



Department
for Education

Free school application form 2014

Special (updated March 2014)

GROVE HOUSE SCHOOL

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a free school in accordance with:

- the requirements outlined in the ‘How to apply’ guidance;
- the funding agreement with the Secretary of State;
- all relevant obligations and requirements that apply to open academies (e.g. safeguarding, welfare and bullying) – this includes statutory requirements (those that are enshrined in legislation) and non-statutory requirements (those contained in DfE guidance); and
- for non-statemented pupils, the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeals Code and the admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. Any child where the school is named in the child’s statement must be admitted. 16-19 applicants do not need to follow these codes but must have admissions arrangements and criteria which are fair, objective and transparent.

I have fully disclosed all financial liabilities and the full extent of each/any debt for which the company, trust or existing school is liable.

I confirm that I am not and have never been barred from Regulated Activity within the meaning given by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. I further declare that all current Members and Directors of the Company have confirmed to me that they are not and have never been so barred, and that if it comes to my attention whilst I am a Member or Director of the Company that I or any other Member or Director are or have been so barred I will notify the Department for Education. I and all other Members and Directors of the Company understand that the Company’s free school application may be rejected if a Member or Director of the Company is found to have been barred from Regulated Activity.

I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed:

Position: Chair of company / Member of company (please delete as appropriate)

Print name:

Date:

Please tick to confirm that you have included all the items in the checklist. <input type="checkbox"/>
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Grove House School

Supporting Excellence

Section C: Education Vision

Introduction

The Grove House School Group proposes to establish a day, co-educational specialist special school in the Essex area. It will admit 105 pupils between 9 and 19 with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (or an Education and Health Care Plan) whose primary issue is a severe speech, language and communication need (SLCN). Children with such disorders have speech and/or language skills which are significantly worse (at least one standard deviation less) than their non-verbal cognitive ability.

SLCN is one of the classification categories used for pupils' statements. There are currently 480 pupils in Essex between 9 and 19 whose statements are in this category who are likely to be appropriate for the school. There will also be children in nearly all the other SEN categories who have associated SLCN. These pupils may have a range of diagnoses, including ASD, ADHD, dyspraxia, cerebral palsy and various syndromes. For some of these children, SLCN will be the most significant issue within their diagnosis. These pupils may also be eligible, creating a pool of significantly more than the original 480 pupils.

With consideration of the challenges and difficulties these children typically face, Grove House School will focus on achieving the following outcomes for its pupils.

1. High levels of aspiration and achievement in all areas of learning leading to places in FE, HE, apprenticeship schemes and employment as appropriate for each learner
2. Excellent and demonstrable progress in pupils' speech, language and communication through the highest quality education and therapy
3. Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being

Grove House School will aim to achieve far better outcomes for its specific cohort of pupils than local special and mainstream schools, dramatically improving their life chances. The school will also be able to work with mainstream schools, to provide programmes for the improvement of communication skills in preparation for OFSTED inspections and to work with pupils who may require support with their SLCN in order to maintain a mainstream placement.

Rationale

The Grove House School proposal responds directly to a need identified by government, the local authority, parents and pupils.

Government

The Bercow Review of services for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (2008) suggests that children with SLCN are likely to represent less than 2% of the population but are likely to have 'enduring difficulties'.¹ According to Bercow, 'evidence illustrates that there is insufficient understanding of the centrality of speech, language and communication among policy makers and commissioners nationally and locally, professionals and service providers, and sometimes parents and families themselves. It follows that insufficient priority is attached to addressing SLCN'.² To raise the national profile of speech language and communication and all forms of SLCN he recommended 'that when issuing guidance to local authorities and schools on the use of funding, the DCSF emphasises the importance of meeting the needs of all children and young people with SLCN'.³

Local Authority

The local authority has acknowledged the need for this school. The Lead Strategic Commissioner at Essex County Council has discussed with us the desperate need for more specialist places for pupils and a requirement to increase the number of special school places by 500 to approximately 2,600. Essex County Council agrees 'there is a need for the type of proposed provision in the local area' and will 'anticipate naming Grove House School on the Statement of Special Education Needs of up to 40 pupils for the first academic year following the school's opening and up to 60 in the second year'.⁴ The Authority is particularly anxious to improve local specialist provision in order to reduce the extraordinary £24m annual bill of their independent special school placements.

Data provided by Essex County Council shows that there are enough pupils with an appropriate profile in the county to fill the school several times.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Thurrock Council have also indicated that they will consider commissioning places where parents have requested the school and are happy to pay the proposed level of top-up funding.

Parents

By engaging with parents at a number of public meetings and through social media, we know that parents are dissatisfied with current school options. In Essex, pupils with statements for SLCN currently attend mainstream schools, enhanced provision units or special schools catering for a broad range of needs. None of these provide a specialist approach with the necessary input from therapists to meet the pupils' needs and enable them to achieve their academic potential. Best practice demands a collaborative approach with the speech and language therapist (SLT) and

¹ Ican, *Children with Severe SLCN*, Issue 9.

