

SEND & Admissions Policy

Approved by:

Full Governing Board

Date: October 2023

Next review due by:

October 2024

Parayhouse School is a Non-Maintained Special School for students aged 7 to 16 years of age, who have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

By way of reference, the following sets out the relevant official guidance on drafting this policy:

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 Years (2015) states the following as a definition of Special Educational Need (SEN):

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 they:

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

Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated April 2020), students identified as having a special educational need are considered within one or more of the following broad categories of need:

- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties;
- Communication and Interaction Needs;
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

All learners at Parayhouse have learning difficulties with SLCN identified as a significant part of their SEN profile. Students may also be identified as having associated Social, Emotion and Mental Health Difficulties and Sensory and/or Physical Needs; however these are secondary to their Cognition and Learning Needs and SLCN.

The school fully subscribes to the principles underlying the SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated April 2020). The Code of Practice sets out the principles that should be followed by all professionals working with studentren and young people who have SEN or disabilities.

The principles of the code of practice include:

- Taking into account the views of studentren, young people and their families;
- Enabling studentren, young people and their parents to participate in decision making;
- Collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support;
- Identifying the needs of studentren and young people;
- Making high quality provision to meet the needs of studentren and young people;
- Focusing on removing barriers to learning;
- Helping studentren and young people to prepare for adulthood.

Referrals by Local Authorities and Privately Funded Students

Usually, students who attend Parayhouse School have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and are placed and funded by their Local Authority (LA). However, as a Non-Maintained Special School, Parayhouse is able to accept privately funded students who do not have a Statement or EHCP. An example of this would be a family relocating to London from overseas for a specified amount of time and who are not permanent residents.

Students can be referred by their Local Authority or by parents initially and can join at any stage of their school career between Year 3 and 11.

In order to be placed at Parayhouse, the school will determine if a student's needs can be best met within the school under the following criteria:

- A learning and SLCN need that will respond to and develop within a differentiated curriculum;
- A willingness to be part of a peer group with different levels of SEN;
- A level of behaviour that will respond to support, but does not hinder the learning of self or others and is compatible with health and safety within the school;
- A level of social and emotional development that will respond to appropriate support that the school can provide;
- A level of developmental, sensory or physical impairment that can be supported within the school.
- There is a place available within the existing group structure at the time for when entry is sought

Whilst we do have a small number of students who are identified as being on the Autistic Spectrum, we are unable to meet the needs of students who have a primary diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. We are also unable to meet the needs of students with behavioural challenges that are so significant that they require 1-2-1 support and/or may present a danger to themselves and others in our specific school environment.

The school cannot accept admissions for students who require full time 1-2-1 support for any reason and will only ask for 1-2-1 support from the LA in exceptional and short term circumstances.

The school is unfortunately unable to meet the needs of students who are not toilet trained as we do not have the requisite changing and showering facilities. The school does not have the necessary equipment or space to support students with severe physical disabilities and our ability to meet the needs of these students would need to be discussed with families when a consultation was received.

On occasion, the school will offer an assessment place for a set period of time. Typically, this would be the case where for any reason the school has been unable to complete a full pre-admission observation process or where, after observations, there is still some uncertainty as to the suitability of the placement.

The assessment place will be reviewed at the end of the first term and either terminated, extended or made into a permanent placement. The assessment period is an opportunity for parents and the school to assess the suitability of the placement and identify if Parayhouse is the right setting to meet a student's specific needs.

If it is decided at the end of the first term that the placement cannot be continued, we will make all possible efforts to support a family, alongside the local authority, to identify alternative suitable educational establishments and allow the student to remain at our school while this is sought. However, on occasion it may be necessary to terminate the assessment place with immediate effect for example where the student presents a significant risk to themselves or others.

Offering assessment places is not something that happens frequently, and is not the school's preferred option on admission.

Identification and Assessment of Students

When we are contacted by a LA, parent/carer or other professional as to the suitability of a student's placement at Parayhouse, we consider the needs of the student and our ability to meet those needs.

For those parents/carers and professionals who are unfamiliar with the school, they are invited to attend a 'Visitor's Morning'. This is an opportunity to look around the school, meet with the Headteacher and some of the students, and to have any questions answered.

If parents would like the school to consider a placement for their student, the school will ask to see any relevant paperwork relating to the student e.g recent EHCP, Educational Psychology reports, SaLT reports.

If we believe that we may be able to meet the student's needs, our Speech and Language Therapists and/or Teachers may initially make arrangements to visit the student in their current school. This process allows teaching and therapy staff to make an evaluation as to the suitability of any potential placement.

