



EDUCATION MY LIFE MATTERS

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) POLICY

Approved by:	Independent Executive Board	Date: May 2024
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Next review due by:	April 2025	

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Review date: **April 2025**

Introduction

As an Independent School offering Alternative Provision support, we believe that all learners have the right to achieve their full social and academic potential. The SEND policy for Education My Life Matters seeks to promote this by providing equality of access and opportunities in all areas of the Provision. Learners are taught in an environment where they are valued and are treated with respect. At EMLM, we believe that all learners have learning **differences** rather than learning difficulties and it is our guiding principle to identify and assess these **differences**. Whilst this does not mean treating all learners equally; it means treating all learners as individuals and ensuring they have the required provision to achieve the highest possible standard and to ensure all learners make good progress.

This policy outlines how we make sure that all our learners with SEND needs are met. We have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2014, when carrying out our duties towards our learners with SEND and follow the principles outlined therein.

1 Principles

- Inclusive practice for our learners with SEND is good practice for all
- All learners are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum which is differentiated to meet their individual abilities and needs
- All learners should be supported to reach their full potential as we have high expectations for everyone
- Learners with SEND have a unique view of their own needs and this should be central to the decision-making processes regarding their provision, where possible
- Parents and/or Carers know the learner best and in partnership with EMLM should plan and review the support in place for them

2 Aims

The aims of our SEND policy and practice in this provision are:

- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a SEND by taking action to increase access to the curriculum and **to** develop in confidence and self-esteem
- To ensure that learners with SEND engage and feel included in the available activities
- To reduce barriers to progress by embedding the principles in the National Curriculum Inclusion statement (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>). To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for learners for whom this is required, that is *“additional to and different from”* that provided within the differentiated curriculum, to better respond to the broad areas of need:
 - Communication and Interaction
 - Cognition and Learning
 - Social, Emotional and Mental Health
 - Sensory and physical
- To listen to and include the views of the parents, carers and learners, in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet the learner’s need, through well-targeted Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- To support learners with medical conditions to be fully included in all activities offered by the school, in consultation with health and social care professionals in order to meet the medical needs of **the** learner

- To work in a cooperative and through a productive partnership with the referring school, the Local Authority including the Virtual School and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-agency approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners

This policy will contribute to achieving these aims by ensuring that the provision for our learners with SEND is a part of the continuous cycle of assessment and review. We aim to provide outstanding provision as exemplified by the following features.

3 Characteristics and ethos of the provision:

The ethos of EMLM for learners with SEN focuses on their individual needs, interests and their achievement of realistic and meaningful outcomes. The setting and the environment are conducive to meeting the needs of a wide range of SEND needs. The site used by EMLM is spacious and quiet with lots of natural light. The timetable is bespoke and designed to cater for learners that require rest and movement breaks. The group size is small and 1:1 is frequently used.

Our staff are qualified and highly experienced at working with learners with a range of Special Educational Needs including Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

3 (i) The composition of the school and Alternative Provision offers:

The provision offered by EMLM fits appropriately with, and supports, the educational entitlement of all learners; we reflect on the learning capacity and capabilities of the individual incorporating each learner's strengths and interests.

3 (ii) The nature and content of the school:

EMLM aims to provide a bespoke combination of curriculum subjects and functional skills; vocational learning including personal and social development. The combination of core subject teaching, science and computing, coupled with PSHE, RSHE education as well as our bespoke career development programme, provides a broad provision for learners with Special Educational Needs that aims to ensure a learner's individual needs can be met on site.

3 (iii) Relationships, joint working and information exchange:

EMLM maintains close links with referring schools, specialist settings and PRUs to ensure that learners receive the required support. From the detailed referral form and initial school visits to the close liaison with the feeder provision as well as families, is seen as being of paramount importance.

We provide weekly attendance, behaviour and attainment reports that are sent to the referring school and/or provision and careful joint planning is undertaken for reintegration back into the school or to another provider.

EMLM is committed to working closely with the families of learners with SEND. Parents, guardians and carers responsible for the learners who attend the provision are respected and valued as partners and are communicated and consulted with on a regular basis. They are fully involved in their child's education, any attendance issues and behaviour management.

EMLM has very strong links with the Local Authority via the Virtual School and other professionals, where appropriate. This ensures close monitoring and evaluation of the placement and for the progress of the learner, informing next steps.

4 Identifying Special Educational Needs

What are special educational needs (SEN) or a disability?

EMLM bases its provision on the definition for SEN and for disability from the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and [this](#) states:

SEN: A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age. Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

Disability: Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

4 (i) Identification of special educational needs (SEND)

As an Independent School offering Alternative Provision, EMLM is in itself ‘additional to or different to’ a mainstream setting, however not all learners will be automatically regarded as having SEN/D. EMLM recognises that every behaviour is a form of communication, and we aim to investigate further any possible additional needs.