² The Bercow Report, DfE, 2008, 6.

³ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴ [REDACTED], ECC.

occupational therapist (OT) as members of a trans-disciplinary educational team.⁵ Appeals to the SEND tribunal are usually raised on this basis: parents understand that their children require intensive therapeutic input.

Pupils

Research shows that pupils with severe SLCN regularly suffer as adolescents as they become increasingly aware of social differences, often experiencing great levels of isolation and distress. A research study exploring children's views on outcomes that they value, found that, above everything pupils want to feel safe, be protected and to receive help.⁶ Grove House School has ensured their voice is reflected in its plans.

Pupils with SLCN are Underachieving in Essex

Non-maintained SLCN schools who have adopted a collaborative approach demonstrate well that pupils with severe speech, language and communication difficulties can achieve *top* grades at GCSE in addition to developing the personal and social skills to function well in society. Pupils regularly progress to places in Further Education, Higher Education, employment or apprenticeships. At Essex-based CLiP schools, none of the pupils take GCSE qualifications, including those with statements for SLCN. Pupils will typically move on to a Foundation course at a Further Education College or, at best, very low-paid employment.⁷ The table below demonstrates very clearly the measurable gap between the academic outcomes for pupils at these two school types.

School Type	Name of School	Total Average (capped) point score per pupil ⁸	% of Pupils achieving 5 GCSE passes at A*- G	No. of Pupils with Statements for SLCN
Essex-based CLiP Schools with SLCN Pupils	Castledon	0	0	19
	Cedar Hall	22.3	0	10
	Market Field	61.9	0	7
SLCN Schools	Blossom House	85.2	37	x
	Dawn House	81.8	15	74
	Moor House	128.6	62	87

Pupils with severe SLCN are better placed in a specialist setting where they are able to access GCSE qualifications. The case for a change in approach in Essex is clear.

Mainstream placements can be difficult to maintain for these pupils. They require specialist support to access the national curriculum and achieve examination success. Without this, they are regularly at risk of underachievement. A member of the SEN Development Team at Essex County Council wrote the following in response to our proposal:

⁵ Woodruff & McGonigel, 1988.

⁶ Roulstone et al, *The Preferred Outcomes of Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs and their Parents*, Better Communication Research Programme, DfE, 32.

⁷ Reported by Heads of a number of these schools.

⁸ DfES Performance Tables

There are a number of children who are in mainstream secondary schools because they are academically able that would be more suited to the environment of a special school or enhanced provision. These children tend to remain in secondary school but can be very unhappy there – this can lead to mental health difficulties and/or them leaving with qualifications that do not reflect their true ability. Academically they should be in a mainstream school but emotionally they need a more nurturing environment with an appropriate peer group which looks (on paper) as if the Grove House School would provide.

Summary

Grove House School will become the first specialist SLCN school in the eastern region and will run according to a 'best practice' model. It will provide a centre of excellence, staffed by highly specialised teachers and therapists. The specialist identity of the school will increase awareness of SLCN throughout the county (another aim of the Bercow report) and could be a valuable resource for education professionals in Essex.

Vision and Ethos

Grove House School will support excellence. It will create a specialist, language-focussed environment that will facilitate excellent progress academically, therapeutically and socio-behaviourally, preparing pupils for full, independent lives. The school will be distinctive in its offer of:

- A collaborative, classroom-based approach to the delivery of therapy
- A triple-stranded, integrated specialist curriculum
- Innovative approach to the development of literacy skills through programmes and strategies based on clinical research and best practice
- Extended school day with Integrated enrichment programme and supervised homework
- Preparation for a broad range of ELC and GCSE qualifications
- Personalised intervention programmes to target pupils' additional needs
- Sensory integration therapy provided by a directly-employed OT
- Outreach work and sharing of good practice

All of the above are deliverable with the suggested staffing structure and budget. The plans will be realised by a proposer group with the capability and capacity to develop an excellent school. The core team will draw on the considerable experience of [REDACTED], the [REDACTED]; [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Collaborative Model of Delivery

Fundamental to this proposal is the school's use of the collaborative practice model, where teachers and therapists form a trans-disciplinary educational team. Teachers and SLTs will collaborate in the creation of overarching schemes of work, share PPA time to plan and evaluate lessons and will deliver a number of lessons together each week. This level of collaboration will enable learning objectives to be delivered in addition to providing structured opportunities for language use and acquisition. An

occupational therapist will help to plan practical work as well as providing classroom support in practical subjects where necessary.

In order to support inclusion, speech and language therapy will take place with typical peers in the classroom environment. Sensory integration therapy, physiotherapy, psychotherapy and arts therapies will also be available where required on pupils' statements.

The resultant exchange between the different professionals, known as 'cross-fertilisation', is mutually productive and benefits pupils beyond their SLT-supported lessons.

