



Oaklands School

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

Date reviewed: October 2025

Date of next review: October 2026

Rationale

Oaklands is a special school providing for students with:

- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- Autism alongside severe learning difficulties

Students with SLD may also have additional needs including:

- Physical disabilities
- Medical conditions
- Visual and/or hearing impairments
- Challenging behaviour
- Language and communication difficulties

All students at Oaklands School have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which describes their needs and the provision required to meet them.

Aims

- To ensure accurate identification and assessment of students' special educational needs.
- To ensure that each student's individual needs are met.

Objectives

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all students.
- To create a school community in which each individual is valued and enabled to play a full part in school life.
- To enable each student to maximise their potential for learning by using a range of teaching strategies suited to their learning style.
- To teach communication skills using strategies advised by the pupil's speech and language therapist.

- To meet students' physical and sensory needs so that they can access learning.
- To ensure all students have access to a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum suited to their individual needs, preparing them for adulthood.
- To provide a safe, stimulating, challenging, supportive and positive learning environment.
- To encourage parents to support the work of the school and apply school strategies at home through homeworking activities.
- To facilitate the development of self-advocacy.
- To ensure equal opportunities are promoted for all.

Definitions

- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD): Children with SLD find it difficult to understand, learn and remember new skills. They experience problems with both skill acquisition and applying skills to new situations.
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD): Students with a severe learning disability combined with additional disabilities that significantly affect communication and independence. They may also have severe difficulties with vision, hearing, speech and mobility.
- Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that significantly affects verbal and non-verbal communication, social interaction, and flexibility of thought. Pupils with autism may also experience sensory processing differences that impact how they perceive and respond to their environment.

Responsibilities

- Headteacher – Ensures all students' needs are met; liaises with and reports to the Local Authority (LA); ensures sufficient services are commissioned to meet needs.
- Heads of Schools and Assistant Heads – Monitor classroom practice to ensure it meets identified student needs.
- Assistant Heads – Review EHCPs annually and ensure provisions are available in school.
- Class Teachers – Carry out continuous assessment to build an in-depth understanding of individual learning needs; plan activities accordingly; embed specialist strategies and therapy programmes; deploy support staff effectively.
- Therapists – Deliver EHCP provisions; provide support and guidance to staff; supply therapy programmes where appropriate.
- Support Staff – Support students in line with their plans and programmes under the direction of the teacher.

Procedures and Practice

Individual Student Information

- All students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Where necessary, students will also have:
 - A Positive Handling Plan
 - An Individual Risk Assessment
 - A Medical Care Plan
 - A Moving and Handling Plan

Meeting Individual Therapy Needs

- All pupils have an EHCP outlining their needs and required provision.
- Therapy provision is delivered by the school's Therapy Team, consisting of Occupational Therapists (OT), Speech and Language Therapists (SaLT), Therapy Assistants, and a Therapy Administrator. Physiotherapy is commissioned by the LA and provided by the NHS.
- The Therapy Team is coordinated by the Therapy Team Lead and the Head of High Oaks.
- All OTs and SaLTs are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- Therapy is delivered in line with the Oaklands School Wave Model, described in the Policy for Provision of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy (see Appendix A).
- Universal input and strategies are delivered daily by teachers and support staff under the guidance of class therapists. Individual sessions are carried out where specified in EHCPs.
- Therapy records (notes, assessments, evidence) are stored securely in WriteUpp. Programmes, reports and resources are stored on the school network (U:Drive).

Admissions

Admissions involve close liaison between parents, the LA, the school and other professionals. Appropriateness of placement is determined collaboratively. (See the School Admissions Policy).

Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to meet individual needs, providing entitlement, progression and achievement. Delivery is guided by the school's Planning Cycle (see Curriculum Planning, Assessment and Recording Policy).

Principles of Teaching and Learning

- Learning progresses at a different pace and often non-hierarchically.

- Expectations are realistic yet challenging.
- Specialist approaches include Intensive Interaction, visual strategies, Makaton, multi-sensory approaches, structured independent work, group learning, and practical rather than written tasks.
- A Total Communication Approach is used, encouraging students to use a range of communication methods (speech, high-tech AAC, low-tech AAC) depending on ability and preference.

Staff Training

- Staff receive appropriate training to meet student needs.
- Training is provided through INSET days, external courses, twilight sessions, and departmental meetings.

Additional Support & Resources

- Connexions Careers Service: Personal advisor supports students in Years 13 and 14 with college applications.
- Healthcare: The school healthcare assistant provides medical care for students on the CCG nursing caseload. The School Nursing Team supports students on the CCN caseload.
- Therapies: A music therapist is employed two days per week.
- Specialist Staff: The school employs manual handling assessors, Team Teach trainers, Makaton tutors, and job coaches.
- External Support: Peripatetic teachers for sensory impairments visit regularly. The school receives educational psychology support twice per term.

Health and Safety

- Students with medical, physical, or behavioural needs have risk assessments to ensure their safety in all contexts.
- All school and community-based activities are risk assessed.
- Staff receive training in managing student programmes safely.

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

Annual Reviews

- EHCPs are legal documents reviewed annually.
- Progress is monitored and reported for Annual Reviews.
- Parents, carers, professionals and, where appropriate, students attend the review.
- Short-term outcomes are set at reviews, aligned with long-term EHCP outcomes. These form the basis of IEPs, which are reviewed termly.

Cross-References

This policy should be read alongside:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- Assessment Policy

Signed by Chair of Committee:

Print Name:

Date:

Appendix A:
Wave Model Diagram

