

Aurora Vincent House School SEND policy and information report

Policy Reference:	A140-VHS
Version Number:	4
Applies to:	Schools
Associated documents:	Accessibility plan Promoting Positive Behaviour policy Equality information and objectives
Approved by:	The Headteacher and Operations Director
Implementation date:	February 2026
Next review due by:	February 2027
<i>This policy has been reviewed to ensure it promotes safeguarding and does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups</i>	

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1. Aims

1.1 Policy aims

Our SEN policy and information report aims to:

- Set out how we will support and make provision for students with special educational needs (SEN)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for students with SEN

We can offer spaces for students aged 5-19 but presently are just offering spaces for the 11-16 range. Key stage 3 work more on a primary school model – especially in years 7 and 8. Our class sizes are small with just 8 students maximum.

A therapy team led by a Clinical Psychologist focuses upon an integrated therapeutic model where all staff work in a transdisciplinary way to ensure an overall environment that support neurodivergent learners. Great emphasis is placed on an all staff approach to supporting the school community no matter what their role. This is so that we engender a greater feeling of security and consistency for our young people.

We are reflective of our evidence based approaches and aim to include research in to our impact both short and long term wherever possible in order to inform our future practice and to support the neurodivergent community both locally and nationally.

Communication is central to our approaches working with families and external agencies. We encourage frequent feedback and discussion with all stakeholders.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for students with SEN and disabilities
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff working at Aurora Vincent House School.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The SENDCO

The SENDCO is Abbie Simmonds.

They will:

- Work with the headteacher and SLT to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school

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- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEN policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Organise and chair EHCP reviews using a person-centred approach, ensuring full involvement of the parent and young person: considering their views, wishes and aspirations when making decisions.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that students with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure students and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all students with SEN up to date

4.2 The Operations Director will:

Help to raise awareness of SEN issues at governance meetings

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school

4.3 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and quality assurance team to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision within the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability

4.4 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every student in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants, HLTAs or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCO to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEN policy

5. Definitions

ADHD: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

ARFID: Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder

ASC: Autism Spectrum Condition

EHCP: Education, Health and Care Plan

IEP: Individual Education Plan

OCD: Obsessive compulsive disorder

PACE: Playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy

SEMH: social, emotional and mental health

SLT: Senior Leadership Team led by the Headteacher

Thrive®: an approach to support healthy, social, emotional and cognitive development

6. SEN Information Report

6.1 The kinds of SEN that are provided for:

Vincent House School is a specialist school for young people with a diagnosis of autism. We understand delays to medical services and will consider applications from young people who are on the pathway for an autism diagnosis from CAMHS or an approved Right to Choose provider.

All students at Vincent House hold a current EHCP.

Vincent House School supports young people with emotional and mental health needs such as anxiety disorders, OCD and ARFID.

Our school supports young people who may struggle to access mainstream schools due to their autism, sensory or mental health difficulties not being met in a mainstream environment. They may also have specific learning differences such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.

6.2 Consulting and involving students and parents

Vincent House School believes in developing strong relationships with families and students based on mutual trust and a shared aim of supporting our young people towards an independent, healthy and happy future.

We aim to engage our entire community in decisions around school development and events, such as uniform, logo, activities and special events. By giving parents and students a genuine voice in the development and growth of the school, we aim to create as inclusive and neuro-affirmative environment as possible by appreciating and valuing the input of the young people themselves and their families. We do not believe in “doing to” but working with our community who may have had difficult or traumatic experiences with professionals in the past.

Our transition process is detailed and personalised. When a parent or young person is interested in a particular subject area, or as specific approaches that regulate and support we will endeavour to include this as part of our Assess Plan Do Review process.

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We will have discussions with the student and their parents when transitioning to the school. We will consult the student and parents to provide an individual provision plan (IPP) that is reviewed at regular intervals. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and areas of need.
- We take into account the parents' concerns
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- A clear plan of support is in place to meet the young person's EHCP outcomes
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the student's record as part of the transition plan.

We will share the IPPs and seek teacher, parent and student input.

We will formally notify parents and local Authority Key workers of when the EHCP is to be reviewed.

6.3 Assessing and reviewing students' progress towards outcomes

We embed the graduated approach throughout our work with young people.

The SENCO will develop IEPs, provision and targets based on the EHCP and reviewed by the Deputy Head to ensure curriculum coverage and support is appropriate. Plans will include meaningful targets, outcomes and strategies for all areas of need relevant to the child.

IEPs will be shared with the tutor. The tutor will hold day-to-day responsibility for communicating interventions, managing communication with parents and overseeing the wellbeing and progress of the individual pupil.