Collaborative practice will support the development of an expert team of staff. Tailor-made training packages will be delivered by the school's team of therapeutic staff. All teaching staff, including lunchtime and administrative staff, will undergo entry level training identifying the difficulties for pupils with SCLN and the approaches and strategies that they will be expected to use. Staff will also specialise in a number of different needs associated with the school's intake of pupils, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, sensory processing difficulties and Irlen syndrome. In this specialist environment, all forms of communication will be accepted and valued, and appropriate forms of augmentative communication will be promoted and used.⁹

With extended skills and knowledge, staff will be able to employ a number of specialist strategies to support the delivery of the curriculum to all pupils. They will modify language according to the needs of each pupil, use cross-curricular links to support pupils' generalisation of language, pre-teach vocabulary, use visual supports and, wherever possible, take a physically active multi-sensory approach. Classroom routines and teaching strategies will be shared by teaching staff across the school, allowing pupils to enjoy a consistent, specialist approach.

Specialist Curriculum

The curriculum will have three components:

1. The Academic Curriculum
2. The Therapeutic Curriculum
3. The Social, Emotional and Communication Skills Curriculum

Pupils will only reach their potential if all three are treated with equal importance, equipping them with knowledge, communication skills and the ability to cope functionally within the wider community.

In order to create a highly specialist provision, every detail of the school's education plan has been developed in collaboration with SLTs and draws upon the experience of existing SLCN schools in the independent sector.¹⁰ In addition, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], has worked with the group to design parts of the curriculum and supply pioneering programmes to enhance pupils' language and communication.

Above everything, the school will prioritise the development of literacy skills as there is a very strong link between SLCN and literacy problems: almost all pupils

⁹ For example, Paget Gorman Signed Speech, Cued Articulation, Thrass, symbols and communication aids.

¹⁰ The Steering Group is currently sharing information with the Principals at Moor House School in Oxted, Blossom House School in Wimbledon and Dawn House School in Nottinghamshire. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], will supervise the team as they work to develop plans during the pre-opening stage.

will have difficulty with some aspect of learning to read and write. On entry to the school pupils will undertake intensive training in grammar, narrative, vocabulary and reading, spelling and social skills to develop a core of skills and strategies to underpin learning in all subjects. These innovative programmes and strategies are grounded in recent clinical research. They present effective opportunities to improve outcomes for pupils at little financial cost. There will also be time available on a daily basis for pupils to follow personalised intervention programmes to improve, for example, auditory processing, reading, listening skills, handwriting, working memory or conceptual understanding.

At key stages 2 and 3 the focus will be the development of literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of the curriculum. At key stage 4, pupils will be able to follow an individual learning pathway by selecting from a broad range of ELC and GCSE qualifications. A limited post 16 provision will be targeted at the lower achievers, enabling pupils who have not yet taken five GCSEs to work towards examinations at their own pace. Those pupils who have been able to follow the typical timetable of completing GCSEs in the first two years will progress to other placements for key stage 5. There are many options for this group of pupils in the local area with FE colleges in many of the large Essex towns offering a broad range of subjects with varying entry requirements that they will be able to meet. There are, however, not enough places for older pupils learning at a lower academic level: only one of the six Essex based CLiP schools currently has provision for 16-19 year olds. Other SLCN schools have shown that with continuity and specialist support, these pupils can achieve gold standard examination success at a later slightly stage, transforming their options for the future. With the resources available at Grove House School it will be possible to tailor bespoke courses to individual applicants at key stage 5 and consider a range of options for supporting their needs.

Progress in all parts of the curriculum will be tracked and monitored closely, with the starting point provided by a thorough initial assessment. All pupils will have an Individual Education Plan with regular target setting and reviews. The school will foster close relationships with parents, reporting progress regularly with advice on how to support their children, but also providing informal opportunities on a very regular basis for communication and sharing ideas.

Preparation for Life

Alongside academic achievement, the school will place great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. Opportunities to develop functional language and social communication skills will be offered through targeted off-timetable weeks, projects and clubs. Adults will share lunchtimes with pupils, encouraging social interaction and working informally on pupils' communication skills. Lunchtimes will also be an opportunity for children of different ages to come together and participate in organised games and sports, helping pupils learn how to work with others and be respectful members of a community. The social environment will be entirely safe and appropriate for these children, helping them to grow in confidence when communicating with peers. Good relationships between pupils across the year groups will be nurtured with whole school projects, developing a sense of community and belonging.

Research shows that many of the children will also have issues with confidence and self-esteem, requiring staff to create a positive environment that will encourage inclusion and participation. In some situations this will involve making suitable adaptations to the physical environment to enable all pupils to cope and thrive. In all interactions with pupils, staff will be fair, respectful and will act as excellent role models. Pupils will be exceptionally well-supported at school, with all staff taking responsibility for pupils' emotional well-being, and the senior management team (SMT) taking a proactive approach to any difficulties. Form teachers will know their pupils well, spending time with their small class of ten pupils at least twice a day. An ethos of dignity and fairness, where pupils know that difference is respected, will contribute greatly to progress at Grove House School.

