**Bluebell Park**

**SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY**

Bluebell Park’s Special Needs policy relates directly to the Governing Bodies General Statement of Principle and aims and objectives of the School and reflects the requirements of the Knowsley Strategy for inclusion. These principles are:-

To provide a positive learning environment through the establishment of a warm, secure, caring atmosphere.

To maximise the potential of each child and meet their needs irrespective of disability, by the provision of a broad, balanced, relevant and suitably differentiated curriculum (including, where possible, the National Curriculum) which motivates, stimulates and excites.

To promote through the range of opportunities provided, the maximum degree of independent living.

To recognise effort, not merely attainment.

To work closely with parents/carers thereby establishing a successful partnership between home and school.

To promote interaction with the wide community and to foster the understanding and acceptance of disabled people in that community.

To seek opportunities, and where appropriate provide the necessary support, for pupils whose development can be further enhanced by attending alternative educational establishments.

The translation of the above and what follows into practice by the multi-disciplinary team and parents working collaboratively will ensure that children attending Bluebell Park have their individual special needs met within the constraints imposed by the availability of resources.

**Special Educational Needs Co-ordination**

The Headteacher will take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for the pupils attending Bluebell Park, recognising that many functions will be delegated via line management to the Senior Managers and subsequently to Class Teachers, the majority of whom also act as curriculum leaders and consequently take responsibility for ensuring maximum curriculum access to all the pupils attending the school.

**Admission Arrangements**

Other than in very exceptional circumstances pupils are admitted to the School with an Education Health Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs, following a full assessment/re-assessment under the terms of the SEN Code of Practice, 2015. SEN: A guide for parents and carers, 2009 is also available to support parents in this process.

Pupils are usually admitted into Bluebell Park’s EYFS provision or the appropriate key stage. Bluebell Park has the necessary flexibility to accept pupils at any age within the range of its age provision (3-19).

Following a request by the Local Authority, for a place in the School, a parental visit with the child will be arranged should the School feel that the needs of the pupils can be met.

Assuming all parties (parents, school and LA) are in agreement regarding admission, Bluebell Park will arrange to attend any review meetings that may be taking place, where appropriate a home visit will be completed by the relevant class teacher, supported if necessary by a member of the nursing staff gathering further necessary information and arrange an admission date and plan transition. Transition plans will be unique to each pupil depending on the needs of the pupil.

The documentation resulting from the home visit will be circulated to the school office, medical staff and therapy staff, along with the documentation covering the request for admission from the LA in line with our information sharing protocol.

Parents/Carers will need to apply for transport provision via Knowsley LA , an application form can be obtained from the school office.

**Educational Provision**

a) The Range of Special Needs

Bluebell Park is designated by Knowsley Local Authority to meet the needs of children and young people between the ages of 3 -19 with physical and learning disabilities including those with Autistic Spectrum Condition. It is also necessary to recognise that in many instances pupils admitted to the school have complex difficulties which vary in degree along a continuum from those associated with a lack of experiences usually available to non-disabled children, to those of a profound nature.

It also meets the needs of children who in addition to the difficulties previously described, have sensory disabilities which vary in degree and which may occur singly or in combination.

It is increasingly evident that children with difficulties of a complex/profound nature are accounting for a growing proportion of the pupils attending Bluebell Park.

b) Facilities for Pupils

In order to meet individual pupil needs, Bluebell Park provides small group teaching situations across the school : -

Lower School for pupils aged 3-11 (EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2)

Upper School for those aged 11-16. (Key Stage 3 and 4)

Post 16 for those aged 16-19.

Within these departments children are grouped according to need, each teaching group having available to it qualified teaching assistants to further enhance learning opportunities.

Operating throughout Bluebell Park is a team composed of medical, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech therapy professionals who work closely with teachers and teaching assistants in meeting individual needs.

Access to all learning areas of the building is available to non-ambulant pupils. In addition access to working situations is facilitated by adapted and adjustable furniture.

It is the policy of Bluebell Park to identify, seek and provide within the available resources opportunities which will enhance and promote the learning process. Consequently a wide range of specialised and non specialised information technology equipment is available along with a hydrotherapy pool, swimming pool, soft play and sensory environment, rebound therapy room, performing arts studio, sports hall, DT Room, primary and secondary Food Technology Rooms and specialised purpose built inclusive play park and outdoor areas.

Purposely adapted minibuses are used to promote independent life skills according to individual needs and cohorts of pupils.

**Resource Allocation**

Although Bluebell Park offers children a wide range of specialised and non-specialised equipment to enable and extend the learning process, its most valued and valuable resources are the highly skilled and experienced professionals working in the building.

Bluebell Park recognises that all children have access to staff and equipment as specified in the Statement/ EHCP to maximise their development. However, by definition the response to need, will vary in time and extent between children or groups, according to the needs presented and the Statemented needs of the individual or outcomes of the EHCP.

As previously described, pupils are grouped according to the criteria of both need and age within the three hubs. This permits the wide variety of educational and care needs to be met by targeting higher levels of support to those groups and individuals demonstrating the greatest levels of need.