All staff who work with the student will be made aware of their needs through the IEP and regular child-focussed CPD/meetings.

Evidence against students' individual targets will be recorded on Earwig. Summative reviews will be recorded on Engage as required by the assessment policy. All staff members are responsible for recording evidence.

The SENCO will meet with tutors and clinical team on a half termly basis (or a shorter time if required) to review interventions and specific therapies.

The Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher will meet with the SENCO and tutor on a termly basis to review a students' overall progress. This will be more regular if required due to a crisis or difficulty. Evidence from Earwig, Engage, pupil and parent voice and staff feedback will be sought in advance of these meetings.

The SENCO, with support from the HT/DHT as required, will run annual reviews on a yearly basis which will collate evidence and reviews from the previous year and look ahead to setting targets for the next year.

6.4 Supporting students moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

Preparation for adulthood and supporting students through transition are core elements of our curriculum and whole school approach. We work closely with the young person, family

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and clinical team to ensure transitions are prepared for therapeutically, enabling the young person to make positive transitions when the time comes.

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the student is on roll with, and/or as part of a consultation process and in line with GDPR requirements. We will agree with parents and students which information will be shared and ensure we have this in writing.

We will transition the students into a placement with as much preparation and support as possible, sharing strategies and approaches that have been effective for the young person so far. We aim to support the success of the placement through developing good lines of communication, planned and well managed support and transitions to reduce anxiety.

Transition will be supported within or school's multidisciplinary team.

6.5 Our approach to teaching students with SEN

See Curriculum Policy and Curriculum Overview for more details.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class and in their subject area. The SENCO is responsible for the timetabling and delivery of interventions to support education, and this will be delegated to relevant members of staff as appropriate.

Progress is not considered to be solely an academic objective. We acknowledge and highly value the importance of holistic progress. This may include supporting young people to progress in:

- Attendance and engagement with learning
- Self-esteem, including academic self-image
- Communication skills, including the ability to express their needs and wants
- Relationship skills, including friendships
- Therapeutic targets based on specific mental health or other difficulties
- Progression in a specific subject area
- Achievement of a qualification

High quality teaching, a carefully designed low arousal environment and a trauma-informed approach to all interactions and engagement with students makes Vincent House School a more accessible provision for autistic and anxious young people than traditional, mainstream secondary schools.

We offer a specialist curriculum, that provides flexibility for individuals to engage in subjects that they are passionate or interested in, alongside building in time for interventions and therapeutic activities.

We will also provide the following interventions:

- SaLT session and support and training
- O.T observations, assessments and interventions
- Literacy / dyslexia support
- Numeracy / dyscalculia support
- Clinical psychology interventions in a group or 1:1

- Therapeutic interventions as indicated on students EHCP

6.6 Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

Vincent House School follows a neuro-informed and neuro-affirmative approach. Our staff will be working in an evidence-based and research-based approach, ensuring that our young people's neurodivergence is accepted, celebrated and they are able to access their learning without feeling that they need to be 'fixed' or 'changed' to meet the demands of neurotypical expectations.

We make the following adaptations to ensure all students' needs are met:

- Creating a calm and low-arousal environment
- Reducing the demand of frequent lesson transitions
- Reducing the demand of uniform
- Provision of sensory equipment in lessons such as wobble stools, standing desks and alternative writing equipment, adapted uniform policy
- Scaffolding our curriculum to ensure all students are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing with student needs in mind,
- Using recommended literacy and accessibility aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Adapting and scaffolding our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.
- Building links with local organisations to provide enrichment opportunities
- Adapting the curriculum offer to provide enrichment and engagement sessions, focussed on special interests where possible

6.7 Additional support for learning

Vincent House School offers class sizes of no more than 8 pupils, with a teacher and two teaching assistants available. Our teaching assistant support learning through offering individual and small group support, as well as supporting young people in accessing learning during lesson time.

Vincent House School has HLTAs available to support specialist learning and interventions.

Interventions will be bespoke for the individual and may include 1:1 or group activities.

6.8 Expertise and training of staff

The recruitment and induction process rigorously reinforces our core beliefs of being neuro-informed and neuro-affirmative in our practice.

Rob Walton (HT) is a highly experienced Headteacher with nearly 30 years in education and special school leadership. He also has experience in mental health and paediatric medicine. Currently he is studying for a diploma in Autism and Mental Health.

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Abbie Simmonds (DHT) holds the NASENC qualification from Chichester University. She has over 16 years' experience in education, with the majority of that time spent in specialist provisions. She holds an NPQSL and is studying for a CPT3A in access arrangement assessment.

