

Special Educational Needs and accessibility policy.

Introduction and Context:

Granta is an all age 3 to 19 years school for pupils with complex learning disabilities. We were specially built for this purpose in 2006 and are a single storey building with wide corridors. We were built to accommodate up to 164 pupils (under the building regulations then in place) and currently have funded spaces of 130 with 141 currently on roll plus two students on frequent inclusion. We aim to balance class sizes with room capacity and suitability whilst making best possible availability of our resources. We recognise the national and local pressure on High Needs provision.

Our curriculum and class groupings are arranged on a Key Stage basis with a separate 6th form and a specialist department for pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities. Our KS1 and Early years department are closely linked.

All our pupils have a learning disability and many have associated sensory, physical, health or emotional needs. Approximately 50% of our pupil population have a diagnosis of autism. Other medical diagnosis include but are not exclusive to Cerebral palsy, visual and hearing impairments, Down syndrome, Fragile x, Prada Willi and a growing number of rare chromosomal disorders in which the diagnosis does not necessarily indicate a clear prognosis. Some of our pupils have life limiting conditions.

The Headteacher acts as SENCO with assistance from the leadership team.

Our mission statement is :

Education, Progress, Confidence and Joy

Our Mission:

- Care and advocacy
- High quality learning experiences
- Whole family and social network support
- Progress confirmed by evidence based reporting
- Exploit technical advances and our environment to benefit pupils
- All leavers well prepared to enter their next phase

Granta Community Values

- Respect
- Individuality and inclusion
- Compassion, happiness and caring
- Self development

- Striving for Excellence

Four Broad areas of Need:

The Code of Practice 0 – 25 identifies four broad areas of need. Most pupils at Granta have needs in more than one area. They are:

Communication And Interaction

Most pupils have an identified social communication need or expressive language need. We support children to develop communication systems including use of symbols, sign language, IT packages, objects of reference and room cues and intensive interaction.

Cognition and learning

All pupils at Granta have a learning disability. We support pupils to make good or better progress from their personal baselines. This requires several assessment packages to track and for many pupils, their learning and progress is uneven across subjects and areas of development. We make arrangements for our pupils to access examinations within the permitted reasonable adjustments for that awarding body.

Social Emotional and Mental Health

Many pupils at Granta have social and emotional needs associated with their special educational needs. As a result of our recent inclusion and accessibility plans and developments, a very few pupils have this as their main area of current need but pupils here do not have it as their only area of need. We support pupils to achieve positive self image, behaviours and engagement through individual behaviour plans, sensitive staff, timetable adjustments and for a few pupils a specialist “wellbeing” approach to the curriculum.

Sensory and/ or physical needs

A significant group of pupils at Granta have physical disabilities and complex health needs. Pupils with physical disabilities are facilitated to access any key stage class within the school. For a few pupils who also have profound and multiple learning disabilities and/ or multi sensory impairment (visual impairment/ hearing impairment) our specialist department, led by our qualified MSI teacher, is preferential. We moved out preferred sign system to Sign Supported English a few years ago and are now a registered training provider for British sign language via ‘Signature.’ We have a number of training packages and processes to enable us to meet the varied health needs of our pupils and which are outlined in “supporting children with medical conditions” and in Education and Health Care plans.

Pupil Attendance

Pupil attendance is scrutinised informally and formally each half term by the head teacher who uses the data to identify vulnerable pupils, families who may benefit from additional support and patterns and trends that could indicate further school development priorities. A very few pupils may be on reduced timetables in line with their physical or mental health needs and/ or because they are our very youngest pupils. Whole school data is impacted by the number of medical reviews and bouts of ill health that a significant number of pupils experience. We support the best possible attendance by undertaking additional training to meet complex health needs.

Policy and document links

This policy links to our equalities policy, behaviour policy, physical intervention and safe touch policies, safeguarding policy, anti-bullying policy, exams policy and access arrangements and school development planning document. It links also to key guiding documentation such as Keeping children safe in education/ working together to safeguard children/ supporting children with medical conditions and the SEND code of practice. All pupil data is handled in accordance with GDPR (general data protection regulations) and we have a privacy notice on our website and available from the school office on request.

Working with partner agencies

We recognise that colleagues from all main partner agencies within the public service sector are challenged in terms of capacity and internal organisational reviews. We strive to work within those parameters to the ultimate benefit for pupils and families whilst remaining mindful of our core purpose and efficiency. We facilitate social worker keeping in touch visits at lunch times, working day meetings as required by pupil need, working day training arrangements, multi-disciplinary meetings at senior level, individual family meetings and reviews including for example, annual reviews, CIN meetings, complex health meetings and looked after children meetings. If we are unable to attend meetings due to class responsibilities then we will submit a short report.

The physical environment

We are fortunate that our building was designed to meet the needs of a wide range of pupil disability needs and was completed with flexibility in mind. To that end we have a large schedule of room changes and works which is carried out each Summer Holiday to ensure the building is adjusted to meet the needs of any new pupils or staff joining the school in September. For example, we had additional visual signage placed in the courtyard play area to accommodate the specific needs of an incoming child with visual impairment in August 2019. We cater for a wide range of individual dietary and medical needs each day.

Staff accessibility.

As an employer we are particularly mindful that our staff benefit from quality reasonable adjustments to enable them to be successful and efficient workers in their field whether that be site, kitchen, teaching or non teaching staff. To that end we make reasonable adjustments on an individual basis. Currently those include, but are not exclusive to, occupational health reviews, dietary considerations, workstation adjustments, task adjustment and/or colleague support for adults with dyslexic needs, class changes for adults with specific health needs according to individual risk assessment, back to work interviews, a flexible working policy and wellbeing Wednesdays within the training calendar.

Complaints

We work hard to resolve any complaints, suggestions or comments that are made to us. If our response fails to satisfy then we have a separate complaints policy that can be accessed via our website and or request from the school office.