If, following this visit, the school still feels they may be able to meet the student's needs we will arrange for the student to attend the school for a minimum of one day observation (without their parents).

An information sheet about the observation day is given to parents prior to their student's appointment. Parents are asked to complete a contact form and also a consent form allowing Speech and Language therapists to obtain a communication sample video. This video will not go ahead if a signed form is not received.

The time in school is structured to be a fairly informal and enjoyable event for the student, in order to help him/her relax and perform well.

The student is observed in a range of situations so that we can assess social development, self-help skills, behavioural responses, physical abilities, pre-academic and academic functioning.

The student may be withdrawn from the relevant peer group and be observed in a distraction-free setting for informal assessment work by a Speech and Language Therapist [SLT] and if relevant the Occupational Therapist [OT].

The Speech and Language Therapists' role on Observation Days is to gain an overall view of the student's functional speech, language and communication abilities. When a prospective student is already in therapy, then the assessment is subjective as required in professional practice. Previous therapy reports or assessments are considered and the current therapist may be contacted for background information.

Parayhouse School is a non-maintained provision, therefore places are offered at the discretion of the Headteacher and Senior Leaders. It is a criterion for entry that students be adequately transported to and from school. In the case of a student being funded by their local authority, then Parayhouse School will ask that the LA make the necessary arrangements for this. In special circumstances, notably where an agreement has been reached between LA and the family, the transport costs and arrangements may be the responsibility of the parents.

If it is felt that the school could meet the needs of the student, a decision concerning suitability is then communicated to the parents/carers, and where appropriate to the student's LA. The parents/carers and LA then decide whether they will name Parayhouse School as the student's school.

The Educational Provision at Parayhouse School

Our Mission:

Parayhouse School is committed to ensuring that each and every student reaches their full potential.

This is delivered in three essential ways:

- Firstly, we provide a safe and nurturing environment where students feel secure and are confident and eager to learn;
- Secondly, we create a highly specialized and individualized curriculum with speech and language at its heart;
- Thirdly, we establish close working relationships between parents, carers, students and staff to support learning and behaviour at home as well as at school.

Class Groups and Approach to Support and Curriculum

When a student starts at Parayhouse we will have already discussed and identified the level of support required and the class group most appropriate for the student's level of need. We have three broad ability groups of students spread between five classes. The classes are Willow, Ash, Elm, Lime and Oak. These classes are broadly grouped by students' academic ability and learning need, their level of language use and understanding, plus their level of social and emotional development.

Throughout their time at the school, a student's placement within a particular class is monitored and assessed, ensuring that each student's needs are being met. Where it is identified that a student would be better placed in another class, arrangements can be made at any point in the year to facilitate a move.

Through standardised and non-standardised assessment, we identify the level of need and learning opportunities that each student requires. Students then follow an adapted curriculum suited to their individual learning needs and objectives.

Reviewing Students' Needs

Annual Reviews

Students' progress and the continued suitability of the placement are reviewed at annual reviews each year. Parents, Teachers, Therapists and the Local Authority receive an invitation to the Review in advance to ensure all relevant parties are given notice to attend.

Where a parent/carer fails to attend the Review and there is no LA representative present, we will contact them by phone to establish if they are happy for the Review to continue without them, or if they would like the meeting to be rescheduled.

If a LA representative fails to attend the Review, the meeting will continue without them.

Those present at the meeting will consider the following:

- Do the contents of the Statement/EHCP remain appropriate?
- Are any amendments to the Statement or EHCP required?
- Should the LA continue to maintain the Statement/EHCP, or should the LA be recommended to cease it?
- The current targets will be discussed and any changes agreed;
- New targets set must meet the broad outcomes agreed in the EHCP;

- At the meeting, notes will be kept which detail persons present, their views about what is working well or not so well and a list of agreed actions.

A review meeting may make recommendations on any of the matters listed above.

Amendments to the EHCP are likely to be recommended if:

- Significant new evidence has emerged which is not recorded on the Statement/EHCP;
- Significant outcomes recorded on the EHCP are no longer present;
- The provision should be amended to meet the student's changing needs and the targets specified at the review meeting, or
- The student should change educational setting, either at point of transfer between phases, or when a student's needs would be more appropriately met in a different placement.
- The meeting will consider all contributions including written contributions and any verbal contributions by those attending.

Action Following the Annual Review meeting:

Detailed notes are taken at the Review, typed up and form the Review Report. Action points are collated and distributed along with copies of the report which support the Review. These actions are implemented, monitored and reviewed by those involved on a regular basis.