Teachers will be expected to help pupils to recognise their strengths and abilities and take the time to record and celebrate pupils' achievements. The school's behaviour policy will be clear and consistently implemented and will deal with all situations positively. Well-defined systems will be established to reward achievement, good behaviour and effort.

The enrichment programme will be integrated into a slightly longer school day, enabling pupils to spend vital time with their peers in a caring and supportive informal setting, encouraging independence, friendship and inclusion. At key stages 2 and 3 a range of suitable activities will be offered, reflecting the preferences of the pupils, then as pupils reach key stages 4 and 5 more of this time will be used for supervised homework.

A number of strategies will be employed throughout the school to develop pupils' independence and ability to thrive away from school. From the outset, year seven pupils will be encouraged to work independently and develop their organisational skills. There will be high expectations for punctuality, uniform etc to prepare pupils for standards required in the workplace. Older pupils will be given opportunities to take on further responsibilities, for example becoming a peer mentor or taking part in decision-making in the School Council. They may like to follow programmes, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, encouraging them to become responsible, active members of their community and carry out carefully-selected work experience. Throughout the school pupils will be given opportunities to learn from real life situations. Trips, visits and themed days will be a regular feature as these can offer very vivid learning experiences for the children as well as providing opportunities for developing life skills and links with the local community. Older pupils will be offered a chance to participate in travel training, helping them, when ready, move towards greater independence.

Summary

Grove House School will support excellent outcomes for pupils in each of the curriculum areas. It will adopt a well-proven specialist model to outperform local mainstream and special schools and will, in time, transform the provision and services for pupils with SLCN in Essex.

Aspirations and Outcomes

1. High levels of aspiration and achievement in all areas of learning

- 100% of pupils to make better than expected progress in core subjects, relative to starting points.

The rationale for the establishment of Grove House School relies heavily on the need to raise aspirations and improve academic outcomes for its specific cohort of children. This target represents a very high level of achievement in comparison to other local provision and is in line with the best SLCN provision which is all non-maintained. Their educational model will be reproduced and refined, giving Grove House School the opportunity to replicate their measurable academic success.

2. Excellent and demonstrable progress in pupils' speech, language and communication through highest quality education and therapy

- 100% of pupils will make progress with their functional communication skills, enabling them to use their chosen form of communication to express meaningful choices

The collaborative, trans-disciplinary approach to policy, planning, delivery and evaluation will target the core deficits of pupils with primary SLCN. The exchange between the different professionals, known as 'cross-fertilisation' will enable staff to develop specialist strategies to support the delivery of the curriculum and work on functional communication skills and compensatory strategies.

3. Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being

- 90% of pupils (rising to 100% after two years) to meet social, emotional and communication skills targets set in their IEPs, measured by the POAT tool.¹¹

The school will provide an exceptionally caring environment with a range of enrichment activities, trips and projects giving their school day balance and richness. Social communication skills, involving both the understanding and use of verbal and non-verbal skills will be taught as part of the Life Skills curriculum, using as many real-life scenarios and contexts as possible. The school will invest in the long-term quality of life of the pupils, by preparing them for an independent and purposeful role in society as adults.

Section D: Education Plan – Part 1

¹¹ See section D2.

The table below shows the number of pupils we would expect to take places at Grove House School. The numbers are based, quite conservatively, on trends seen in the parental support surveys.

	Current number of pupils (if applicable)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Year 5		5*	5	5	5	5	5	5
Year 6		5*	5	5	5	5	5	5
Year 7		10*	15	15	15	15	15	15
Year 8		10*	10	15	15	15	15	15
Year 9		10*	10	10	15	15	15	15
Year 10			10	15	15	15	15	15
Year 11				10	15	15	15	15
Year 12			5	10	10	10	10	10
Year 13				5	10	10	10	10
Totals		40	60	90	105	105	105	105

* These figures are approximate. The numbers of pupils in specific year groups will be flexible due to vertical streaming.

Grove House School will offer places for a small number of year five and six pupils, as this is the stage when some pupils with severe SLCN begin to experience greater difficulty accessing the curriculum and maintaining relationships with their peers in mainstream schools and apply for special school places in greater numbers. Year 7, however, will remain a standard entry point. In 2016 the school will establish its key stage 4 and 5 provision and pupils will be admitted into teaching groups working towards ELC or GCSE qualifications.

Section D: Education Plan – Part 2

Curriculum Principles

Grove House School will stand apart from existing local provision as it will develop a highly-specialised curriculum that will support pupils' specific needs and promote access to learning. Teachers and SLTs have worked collaboratively to develop the high-level plans, drawing on the experience of other SLCN schools and recent academic research. As a result, the curriculum will incorporate language-focussed programmes, strategies and approaches at every level providing an optimal framework for pupils with SLCN.

