning to meet the student’s needs
* plan for progression for all students in their class
* taking the lead in monitoring/reviewing any action taken to support the student

The students who attend Stepping Stones School have an Education Health Care Plan or are in the process of having one written by the student’s home Local Authority. Stepping Stones School assists in the process of collating this information and uses formatted records in line with the EHC plan to allow for efficient transfer of data

* The school is housed in the heart of a residential area of Tamworth. We also have a nurture hub for our looked after on the Valley House site for those who cannot manage the transition to Mortimer House.
* Each class/group has the appropriate number of staff allocated (teacher and learning assistants) who are deployed to support students special educational needs and well-being needs
* All this is supported by clinical services who work with and alongside the teaching and care staff to provide all round holistic support.

**Access arrangements:**

* Each student at is given the opportunity to achieve their personal best
* All students access a full range of activities appropriate to their needs
* Appropriate support is given to students so that they have full access to an appropriate curriculum and resources to support the teaching delivery of it
* All students are recognised as individuals and their individual needs are met
* Where possible all students are included with their peers both within the school and outside of the school in the wider environment
* We aim to promote positive self-esteem in all students
* The staff foster communication between staff/parents/carers/other professionals and agencies.
* We work in partnership with parents/carers enabling them to play an active role in their student/young person’s development and education underpinning our school mission statement of ‘Uniting parents and professionals’

**Physical access:**

The following measures allow for equal access and the safety of our students:

* our school setting has specifically designed classroom and workshop furniture and fixtures, adapted door openings, clear signage, appropriate surfaces, materials and toilets for students with SEMH/ASD/related needs
* Visual Aids and adaptations for our young people with a visual impairment.
* passageways are kept clear (a health and safety issue)
* equipment for the needs of the students

**Support and Resources:**

The students within the school are supported effectively through the identification of need which allows for the appropriate staffing levels, resources and expertise for the varied and complex needs of the students:

* we provide materials relating to interests, aspirations and abilities
* we have relaxed, informal learning spaces to incorporate quiet areas.
* we differentiate activities/learning outcomes to ensure all students have access to the curriculum
* All students are provided with a curriculum at an appropriate level
* students are involved in making choices
* our planning addresses student’s individual needs

**Monitoring and reviewing:**

* Monitoring of progress is ongoing
* PCEPs (Person Centred Education Plans) are reviewed three times each year
* Each student has a 6 month/annual/transition/transfer review for EHC plans in which long term aims/outcomes are set/evaluated
* We encourage parents/carers and other professionals to attend reviews
* There are progress meetings/tutorials held weekly with their Support Lead. Each 6 weeks, an Assessment Week is held with Class Teachers to capture progress, outcomes and give workshop catch up time if needed.
* There are standardisation/moderation meetings held by Teaching & Learning Lead over the academic year to ensure progress and what this looks like is well-embedded within all assessment/outcomes
* Progress is also mapped to accreditation for all students at the school and covers the alternative curriculum provision.

**Record keeping:**

* Information is sought from parents/carers and relevant professionals on/before admission to the school
* PCEPs and records of progress and reviews are kept in secure facility setting
* the setting follows guidelines on GDPR, preserves confidentiality and gives parent/carer access to records when a written request is made
* the setting keeps records of any additional provision made
* the setting updates records regularly and parents/carers are asked to contribute
* records are passed on to the next setting/school with parent/carer permission if requested.

**Partnership – Students and Young Adults:**

* The students and young adults are encouraged to and given access where ever possible to be involved with:
* their own learning
* setting targets
* celebrating success, making choices and maintaining self esteem
* aspirations/interests through ‘Stepping Stones School Learning Pathways’, reviews and the EHC plan process

**Partnership – Parents/Carers:**

* we have full and open consultation with parents/carers
* parents’/carers’ concerns are recorded and acted upon following the young foundations policies
* we value parent/carer expertise
* parent/carer comments are included in assessment and review
* we ensure parents/carers are made welcome in the setting/school
* the school has an ‘open door’ policy, offering informal chats as necessary and formal discussion by appointment
* information is shared with parents/carers through informal chat/meetings, planned open days, charity days, events days each year
* Through such meetings student progress including progress within key targets identified can be discussed/reviewed
* we involve parents/carers in provision e.g. implementation of strategies, Positive Behaviour Intervention Plans and PEP/EHC targets

The school seeks to comply with the 2010 Equality Act.

**Information about our school's policies for the identification, assessment and provision for all students with special educational needs**

**How are our students special educational needs identified and their needs determined and reviewed?**

All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class. Our whole school Planning, Assessing, Do and Review, Reporting and Celebrating procedures outlines ways teachers plan for student progress over time. Where a student is not making adequate progress/progress which is identified using the assessment data held by the school(BSKB), teachers provide additional support to ‘close the gap’. Together with their whole school approach gives opportunities to ‘close the gap’ are identified and implemented/monitored. Parents/carers will be involved in collaborate working determining problem-solving, planning support and teaching strategies for individual students.