Medical and para-medical services, although available to all children are more effectively used following individual assessments through needs based groupings and inputs can often be delivered on a group based approach e.g. social skills, physiotherapy, speech therapy.

**Identification of Need and Review**

Initial identification of a child presenting difficulties prior to admission is through the Knowsley Inclusion team.

In some circumstances but in particular to those pupils with an acquired brain injury, after admission to Bluebell Park, those concerned with meeting the educational, medical and para-medical needs of the child will make further assessments to enable a clearer picture of the child's needs to emerge and the responses needed to meet those needs. This more precise information may lead to a modification of the original Statement/EHCP, this being done through updated advice being supplied to the Inclusion Officer.

Once a Statement/EHCP has been agreed between the parents and the Local Authority, a review of that Statement/EHCP is legally required annually. If deemed appropriate by Bluebell Park or on request from parents or relevant professionals in consultation with the school, more regular reviews may take place. For children attending the under the age of five, six monthly reviews are held.

Reviews are regarded as a mechanism by which the school, with parents -

a) monitors the progress which has been made in meeting objectives set at the previous review meeting,

b) determines future objectives for the child.

c) considers the view regarding the child's progress from parents and professionals and

d) attempts to resolve issues pertinent to the child's functioning both in School and at home.

At all times parents are actively encouraged to contribute to review meetings along with all involved professionals. To enable due consideration to be made of the relevant issues all appropriate documentation will be made available to parents at least two weeks prior to the review meeting.

An important time for our pupils is transition to post education provision and adulthood and it is important that the full involvement of parents is sought and it is at this stage where the Social Care Team will become more actively involved. As the majority of pupils remain at school until 19 it is recognised that planning for transition at 14 is inappropriate. Consequently the more substantive Transition Plan will be formulated by the LA using the school's advice and that of parents and other professionals to make more detailed plans from the period beyond statutory school leaving age. In the drawing up of the Transition Plan School will:-

a) convene the review meeting.

b) ensure that providers, other than the school are aware of the annual review and the procedures to be followed.

c) always invite the Social Care Team to attend the review.

To facilitate this we employ an independent chair person who uses a person centred review format to ensure that the process enables a range of options to be considered.

Ongoing identification and assessment resulting from termly determined programmes for every pupil (Individual Educational Programmes) jointly arrived at between teachers, carers and the medical/para-medical staff is the mechanism by which the school modifies its priorities, approaches and delivery to individual children, thereby ensuring that presenting and changing needs are met.

**Access to the Curriculum**

Irrespective of need and disability, all children have entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which requires continuity and progression. For all children this includes the National Curriculum and this is implemented either in totality or selectively according to the child's priority needs determined by the staff working with parents. The relevant decisions surrounding priority needs are made at review meetings and conclusions resulting from those meeting are forwarded to the Inclusion Officer who may amend the Statement/EHCP to take account of modifications.

Due to their learning difficulties many children will follow the National Curriculum at levels outside those normally associated with their chronological ages, and a majority of children will, again through specifications/outcomes outlined in their Statements/EHCP, have assessment with respect to the National Curriculum confined to Bluebell Park’s own internal mechanisms.

Wherever appropriate, children are taught on an individual or small group basis to enable differentiation by input, task, resources, response and outcome to take place and follow the determined individual education programme.

Individual or group activities either within or beyond the confines of the School are provided to further the learning/socialisation process and to permit staff to deliver enhanced curricular opportunities.

Within School, break times, lunchtimes and assemblies, enable pupils, irrespective of need to value each other and benefit from each others contributions in social settings.

**Educational Provision & the Role of the Governing Body**

The Governors regularly receive reports from the Headteacher regarding the effectiveness of Bluebell Park in meeting pupil needs. The Governing body seeks the views of parents through the parent/carer survey.

To more effectively enable the Governors to discharge their range of responsibilities, Resource and Stakeholder Sub Committees have been established which report back to the Full Governing Body for decisions to receive further consideration. If necessary an Appeals Committee can also be convened to consider issues related to any grievance or disciplinary matters affecting staff.

At meetings, the Governors review curriculum provision and the resources necessary to deliver a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. It seeks to identify areas where further opportunities may be provided in the light of changing needs and national/local priorities. All Governors have the responsibility to ensure that Bluebell Park, within available resources, meets the needs of all pupils within its remit.

As a consequence of Bluebell Park’s commitment to the principle of home-school partnership, concerns which parents may have regarding the provisions made for individual children are normally dealt with at the point of need and are not normally raised within the forum of a Governors meeting. Concerns or complaints, if not resolved at the point of delivery or by the Headteacher regarding curriculum issues are dealt with by the Governors Appeals Committee. Such issues are covered in detail in the Complaints Policy.

General issues can be raised through parental representation on the Governing Body, although it is not the Governors policy to discuss individual children in this forum. When the former does take place the Governors will take seriously any representations made and attempt to resolve such issues whether or not a resolution is passed.