Grove House School pupils will all have severe speech, language and communication difficulties, many with co-morbid issues. It is essential when designing the curriculum that their full range of needs be considered and addressed. The curriculum will be delivered flexibly with consideration of each pupil's learning profile. Staff will be required to modify curriculum objectives, learning outcomes, activities, resources and assessment criteria to match pupils' individual abilities and needs, learning styles and developmental stages. Subject Leaders will develop overarching schemes of work that develop learning outcomes over the course of the key stages. They will then ensure that appropriate curriculum is planned, delivered, monitored and assessed at each key stage. Each member of staff will spend some of their PPA time with therapeutic staff in order to plan, prepare and differentiate materials, ensuring all pupils have access to the curriculum and are able to make excellent progress.

There will be three main components to the curriculum in our triple-stranded specialist approach:

1. The academic curriculum
2. The therapeutic curriculum
3. The social, emotional and communication skills curriculum

Pupils will only be able to reach their potential if all three are treated with equal importance, equipping them with knowledge, communication skills and the ability to cope functionally within the wider community. Each lesson will outline and aim to deliver objectives in the three areas as appropriate. Pupils will also be given targets in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) relating to each component.

In order to deliver the outcomes for pupils outlined in the vision, the curriculum plan must demonstrate the same priorities:

1. High levels of aspiration and achievement in all areas of learning

The school's key priority will be pupils' **academic progress**. The planning of the curriculum will be based on the determination that all learners, at all levels, achieve their full potential. Of primary importance is the recognition that pupils with SLCN require structured learning and opportunities to build vocabulary and conceptual understanding. Programmes of study at key stages 2 and 3 must develop the core skills and knowledge required to progress to appropriate key stage 4 and 5 courses and ensure success at these levels. Pupils' progress towards national curriculum levels will be monitored closely at this stage to ensure that they are on track (see

section D2). It is critical that within these programmes of study all pupils be presented with an appropriate level of challenge and be encouraged to take risks with their learning. A sufficiently wide range of subjects should be offered to address the different profiles and learning styles of the pupils and prepare pupils for a range of destinations.

2. Excellent and demonstrable progress in pupils' speech, language and communication through the highest quality education and therapy

A collaborative, trans-disciplinary approach to curriculum development and planning will operate at every level, from the high-level planning in this document to the planning of individual lessons, in order to accommodate the needs of the pupils. Links will be established between pupils' academic and speech and language work, enabling a fully-integrated approach to teaching and learning.

Pupils will spend a proportion of their early years at the school developing an awareness of strategies for learning:

- Grammar
- Narrative
- Vocabulary
- Social skills
- Reading
- Spelling

These core skills will underpin the teaching throughout the school, integrating best practice for SLCN into real life learning experiences. The curriculum will be innovative, imaginative and highly-specialised in order to make the most of this unique opportunity to create an excellent new school for this cohort of children.

3. Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being

Pupils' personal and emotional development will be a prime concern; research demonstrates poor **self-esteem** is a significant issue for many pupils with SLCN. The curriculum, with careful differentiation will be designed to ensure that all pupils feel confident and successful in the classroom. It should have the flexibility to allow progress to be made in small steps, with the possibility for pupils to work at different levels within the same topic area. Whole school projects, programmes and enrichment activities will present pupils with a range of experiences that will help inspire and motivate, improve **social skills** and encourage a positive attitude to school and learning.

Therapeutic staff will lead on the creation of detailed programmes for the more formal development of pupils' social communication skills. These programmes will be delivered collaboratively and will be integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

Life skills, taught as a discrete subject throughout the school and integrated into all areas of the curriculum, will be fundamental to the pupils' move towards greater **independence**. Older pupils will be offered opportunities to take on responsibilities and develop the necessary skills to prepare for transition.

A curriculum developed from these guiding principles will enable all pupils at Grove House School to make excellent progress in the key areas identified in the vision.

Expected Pupil Intake

Grove House will admit pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (or an Education and Health Care Plan) whose primary issue is a severe specific developmental disorder of speech, language and communication.

SLCN is one of the classification categories used for pupils' statements. These children will have been identified as having SLCN as their primary need and are highly likely to be appropriate for the school. In Essex there are currently 480 pupils between 9 and 19 whose statements are in the SLCN category. There will, however, be children in many of the other SEN categories who have associated SLCN. These pupils may have a range of diagnoses, including ASD, ADHD, dyspraxia, cerebral palsy and various syndromes. For some of these children, SLCN will be the most significant issue within their diagnosis. These pupils may also be eligible, creating a pool of significantly more than the original 480 pupils.

Range of Difficulties

To give a feel for the proportion of both groups, The Communication Trust estimates that:

- 10% of all children have long term or persistent SLCN.
- 7% of all children have SLCN as their main difficulty
- 3% of all children have SLCN as part of another condition such as autism, hearing impairment, general learning difficulties etc.

According to these statistics and the experience of other SLCN schools, we will expect to admit a majority of pupils with SLCN as their main difficulty (SLI) and then a proportion, perhaps between 20 and 40% with a range of other diagnoses including ASD.

Children with different SLCN can perform quite differently, but will generally demonstrate any of the following core deficits:

- Speed and capacity limitations
- Auditory processing difficulties
- Extracting information from the prosodic features
- Word learning deficits
- Maturation lag
- Auditory memory
- Procedural memory
- Semantic pragmatic deficit

In the classroom this may impact pupils' ability to:

- Understand language
- Use language
- Interact socially
- Take part in lessons
- Learn to read and write
- Use words to express themselves
- Make the right sounds for speech

- Attention and listening
- Think things through
- Manage their feelings.