We recognise the importance of early identification and aim to identify learner’s special needs as early as possible. The referral form from the learner’s usual placement allows for significant detail to be shared about the assessments and results of diagnostic tools that have been used to identify needs.

A learner will be added to the SEND register if:

- They have an identified SEND need via their mainstream and/or most recent placement
- They have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- If the SENCO or other link professional has identified the learner as having additional needs.

EMLM recognises that the factors below could be of importance and require further investigation to identify SEND or need for additional support:

English as an Additional Language (EAL):

The [SEN Code of Practice](#) is clear about our responsibilities in the identification and supporting of learners with EAL who may also have SEN:

‘Schools should look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person’s performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.’

It is essential not to make assumptions about EAL learners when working with them:

- Learners at the earliest stages of English language acquisition must not be treated as if they have differences in learning
- Where academic progress is slow, we must not assume that it is as a result of their additional language needs

The Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties ([PATOSS](#)) sets out in a document ‘The Procedure’, a five-step approach to ‘assist teachers in the process of discerning the real needs of EAL pupils causing concern.’

Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant

Pupil premium funding is allocated to eligible schools based on the number of:

- pupils who are recorded as eligible for free school meals, or have been recorded as eligible in the past 6 years (referred to as Ever 6 FSM)
- children previously looked after by a local authority or other state care, including children adopted from state care or equivalent from outside England and Wales

The barriers to learning for our learners are developmental as well as a result of socioeconomic background. As the majority of our learners in receipt of Pupil Premium funding have social, emotional, mental health (SEMH) learning needs, this area is a focus for targeted interventions.

In addition to the above:

- Disability, where reasonable adjustment under the Disability Equality legislation can enable a child to make expected progress
- Recognised SEMH Needs
- Attendance
- Health and welfare
- Being a Child that is 'Looked After' (CLA)
- Being a child of Service personnel

The skills and levels of attainment of all learners are assessed on entry to the provision, building on information from their feeder setting. The purpose of identification is to work out what action EMLM needs to take. As part of this process the needs of the learner as a whole are considered, not just the special educational needs of the learner.

4 (ii) SEND Support

All staff are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the learners in the provision. EMLM offers a wide variety of pastoral support for learners. These include:

- An evaluated PHSE curriculum that aims to provide learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to enhance their emotional and social knowledge and well-being
- 1:1 mentoring support
- Individual and small group, evidence-led interventions. This aims to improve interaction skills, emotional resilience and well-being

Due to the nature of the school, it may be considered that all learners receive intervention that is '*additional or different*' to that provided for their mainstream peers, however EMLM recognises that not all learners referred to the provision will have identified or latent special educational needs. Therefore, the level of interventions for learners with special educational needs is perhaps best understood using **the** graduated approach and the four-part cycle of 'assess-plan-do-review' as recommended in the SEND Code of Practice.

Support available for our learners includes:

- All learners to have access to a mentor
- All learners will have a Risk Assessment Plan based upon the referral information received before arrival
- All learners have tutorials which focus on personal social health and emotional literacy.
- Baseline assessments including English, Maths, Reading Age and Science
- SEMH assessment
- All learners, including those with SEND are encouraged to attend

- Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place with the aim of enabling all children to participate in all activities
- EMLM aims to ensure it has sufficient staff expertise to ensure that no learner with SEND is excluded from any school provided activity
- Social Skills training in small groups
- Speech and Language groups (to be advised by Speech and Language Therapist as required)
- Sensory and holistic approach
- The allocation of a specialist mentor to learners who are vulnerable as/where necessary

Highly personalised provision for individual learners – these learners will have the most complex needs and are likely to be the subject of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The nature of this provision will be detailed in the EHCP and will vary from learner to learner. For these learners a specialist mentor will be provided. Additionally, these learners would have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and individualised timetable, where required.

Learners with additional needs will be provided with reasonable adjustments (such as access to a Calm Room, coloured overlay sheets for dyslexia, coloured paper for visually impaired, sloped board, 1:1 support) to overcome any disadvantage they may experience in the provision and increase their access to the taught curriculum.

The quality of classroom teaching provided to learners with SEND is monitored through several processes that includes:

- Ongoing assessment of progress made by learners with SEND
- Work sampling and scrutiny of planning to ensure effective matching of work to learner's needs
- Teacher meetings with the Leadership Team to provide advice and guidance on meeting the needs of learners with SEND
- Learner and parents' feedback on the quality and effectiveness of interventions provided
- Attendance and behaviour records.

4 (iii) Action relating to SEND support/interventions follow an Assess, Plan, Do and Review approach:

Whole provision planning takes place, with responsibility shared between all staff including the Teaching staff, Learning Mentors and Leadership Team and ensuring that the learner and their family are at the heart of the process.