Our teaching team comprise of specialist and primary trained teachers, who all receive training from Aurora, as well as bespoke training from our clinical team, leadership team and invited guests.

All staff receive training in:

- Neurodiversity
- Neuro-affirmative approaches
- Trauma informed practice
- The Thrive Approach
- Autism and co-occurring conditions
- Literacy development and dyslexia
- Team Teach de-escalation and positive handling Level 2
- Health and Safety
- Basic first aid & use of an AED
- Speech and Language – DLD and other common language conditions
- Sensory needs and awareness
- ARFID and eating disorders
- Mental health difficulties including OCD, anxiety disorders and depression

We have a clinical team led by Warren Matofsky, a highly experienced and qualified clinical psychologist who also lectures for the University of Surrey.

6.9 Securing equipment and facilities

Students requiring equipment are identified at transition and this is reviewed regularly. Requests for resources are processed as required.

6.10 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

Vincent House School is a specialist education provision. The effectiveness of the whole provision is evaluated regularly by the Aurora Group team, the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership team, with support from the Clinical team as relevant.

The effectiveness of SEN specific intervention and approaches are monitored and managed by the SENCO, with support from SLT.

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEN by:

- Reviewing students' individual progress towards their EHCP outcomes each term on their Individual Provision Plan (IPP)
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after 6-8 weeks, or longer as required by clinical or specialist direction
- Engaging with regular opportunities for student voice, either through questionnaires, conversations or other communication approaches
- Monitoring by the SENCO

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- Using evidence from EHCP reviews to inform EHCP outcomes tracker.
- Holding person-centred annual reviews for students with EHC plans

Our school believes in a person-centred approach, whilst holding in mind that this may require scaffolding and support for some families and young people to achieve.

The young person's voice is always held at the heart of our EHCP reviews, whether they can physically attend a review or whether they provide information in another format. The EHCP review outcomes will be discussed and shared with the young person, so they are able to take ownership over their documentation as they grow into adulthood.

6.11 Enabling students with SEN to engage in activities available to those in the school who do not have SEN

Aurora Vincent House School is a specialist school where every activity is made available and adapted to individual needs. Our neuro-informed and neuro-affirmative approaches extends to all activities, including trips and visits.

We actively encourage our staff teams to take class groups off-site, into towns and their local community to engage and communicate with people in shops, services and businesses, in line with clinical guidance and support.

The accessibility plan is available on request from the school office, it outlines how we aim to improve the physical environment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services we provide and how we are developing the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

6.12 Support for improving emotional and social development

Emotional and Social development underpins all the work we do at Vincent House School.

Vincent House School has adopted the Thrive approach® to supporting students with their social and emotional needs and healthy cognitive growth through a developmental and trauma-sensitive approach. This underpins the holistic curriculum that supports the needs of our students. We believe in the importance of student-staff relationships and lived-experience shows us of the importance of PACE and the Thrive approach® to working with the students. Whilst the content of lessons is important, our relationships with the students determine the effectiveness of the lessons.

Support for students emotional and social development include:

- Extended tutor times (1hr a day) throughout their education
- Supported social activities during lunch and break times
- Clinically informed approaches for individual students.
- Enrichment and Engagement activities designed to promote social engagement and emotional regulation skills through adult-supported enjoyable activities
- Links with social care, medical teams and external specialists as required.

We acknowledge that the young people in our care may have particular difficulty in understanding and working through emotional and social issues. As a school, we appreciate that difficult moments are also opportunities for growth and improving understanding. As a

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result we encourage staff to engage and support young people in the moment, working with young people to unpick tricky situations, circumstances and experiences.

6.13 Working with other agencies

Aurora Vincent House aims to engage with a wide range of agencies including health and social care, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, to meet students' individual needs and to support their families.

We aim to work with local SENDIAS and SEN parent groups, specialist and mainstream schools and local business to support their understanding of accessibility for students of our cohort.

6.14 Complaints about SEN provision.

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the Head Teacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

The parents of students with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

6.15 Contact details of support services for parents of students with SEN

Our local authority's SENDIAS is:

[West Sussex SENDIAS Service](#)

We also work with the below organisations to ensure parents have access to all the information they need to support their child:

[West Sussex Parent Carer Forum | Information | Training](#)

[Home – Aspens Services](#)

6.16 Contact details for raising concerns

If you have any concerns about SEN provision, please contact the SENCO in the first instance or the Deputy Headteacher if required.

If you would like to raise a formal complaint about SEN provision, please see the Complaints Policy.

6.17 The local authority local offer

Our local authority's local offer is published here:

[Local Offer - West Sussex County Council](#)

7. Monitoring arrangements

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This policy and information report will be reviewed by the SENDCO and **every year**. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.