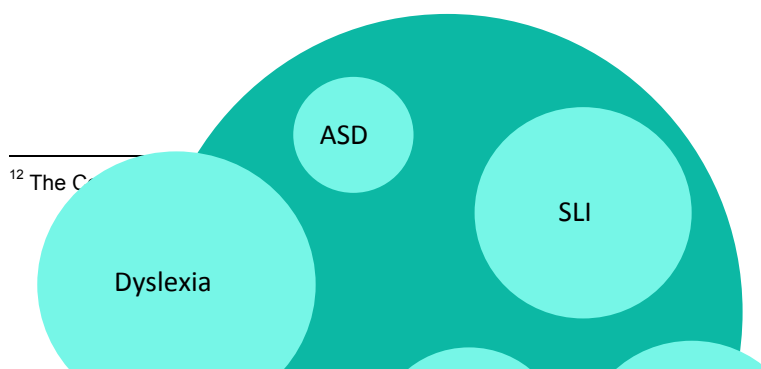
Pupils may present with any combination of the above, creating a highly heterogeneous group. The curriculum must, therefore, provide opportunities for all these needs to be addressed. To provide examples of the way in which these difficulties interact to form individual profiles, I can have prepared the following case studies of real children with descriptions of the strategies used to support them in school. These are examples of the types of pupils that would fit the admissions criteria for Grove House School.



Co-morbid Issues

The specific nature of pupils' speech, language and communication needs will vary enormously. Their profile is made yet more complex by the co-morbidity between severe SLCN and difficulties in other areas of development. The following diagram illustrates well the interactions between SLCN (represented by the large dark circle) and a number of co-morbid issues.

Fig. 1 Groups of children who are likely to have SLCN¹²



¹² The C



The illustration shows clearly that:

- All children with a speech and language impairment (SLI) have SLCN which are often severe and complex – there is no obvious reason or cause for these difficulties with language, and their non verbal skills are often well developed.
- All children with (ASD), which includes Asperger syndrome, have SLCN. They also have difficulty with social interaction and social communication. This affects 1% of all children.
- All children with learning difficulties have SLCN. This affects 3% of all children.
- Pupils will be at increased risk of Dyslexia, a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Typical features are difficulties in: phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed, for example being able to break words down into individual sounds or parts which rhyme.
- Pupils will be at increased risk of Dyspraxia (or developmental co-ordination disorder), a difficulty with planning a sequence of co-ordinated movements which can affect speech.
- Approximately 50% of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) have some form of SLCN. These pupils have very poor attention, are overactive and impulsive in all situations. ADHD occurs in about 8% of all children.
- Children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) are at an increased risk of SLCN, which often go undetected in this group.

Existing specialist SLCN schools confirm they have experience of pupils with:

- Learning/behavioural difficulties
- Problems with attention and memory
- Motor dyspraxia
- Sensory difficulties
- Autistic spectrum disorders
- Emotional problems
- Difficulties with friendships and social relationships
- Poor self image and low self-esteem

To comply with the admission criteria for Grove House School outlined in section *D4*, these co-morbid issues will have to be secondary to pupils' SLCN. The curriculum will, however, need to address these likely additional needs.

Other Characteristics

Looking beyond the pupils' SEN, it is important to understand as much as possible about the school's likely intake. The combined data of Essex special schools and independent SLCN schools suggests:

- **An elevated level of pupils entitled to free school meals** compared to the county's mainstream schools (the SLCN schools do not report a figure here as they are all non-maintained)
- **EAL pupils are not usually admitted** by SLCN schools. It would be fair, however, to consider any applications from EAL pupils on a case by case basis.
- **A high proportion of boys.** Most of the out of county SLCN and Essex special schools had over 70% boys on roll in 2012.¹³ It will be particularly important, considering this, to create opportunities for pupils to work/socialise across the year groups in order to give girls a good range of friendships.

The curriculum will incorporate measures to minimise the risk of an attainment gap appearing. It will also be important to analyse data for groups of pupils with different characteristics on an ongoing basis in order to look for trends and take action where necessary, to protect pupils who might be at greater risk of underachievement.

Type of Curriculum

Pupils at Grove House School will follow the national curriculum, adapted and differentiated where necessary to meet the wide range of needs of its pupils. Staff will work collaboratively to develop schemes of work based on the programmes of study that are appropriate for pupils with SLCN, mitigating barriers to learning and assessment. Staff will have to go outside the national curriculum to provide the additional learning opportunities required by this cohort of pupils and to adhere to the specifications of pupils' statements. Therapists will collaborate with teachers to suggest therapeutic and social, emotional and communication targets for each lesson and to help evaluate progress towards them. In each lesson these targets will be given the same priority as the delivery of the academic objectives linked to the national curriculum schemes of work.