Learners without an EHCP receiving SEND support that is '*additional and different*' from that provided within the differentiated curriculum are included on the SEN Profile.

1. Assess: It is expected that the referring setting will be able to provide information relating to attainment and current functioning. Baseline assessments are undertaken, and this allows for clear progress to be tracked.

If expected progress is not being made, additional information is being drawn from family members or carers and external services and assessment against SEN criteria is being made.

2. Plan: Teachers and mentors plan using baseline results and information about learner's prior attainment, differentiating tasks to ensure progress for every learner in the provision.

When a learner has been identified as having SEND, the curriculum and the learning environment will be further adapted by EMLM staff to reduce barriers to learning and enable them to access the

curriculum. These adaptations will include strategies, interventions, support and outcomes as suggested by the SENCo and/or external specialists and then agreed with the teaching staff, SENCo, parent/carer and the learner. These adaptations will be recorded in Learner's SEND Plan.

3. Do: SEND support will be recorded in the SEND plan that will identify a clear set of expected outcomes, which will include SEND outcomes, relevant academic and developmental targets. The teacher will be responsible for working with the learner daily and assessing the impact of the plan. This will be recorded and reviewed.

SEND support can take the form of teacher planning or intervention, additional in-class support, Access Arrangements for assessments, mentoring or an intervention group to address a particular area of need. All SEN support interventions are time limited.

4. Review: Progress towards attainment outcomes is tracked and reviewed weekly by staff and half-termly with the parents and the learner. If learners fail to make expected progress the decision may be made to undertake further informal/formal assessment of their learning and effectiveness of the interventions offered.

The efficiency of SEN support and/or interventions is monitored on a termly basis by the [Head of School](#). The assessment, along with the views of [the](#) learner and their family will be used to review the overall impact of support.

When expected progress is made and learners are achieving in line with their ability, the SEN support may no longer be required or may decrease gradually, depending on needs and intervention provided. If progress rates are inadequate despite the delivery of high-quality targeted interventions, advice will be sought from external agencies regarding strategies to best meet the specific needs of a learner.

[The Team Around the School approach \(TAS\) - obtaining support from the Early help Coordinator with the Team Around School approach. TAS brings a team of professionals together to discuss and devise a SMART plan and offer early help. The TAS approach can also support with concerns around behaviour, school attendance, emotional health and wellbeing.](#)

[Early help - signposts and refers families with consent to the Early help services, which offers the family support in a variety of ways \(this includes professional support, family intervention , family therapy, parenting programmes and signposting to other services\).](#)

[Team Around the Family \(TAF\) - facilitates meetings so that the learner and their needs are managed in a holistic way, supporting not only them as an individual but the family as a whole.](#)

This will only be undertaken after consultation with the parent or carer and may include a referral to:

- Speech and Language Service
- Educational Psychologist
- Specialists in other settings e.g. other Alternative Provisions, Specialist Schools.
- ASD and Sensory Support Team
- Hearing Impairment [Team](#)
- Visual Impairment [Team](#)
- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Educational Welfare Officer
- Social Services including the Youth Offending Team
- Youth Services
- School Nurse

5 Working with Learners and Families

Admissions

- EMLM is a temporary placement to which learners are referred from a range of settings, mainstream school, virtual school, other alternative provision
- EMLM ensures that learners with SEND are admitted with other learners in accordance with its Admissions Policy
- For learners with an EHCP, parents or carers have the right to request a particular setting and the local authority must comply with that preference and name the provision in the EHC plan unless:

it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

Before making the decision to name EMLM in a learner's EHCP, the local authority will send the **Head of School** a copy of the EHCP who will then consider their comments very carefully before a final decision on placement is made. In addition, the local authority must also seek the agreement of EMLM where the draft EHCP sets out any provision to be delivered on their premises that have been secured through a direct payment (personal budget).

6 Support for parents and carers:

If parents and carers wish to discuss their child's special educational needs or are unhappy about any issues regarding EMLM's response to meeting these needs, they are encouraged to contact the following:

- The learner's teacher or mentor
- The **Head of School**

7 (i) Transition Arrangements

A detailed referral form will be provided on entry to ensure as much information as possible is relayed to EMLM from the feeder school.

An Education Planning Meeting with the school and parents will be arranged, if required, SEND plan and IEP will be drawn up to support the learner's individual needs.

Parents and learners will be given guided visits to the provision before a decision is made for them to attend.

7 (ii) Transition to the next Stage, preparation for adulthood and independent living after School:

In most cases, due to the nature of the provision, the learner will return to the referring school or move onto another provider. Again, close liaison with the new placement involving parents or carers and learners will be undertaken. In cases where learners do reach transition, careful planning and liaison with Key Stage 5 provision will take place. Learners also receive independent advice from Lewisham Work Experience team.