**Staff Professional Development**

Bluebell Park is committed through its ‘Staff Development Policy’ to ensure that it provides for the continuing development of professional knowledge and skills of staff. In-service training and the day to day management of the INSET budget is the responsibility of the Staff Professional Development Officer liaising directly with the Headteacher and Senior Management Team.

Regular opportunities will be sought, in the line with the Schools Improvement Plan to enable staff to further develop the necessary subject knowledge and organisational strategies to actively respond to the changing curricular and other needs of the children and to be fully conversant with national developments.

The Governors receive an annual report on the schools INSET record provided by the Headteacher.

**Support Services**

As a consequence of the wide ranging needs existent in the children attending Bluebell Park, considerable access to support agencies is necessary and is actively encouraged.

a) Schools Psychological Service - provides an assessment function for individual pupils and advice to staff and parents in meeting individual needs. Referral to CAMHS can be made if its deemed appropriate.

b) Sensory Impaired Service - offers advice and support for children, parents and staff in meeting the needs of pupils who have hearing and visual problems, which in some instances occur in combination.

c) Portage Team- assistance is available to support parents whose children have physical and associated learning difficulties prior to entering Bluebell Park. *Please note this support terminates when admission to Bluebell Park is completed.*

d) The Local Authority - directly provides curriculum support and advice through the designated Education Change Partner.

e) Social Services Department - works closely with Bluebell Park, its pupils and their parents to facilitate maximum access to the services offered by that Department and undertakes assessments under the terms of the Disabled Persons Act to determine the levels of provision which the Department can make available. Where a pupil has an assigned social worker, the Disability Team provide support to the school, children and their parents/carers with respite facilities for many being a significant feature.

f) Positive Behaviour Support Service (PBSS) – If it is felt appropriate a referral can be made for support for parents whose children have complex behaviour needs. Whilst undertaking work with pupils in school PBSS will work closely with school and parents/carers and any other relevant parties.

g) Others Fostering, adoption and respite providers, will where appropriate, continue to play a crucial role in meeting needs. Bluebell Park will involve these agencies at all times in consultation and meetings which directly impact upon children in their care.

**The Role of Parents**

Bluebell Park, as stated earlier, is committed to the principle of partnership between home and school. It is the firm belief that our pupils’ needs are best met where successful continuity exists between Bluebell Park and the child's parents/carers.

We encourage parents to visit the building by prior arrangement to discuss any aspect of the provision for their child. Two open sessions will be organised during the school year in addition to the Annual Review meeting which parents are cordially invited to attend to discuss their child's progress.

Bluebell Park will, where appropriate, through a home/school book provides parents with a daily account of their child's functioning and activities and encourage parents to report back any significant or relevant information.

**Links with Other Schools, Centres and Colleges of Further Education**

To ensure the maximisation of educational and social opportunities, Bluebell Park maintains active and developing integration opportunities for children.. We support the Centres for Learning in meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities in an advisory capacity offering support when required.

Where practical and appropriate children may transfer from the roll of Bluebell Park to their neighbourhood schools, and attend on a full time basis.

Bluebell Park is able to offer extended and enhanced curricular opportunities by working with closely with the Bracknell Centre and other external providers.

**Links with Other Special Schools**

A close working relationship exists between Bluebell Park and other schools for children with special needs in Knowsley and Merseyside. One of the prime functions of these links will be to more effectively meet the needs of the pupils by collaborative curricular and in-service activities, and the identification of good practices within Knowsley and in the wider sphere. Bluebell Park is a member of the Merseyside SLD network, linking us with schools with similar cohort of pupils with similar needs across greater Merseyside.

**Links with Others**

Bluebell Park will continue to seek opportunities to build on the already substantial links with the local community and agencies/establishments that exist both locally and beyond. It is committed to the principle that it is a community resource which seeks to make its facilities available, where possible, to others who may benefit from those facilities.

Bluebell Park will continue to offer opportunities for training and placements to those seeking careers or training in meeting special educational needs. Established links already exist with local colleges and training organisations. We function as a premier partnership with Edge Hill University and is a member of the Federation of Leaders in Special Education.

**Links with Post School Providers**

Through the well established Annual Review procedure, input and advice to young people and their parents/carers is freely available either prior to statutory school leaving age or thereafter from Knowsley Social Care Team working in conjunction with Bluebell Park. At all times the views of the young person and their parents/carers are paramount, and are expressed through Person centred Transition Planning.

**Links with Health Services**

Bluebell Park will seek to maximise the effectiveness of these providers of services in the meeting of pupil needs by involving them as fully as possible in collaborative approaches and future developments thereby adding to that which it already brings to its pupils and their parents.

**5 Boroughs NHS partnership**

Pupils at Bluebell Park have access to on-site School Nurses and staff from Physio, Occupational and Speech Therapy Services, all provided by 5 Boroughs NHS partnership. In addition regular medicals are held for particular pupils by the visiting School Medical Officer and when necessary Consultant Paediatrician. Orthotic clinics are also held in situ.

All medical and para-medical staff work actively with classroom staff to ensure pupil needs are best met and by contributing to the Children’s Individual Action Plan.

Michelle Slater / Jamie Campbell

May 2016

Approved by the Governing Body May 2016