There will be clear advantages to using the national curriculum:

- **Structure for progression and achievement:** It is a suitably-structured programme of learning that promotes good continuity through the levels allowing pupils with SLCN to build and consolidate skills and knowledge as they progress.
- **Differentiation and consolidation:** There is flexibility within the framework for teachers to draw on content from earlier stages to make allowances for the limitations of individuals or groups of pupils.

¹³Schools, Pupils and Their Characteristics, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2012>. Underlying data, school level pupils 2012.

- **Support for SEN:** It is possible to make special arrangements during end of key stage assessments to support individual pupils.
- **Progression to ‘gold star’ qualifications:** As an aspirational school the most able pupils will have the opportunity to prepare for the new GCSE examinations, requiring a key stage 2 and 3 curriculum that is directly related to the examination requirements. The new ‘knowledge-based national curriculum will be adapted to reflect these changes, thus providing a cohesive linear programme.
- **Supporting teaching standards and the quality of planning:** Practical issues are a concern. New teachers will have to undertake a significant amount of training before commencing work at the school: some quite standard, for example child protection, health and safety, fire etc and some more specialist, for example Makaton, Team-Teach, cued articulation, shape coding and vocabulary enrichment. They will also have a period of adjustment as they join the combined team of staff and therapists, possibly embracing unfamiliar methods of delivery. At this time, both staff and pupils may benefit from the consistency of working within a familiar framework.
- **Facilitates effective tracking and monitoring:** The common assessment criteria would also simplify the tracking of pupils’ progress from the national curriculum levels given by previous schools.
- **Consistency of approach with models of best practice in existing SLCN schools:** The SLCN schools that we have visited all use the national curriculum and intend to continue to do so despite the forthcoming changes. They also expect, in the immediate term, to keep the current system of attainment targets with level descriptors to assess and track key stage 2 and 3 pupils, despite the government’s intention to remove them later this year. It would make sense, considering our reliance on their experience, to align ourselves with these schools and watch carefully as they assess the impact of changes on their key stage 4 pupils at a time when we will only be teaching key stage 3.
- **Comparison of pupil progress and achievement:** It would enable us to make compare pupils’ progress with the data produced by these similar schools to give feedback on the school’s performance and identify where improvements can be made.
- **Facilitates staff training and ensures best practice:** It is possible that similar schools may be involved in the process of training our staff at the outset and assisting with the development of schemes of work and resources. If following the same curriculum, this relationship would be far more valuable.
- **Employer, parent and community awareness:** Crucially, the national curriculum makes the skills and knowledge our pupils will have explicit to new parents, employers and the wider community. Grove House School will work to prepare pupils for an independent life as part of society and the workforce, therefore it is essential that pupils’ progress is measured in a currency that is recognised and accepted.

Curriculum Delivery

The success of the curriculum will rely on the specialist method of delivery outlined in section *D4*.

Curriculum Models

The subjects, qualifications and accreditations in the following tables have been chosen in consultation with the principals of other SLCN schools, [REDACTED] and SLTs, who have all offered their professional opinions on the most sensible choices for our pupils. Pupils' SLCN and additional needs have been considered, as well as their likely interests, talents and preferences. These choices will be under constant review, particularly given the proposed changes to the national curriculum and GCSEs. The final offer will be based on the cohort of pupils' differing needs, teachers' subject specialisms and changes to examination syllabuses.

The tables have been organised to show the balance between the three main components of Grove House School's curricula.

Key Stages 2 and 3

	Subject/other activity (e.g. enrichment)	No. of 45 min lessons per week	Mandatory/ Voluntary (See below for M*/V*)	Comments	
1. ACADEMIC	English	7	M		
	Maths	6	M		
	Science	3	M		
	History/Geography/RE	2	M		
	Modern Foreign Language	1	M	Spanish or Italian are recommended by the Dyslexia Association	
	ICT	1	M		
	DT/Food Tech	1	M		
	Music	1	M		
	Art	1	M		
	Drama	1	M		
PE	4	M	Includes swimming		
2. THERAPEUTIC	Form Time (Personalised Intervention Progs)	5	M		
	Life Skills	1	M		
	Nurture club		Needs-only basis		
	Individual Therapy		Needs-only basis	Timetabled throughout the day, in the classroom if pos.	
3. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL & COMMUNICATION	PSHE	1	M	Includes Sex Education	
	School Council		V		
	Enrichment Activities	Team sports eg. football, hockey, rounders.		V	
		Gym/OT club		V	
		Karate		V	
		Band		V	
		Digital Media club		V	
		Art and Design club		V	
		Drama/dance		V	
		Debating		V	
Chess/board		V			

Projects	games/lego/cards			
	ICT club		V	
	Themed days		M	
	School café		M	
	Animal care/farm days		M	
	Charitable projects		M	

