

## **SEND & Admissions Policy**

**Approved by:**

Full Governing Board

**Date:** March 2026

**Next review due by:**

March 2027

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 (2014) 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 Sept 2024), 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. The Code of Practice sets out the principles that should be followed by all professionals working with students and young people who have SEN or disabilities.

The principles of the code of practice include:

- Taking into account the views of students, young people and their families;

- Enabling students, 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 students and young people;
- Making high quality provision to meet the needs of students and young people;
- Focusing on removing barriers to learning;
- Helping students 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 an 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.

Placements sought and confirmed by the local authority will be funded by them. The school is allocated a set number of Education and Skills Funding Agency placements each academic year based on CENSUS , Local Authorities are responsible for Element 3 funding (top up funding). Parayhouse will advise the Local Authority if the placement will be eligible for an ESFA funded place, if this is not the case the Local Authority should assume responsibility for the full fees.

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 long term 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 at least on a pathway to being 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.

### **Assessment Placements**

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. This is also likely to be the case for any student starting their placement mid-year.

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.

The school will initially ask to see any relevant paperwork relating to the student e.g recent EHCP, Educational Psychology reports, SaLT reports.

If, after reading initial consultation papers, we believe that we may be able to meet a student's needs, our Senior leaders, Speech and Language Therapists and/or Teachers may 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. Visiting a student in their current setting allows us to observe them in an environment where they feel most comfortable and speak to the professional there regarding the students academic, social and behavioural levels.

For those parents/carers and professionals who are unfamiliar with the school, they are invited to visit for a tour either before or after the visit to their child's school (depending on which they prefer). 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, following these visits, the school still feels they may be able to meet the student's needs and parents would like to proceed, we will arrange for the student to attend the school for a minimum of one day's 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 them 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.

The length/number of observation days is determined based on the specific needs of the students and how well they may tolerate visits to an unfamiliar setting. They are flexible and additional days can be planned if further investigation is needed.

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. Where the Section F of the EHCP conflicts with our school curriculum, structure and therapy model, we will meet with parents to discuss this and inform them and the LA of how this differs ensuring all parties are fully aware of the Parayhouse offering. The parents/carers and LA then decide whether they will name Parayhouse School as the student's school. Once a place is accepted we will begin the induction and onboarding process.

### **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 five classes which 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 assessment and monitoring, 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. The school operates two distinct curriculum pathways (semi-formal and formal) to suit the varied needs of our students.

## **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 EHCP remain appropriate?
- Are any amendments to the EHCP required?
- Should the LA continue to maintain the 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 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.

#### **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.