8 Supporting Learners at the School with Medical Needs

- Learners with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Individual Health Care Plan, compiled by the Leadership Team, sometimes in partnership with the referring school's School Nurse, parents and if appropriate, the learner themselves
- Staff who volunteer to administer and supervise medications, will complete formal training and be verified by a trained specialist as being competent
- All medicine administration procedures adhere to the LA policy and Department of Education (DfE) guidelines included within Supporting Learners at school with medical conditions (DfE) 2014

9 Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND Provision

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND provision is integral to the Assess, Plan, Do and Review Model. It forms an essential part of whole School monitoring, evaluation and review. This includes half-termly progress reviews, observations of teaching and learning, learning walks, learner work scrutiny and sampling of parent/carer, learner and staff views.

10 Training

The training needs of EMLM is regularly reviewed and planned for so that all staff are well equipped to meet the needs of the learners with the most common barriers to learning. There will be opportunities for all staff to receive training on:

- How to support learners with speech, language and communication needs
- How to support learners with ASD and/or sensory needs
- How to support learners with SpLD, including those with dyslexic or dyspraxia needs
- How to support learners with SEMH

Additionally, specialist training is provided in the following ways:

- The Leadership Team provides generic awareness SEN training for all staff regarding a range of needs
- EMLM buys in the services of other professional such as Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy as needed to provide both advice as well as assessment as and where necessary
- EMLM utilise the services of the LA's Visual and Hearing Impairment and ASD Outreach Services as required
- EMLM will send staff on training courses outside of the provision as deemed appropriate

11 Roles and Responsibilities

The **Head of School**, Teachers, Mentors and other staff are all responsible for ensuring that all learners' needs are met, and they make the best possible progress. They make sure that the IEB are kept up to date about all issues in the school relating to SEND.

For learners

To be fully involved in their learning at all stages, by participating in the setting of targets for improvement, and engaging positively with the systems in place for self-evaluation and review.

For Parents and Carers

To be actively involved in working with EMLM to support their child's academic and social progress, through consistent and regular communication and full involvement in the systems in place for self-evaluation and review.

For Teachers

- To plan teaching effectively, allowing for the diverse learning needs of each learner. To enable access to the National Curriculum at a level that challenges all learners to reach their full potential
- To ensure that IEPs and other information is used as part of the lesson planning process
- To work in collaboration with the SENDCo to develop resources and ensure effective use of support, including partnership teaching

For the Leadership Team

- To identify learners' needs accurately and ensure support is targeted efficiently and effectively
- To maintain and update the Provision's SEND profile
- To work with subject teachers to develop resources and/or deliver CPD to support learning so that learners are achieving in line with national expectations and in line with their ability
- To establish systems that ensure statutory requirements are met for SEND under the 2014 Code of Practice
- To deploy staff and resources according to the needs of the learners
- To write a termly report to the IEB on progress and developments
- To agree a programme of professional development with the [Head of School](#) and that will ensure all staff have the knowledge skills and understanding to support those learners with SEND
- To ensure statutory requirements are met for SEND by the subject areas across the school
- To establish a programme of professional development to raise staff awareness and their capacity to make improvements to planning, teaching and learning at all levels so that the school will ensure a quality education for learners of all abilities

For Mentors

- To work with teachers and support learners so that learners with SEND are able to access the curriculum and make expected or good or outstanding progress
- To empower learners to develop effective strategies that enable them to become independent learners
- To implement specialist support strategies within the classroom

For the IEB

- To review and agree the SEND policy annually
- To ensure that EMLM has appropriate provision and has made necessary adaptations to meet the needs of all learners, including those identified as SEND

12 Complaints procedures

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 parents and carers may seek advice on resolving disagreements with the LA and/or the Independent Mediation Service. The school will make available on request further information about this process.

13 London Borough of Lewisham's Local Offer

- 10 Special Educational Needs Policy: [April 2024](#)
Review date: [April 2025](#)

The purpose of the local offer is to inform parents and carers and young people of how to access services available to them. Lewisham's Local Offer can be accessed via website:

www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk

14 Legislation and guidance relevant to this policy

This Policy includes the processes identified to respond to learners with SEN/D and also meets the statutory reporting regulations of the SEN Information Report. It complies with Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014. It is written with reference to inclusive education under:

Articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (February 2013; updated June 2018)

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (September 2014; updated April 2020)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (linked to clause 64)

Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3

Education Act 2011

Admission Arrangements (as on website)

Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014; updated 2017)

Alternative Provision for Young People with Special Educational Needs LGA Research Programme 2012.

The National Curriculum in England framework document (September 2013; updated December 2014)

Teachers Standards (2012)

SEN policies for London Borough of Lewisham

Related school policies

Equality Policy

Accessibility Plan

Health and Safety Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

[Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy](#)