Additional Reporting to Parents

In addition to the Annual Review, there are two parents' evenings during the year. The first, the 'New Start Meeting' takes place at the beginning of the Autumn Term. This is the opportunity for parents/carers, teachers and therapist to discuss how targets from the previous Annual Review will be met. Additional targets can also be discussed and set at this time. This meeting also provides the opportunity to discuss how a new student to the school or class is settling in.

The second meeting takes place in the second half of the Spring Term and is the opportunity to discuss students' progress and to review and adjust targets.

A summative Annual Report is posted to parents in June, commenting on progress made across the Parayhouse Curriculum.

Working in Partnership with Parents

At Parayhouse we understand the importance of family involvement and support for the development and education of our students. Our Family Support Manager [FSM] forms connections with parents to promote family learning activities, and to inform parents about their student's progress, achievements and well-being.

The FSM also helps parents to understand and implement strategies and programmes at home that are used successfully in the classroom as well as those designed by our Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapist. All new students receive a home visit from our FSM and parents may request additional visits at any time. Parents are also encouraged to attend the termly assemblies on a Friday afternoon, where they will have the opportunity to meet the families of their student's classmates, and meet with the FSM should they wish to.

The FSM works closely with the Headteacher and Senior Staff to facilitate the best possible Transition Experience for our Y11 students and their families.

We further promote working in partnership with parents by:

- Encouraging all parents to be actively involved in their student's education;
- Listening to parents' views and any concerns that they may have;
- Having an open door policy for parents to visit the school at any point in the day;
- By providing termly meetings with staff to discuss progress, either at school or over the phone;
- Inviting parents to all performances, celebrations, fundraising events, learning days and termly assemblies;
- Producing a weekly newsletter that is sent to all parents
- Producing a modular newsletter that is sent to all parents
- Communicating with parents either by home-school book, telephone or email if there are any queries or problems;
- Providing the opportunity for parents to talk or meet with any member of staff involved in their student's education;
- Having a joint approach to working through problems at either home or school or both;
- Holding parent coffee mornings throughout the year;
- Holding parent workshops through the year and sending out parent press and online safety newsletters plus a schedule of 'How To' videos

- Inviting all potential parents to visit the school and for our staff to visit a potential student at their current school;
- Offering the opportunity for our FSM to meet with parents and students at their home.

Working with Professionals and Other Agencies

Professionals employed directly by the school

Our Speech and Language Therapists work collaboratively with our Teachers and Support Staff, to meet the Learning and SLCN of our students. They spend the majority of their time in the classroom, delivering intervention programmes to individuals and groups of students, and deliver specific SLC focussed sessions across the school. Where it is needed, the SaLTs deliver one-to-one focused therapy outside of the classroom. This is usually to target specific difficulties with speech.

We have a part-time Occupational Therapist and Occupational Therapy Assistant who provide individual and group support for specific students. They provide advice and training on matters such as tactile defensiveness, sensory seeking, sensory diets, gross and fine motor development, including handwriting and self-help skills.

Our Family Support Manager (FSM) is an integral part of the team supporting parental contact, and ongoing home school interactions. The FSM liaises closely with the Senior Leadership Team and is actively involved in supporting parents and students, through transition into and out of Parayhouse School.

Outside agencies

Multi agency work is important and we work in collaboration with all agencies, especially those concerned with education, health, welfare and social development to support the needs of our students. We have good working relationships with the following agencies both from health service providers and Local Authorities. The list is not exhaustive and we may work with other agencies where this is appropriate to meet the needs of our students.

Social Services;

Learning Disabilities Team;

CAMHS;

Educational Psychologists;

Visually Impaired Service;

Hearing Impaired Service;

Psychologists;

Additional Therapists and Teachers working for the family.

Medical Needs

We will accommodate all reasonable requests to administer medication, including controlled drugs, once specific staff members have been given all necessary information and training.

We have a small number of students with significant medical needs, which require safety-critical monitoring and may require skilled intervention in the event of an emergency. These include diabetes, epilepsy and dysphagia. Training is provided for staff, so that there is always at least two people with the necessary knowledge and skills with the relevant class or group. This training is usually provided by medical personnel involved with the student, as well as medical bodies such as 'Diabetes UK' or 'Prader-Willi Syndrome UK etc. All medical needs are overseen by the school's Medical Lead.

First Aid training is provided to specific members of staff to ensure that there is always at least one member of staff on duty with first aid knowledge and skills.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school monitors closely the progress and wellbeing of all students and the Leadership Team and Governors monitor the quality of teaching, curriculum and student progress. We evaluate progress and outcomes against individual targets, assessment statements and the impact of our interventions and support for students. Students' annual reviews ensure that the suitability of the placement is continually reviewed. The evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all students.