High quality teaching, differentiated outcomes for individual students, is always the first step in our school’s response to students.

**Role of the class teacher at Stepping Stones School:**

* Use existing information/assessment outcomes as a starting point
* Baseline new students/students to the school within the first half term and 12 weeks (Young Foundations 12 week assessment) to identify what student knows, understands and can do
* Identify from high quality assessment outcomes the key skills which require additional support
* Support positive mental health wellbeing and allow fluidity to lessons where required
* Establish key priory areas for EHCs
* Ensure on-going observation/assessment is an integral part of everyday class practice to inform next steps to learning which provides challenge/personalisation/individualisation
* Involve parents/carers/multi-agency teams (as appropriate)
* Involve the student as much as possible
* Use of OCN/IQA programmes of study alongside the differentiated Young Foundations-Valley House Curriculum to ensure breadth, depth and relevance to learning opportunities delivered throughout the school day
* Ensure there is effective classroom management, appropriate deployment of learning assistants management, the learning environment is conducive to the needs of students and curriculum access arrangements (Stepping Stones School curriculum, National Curriculum)
* Differentiation/personalisation/individualisation ensures all planning is appropriately matched to individual needs
* Take responsibility for planning and overseeing any interventions or support arrangements/multi-agency working to address the student’s learning difficulties.

The outcomes identified within EHC plans will fully consider the successful transition as the student moves through the school and between phases of education and ultimately to prepare for adult life.

In consultation with the parents/carers/multi-agency team short term outcomes/ plan will be drawn to achieve the agreed outcomes; these may include PCEP target setting, behaviour intervention plans or therapy plans dependent upon the needs of the student.

Progress towards these outcomes will be tracked and reviewed termly through our formal termly progress meetings and all outcomes scrutinised through the school’s well-established MDT support process.

Bi-Monthly meetings are held with SLT and our in house Educational Psychologist. This allows discussion around presentations, strategies, interventions, EHC targets and progress.

**Termly progress meetings/Assessment Weeks:**

This meeting will be led by the class teacher who has a good knowledge and understanding of the student. It will also allow for a detailed scrutiny of student progress to discuss additional support measures if these are required. Through such working the school can recognise and act upon the aspirations parents have for their student, agree on ‘next steps’ and work in an informed way.

**The school’s MDT provision map:**

The school will identify class and type of curriculum access based upon the needs of each student in the school. This allows the school to provide be-spoke curriculum opportunities with robust assessment measures to focus upon the key skills students need to develop; these will not only relate to academic achievement; the school will work closely with multi-agency teams to ensure the well-being of all students are fully considered. As a result of this collaborative working students may have personalised therapy, speech and language or behaviour plans. This personalised approach will provide appropriate interventions are made available to ensure that our students can access learning and maximise their achievements.

**The School’s Approach to Assessment of our students:**

At Stepping Stones School we have an agreed approach to the assessment of our students; such assessment measures take into account the nature of each student’s special needs and can be seen in the separately detailed Young Foundations Assessment policy.

Assessment includes the use of high quality formative assessment which is outlined within our assessment policy. The main source of support is from the wide range of professionals who work in Young Foundations including our Clinicians who help inform our delivery and practice if required. External support could be from the Educational Psychologist, Physiotherapist or associated Health Professionals. The school is able to make a referral for additional input/assessment if required. Ongoing assessment allows us to identify needs and implement external assessment if required.

**Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP):**

Some students within the school will have an EHCP which names our school as the educational provider. The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the outcomes determined within the plan and assess the student’s progress during the course of the year within these. Formal reviews of the EHC plan will take place at maximum annually. If a student’s SEN changes, the local authority will be informed and will arrange to hold a review as soon as possible to ensure that provision specified in the EHC plan is appropriate. For further information on EHCPs please see the Local Authority’s Local Offer.

**Access to our alternative National Curriculum:**

At Stepping Stones School we follow an alternative National Curriculum; we ensure our teachers set high expectations for every student and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment. This curriculum will be enhanced through our Stepping Stones School curriculum which is designed to offer further be-spoke educational opportunities which aim to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers will use appropriate assessment measures to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Lessons are planned and outcomes for learning are fully differentiated to support learning needs. At Stepping Stones School we make every effort to make adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment to meet the needs of individual students.

**Preparing for adulthood (Transition):**

At Stepping Stones School we help our students to start planning for their future adult life as early as possible, and by Year 9 at the latest. We implement a ‘Pathway plan’ with the student in their first few months of placement with us, with the aim to support our students to go on to achieve the best possible outcomes in employment, independent living and participating in society. This could include, for example:

* Including preparation for adulthood in the planning meetings with students and parents at an early stage (and particularly from Year 9)
* Ensuring that career advice and information provides high aspirations and a wide range of options for students with SEN; and
* Helping students and parents understand and explore how the support they receive in school will change as they move into different settings, and what support they are likely to need to achieve their ambitions.
* Design our curriculum offer to support the further development of students aspirations

We have specific duties to prepare young people with EHC Plans for the transition to adulthood, as set out in the SEN Code of Practice. The review of an EHC Plan in Year 9 is supported by Young Foundations EHC planning tool. It will allow time for the commissioning of any necessary provision and support to take place.

School planning will build on action that has already been agreed with the student and will inform decisions about the next stage of education if/as appropriate.

**How will Stepping Stones School ‘Governance measures’ evaluate the success of the education which is provided at the school?**

Directors within Young Foundations are integral to the quality Assurance of the quality of educational provision at Stepping Stones School. A number of performance measures are set including:

* Monthly Governance meetings to include Quality Reports to be scrutinised by all interested parties.
* Participation in QA of Teaching & Learning including joint Observations
* Meetings with the SIA on school Governance
* Analysis of reports, admissions, attendance, progress data
* Analysis of Regulatory visits
* Inspection- Ofsted
* Parent View – Comments, Compliments, Concerns and Complaints feedback
* Stakeholder feedback

The Directors publish information on our school website about the implementation of this SEN policy for our students. The information published will be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

**Arrangements made by the Stepping Stones School Directors relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of students with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school.**

Any complaints from parents of students with special education needs is outlined on our school web page.

**Arrangements for Professional Development for all staff at Stepping Stones School in relation to special educational needs.**

**Training (Continuous Professional Development):**

Staff need specific knowledge and positive attitudes to work effectively and successfully with children and young people with special educational needs. There is a commitment to training/CPD in Young Foundations and the sharing of information and expertise within Stepping Stones School.

The professional development of all staff involved in meeting the needs of our students is on-going and continuous. A wide range of training opportunities is provided which includes;

* Person Centred Planning
* Restraint Training (Foundation for Safer Care)
* Mental Health Training
* Prevent Training
* First Aid
* Food Hygiene Level 2
* Anxiety Awareness
* Fire Marshalling
* Anti-Ligature Training
* Safeguarding training including whistleblowing
* Be-spoke CPD relating to key targets identified within the School Development Plan
* Skill sharing and the demonstration of teaching techniques and strategies organised within the school
* Be-spoke coaching/mentoring by the leadership team and SIA following lesson observations/learning walks (development of teacher/learning assistant/HLTA standards)
* Teaching and Learning Lead Mentor Scheme
* Professional development sessions and one-off sessions on relevant subjects provided by SEN specialists
* Attendance at courses offered by external providers, accredited and non-accredited, as part of the school’s Performance Management process

**The role played by the parents of students with special educational needs.**

All parents and carers of students at Stepping Stones School are considered to be our partners. They will 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 Student’s education
* have knowledge of their Student’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 educational provision.
* have informed opportunities to discuss educational progress and aspirational targets for their child at termly progress meeting with e class teacher/team

To make communications effective staff at Stepping Stones School will:

* acknowledge and draw on parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child
* focus on the Student’s strengths as well as areas of additional need
* recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their feelings
* ensure that parents understand procedures, are aware of how to access support in preparing their contributions, and are given documents to be discussed well before meetings
* respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints
* respect the differing needs parents themselves may have, such as a disability, or communication and linguistic barriers
* recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings

**Students:**

The Student’s views will always be ascertained at Stepping Stones School, but this may not always be through direct discussion with the pupil as both the student’s communication difficulties and their complex needs may determine this. However, adjustments such as pictorial, 1:1 work, Visual Adjustments and Student Voice will be opportunities to discuss thoughts and feelings.

Students will be enabled/supported to participate in the decision-making processes in the life of the school through class discussion and other opportunities at a time they are conducive to do so. This may be achieved via differentiated communicative support including signing, symbols, objects of reference and other visual tools. Through our robust assessment measures we always work with students to share assessment outcomes, using key vocabulary associated with the learning outcome being addressed.

Students are encouraged (where appropriate) to record their progress and often that of others through the structured teaching/learning opportunities presented in their class timetables – e.g. – achievement of EHC targets, progress charts, bespoke recording, case studies, MY DAY outcomes and visual presentations.

Through the EHCP process students are encouraged to share their hopes, dreams and aspirations, staff work closely with students to elicit views and work alongside parents to ensure such views are outlined accordingly. Stepping Stones School recognises that students need to be part of the process, to know that they are listened to and that their views are valued, this is what we call the ‘Student Voice’.

Any links with other schools/FE colleges are planned through the curriculum or school action plan to further promote the school aim of inclusive learning.

This process is achieved through the EHCP process where detailed discussion is held and outcomes determined which assist the successful transition to post school providers.

At Stepping Stones School we look to develop links with other educational providers, and community facilities; such links are offered through the structured timetables determined for each class.

The school additionally links with child health services, social services and educational welfare services and any voluntary organisations which work on behalf of students with special educational needs. These are determined with parents/carers and are often identified through outcomes determined through the EHCP process.

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