Key Stages 4 and 5

1. ACADEMIC	GCSEs	English		M*		
		Maths		M*		
		Science		M*		
		Hums – Geog/History		V*		
		ICT		V*		
		Design Technology		V*		
		Food Technology		V*		
		Art				
		Expressive Arts		V*		
	PE		V*			
	ELCs	English		M*		
		Maths		M*		
		Science		M*		
		Hums – Geog/History		V*		
		ICT		V*		
		Design and Technology		V*		
		Food Technology		V*		
		Art		V*		
		Creative Arts		V*		
PE			V*			
2. THERAPEUTIC	Form Time (Personalised Intervention Programmes)	5		M		
	Life Skills	1		M		
	Nurture club			Needs-only basis		
	Individual Therapy**			Needs-only basis	Timetabled throughout the day, in the classroom where possible	
3. SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COMMUNICATION	ACCREDITATIONS	PSHE	1	M	Includes Sex Education	
		School Council		V		
		ASDAN Youth Award Programme - Bronze and Silver		M		
		Duke of Edinburgh Award		V		
		Sports Leadership Award		V		
	EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AS ABOVE					
	PROJECTS	Work experience placement			M	
		Travel training			M	
		Cycling Proficiency			M	
		Themed days			M	
School café				M		
Animal care/farm days				M		
Charitable projects			M			

KS4 and 5 pupils will choose a package of qualifications/ accreditations, selecting from either of the categories (GCSEs or ELCs), as appropriate. All pupils will have to include an English and Maths course.

Abbreviations:

M* - A subject that has to be taken at either GCSE or ELC level.

V* - An option. A certain number of these subjects must be chosen.

** Direct Therapies offered in accordance with pupils' statements: Speech and Language Therapy, Sensory Integration Therapy, Physiotherapy, Psychotherapy, Arts Therapy, Alert Programme

Timetable

The curriculum will be delivered in a daily timetable of six 45 minute lessons. The lesson length, recommended by Heads of key SLCN schools, allows appropriate content to be delivered without pupils becoming overloaded by language content impacting their attention, memory and levels of understanding. Following the advice of OTs, all lessons will feature a gross motor learning break to help all pupils maintain concentration and those with sensory processing difficulties to self-regulate.

Grove House School will use its freedom as an Academy to extend the school day slightly, to give pupils the opportunity to spend informal time with their peers (see *Enrichment Activities* below).

Time	Activity
8.45 – 9.15	Registration and Assembly or Form Time
9.15 – 10.00	Period 1
10.00 – 10.45	Period 2
10.45 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 11.45	Period 3
11.45 – 12.30	Period 4
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch
1.30 – 2.15	Period 5
2.15 – 3.00	Period 6
3.00 – 3.15	Break
3.15 – 3.45	Form Time
3.45 – 4.30	Enrichment Activity/Prep Time

The school will follow the local authority's term dates to help families with siblings at other schools manage their time.

Content of the Curriculum

At key stages 2 and 3, pupils will spend approximately half of their time studying English, Maths and Science. Success in these core subjects will be crucial for pupils to gain access to future learning opportunities and employment.

Work with younger pupils will, where possible, be cross-curricular, with common themes explored through a series of topic webs. This topic-based curriculum will support the transference and generalisation of learning; a thinking skill which some of the pupils may find challenging. A wider range of learning environments for each topic will appeal to pupils' interests and learning styles, enabling them to make sense of their learning. The programmes will draw on the national curriculum for its cross-curricular themes. At key stage 2, pupils will follow a two year rolling programme of topics that support work towards individual targets. In order for

learning objectives to be ambitious, they might vary for different pupils. Lessons will incorporate a range of whole class, group, individual and ICT-based activities in order to accommodate different paces of learning. The level of staffing will support effective differentiation, ensuring excellent progress for all. Pupils will be appropriately placed in vertically-streamed classes ensuring all pupils are engaged and stretched as they move towards different key stage 4 pathways. The lower level classes will concentrate on the development of basic skills and knowledge using a range of national curriculum-based topics. Some pupils might benefit from additional time at this level to consolidate learning. Pupils, when ready, may progress to higher streams to follow a typical year 8 then year 9 programme, preparing the more-able pupils for GCSEs. This arrangement facilitates the personalisation of learning pathways, ensuring progress and challenge for all pupils.

1. Academic Curriculum

Literacy

Above everything, the school must prioritise the development of literacy skills as the relationship between oral language competence and the resulting transition to literacy is crucial in ensuring self-esteem, academic success and improved life chances.¹⁴ There is a very strong link between SLCN and literacy problems: almost all children with SLCN have difficulty with some aspect of learning to read and write. As these children are not a homogenous group and literacy is multi-faceted, difficulties are also various:

- Children with phonological difficulties, including those with dyslexia, often have associated problems with reading and spelling.¹⁵
- Children with syntactic, semantic or pragmatic language difficulties, including those with ASD, may have difficulties in decoding words and in reading comprehension
- Children with syntactic or semantic difficulties may have problems understanding or producing written text.¹⁶

To address these issues, year 5, 6 and 7 pupils will undertake training in an intensive literacy programme that will target issues caused by SLCN, improving pupils' subsequent access to the national curriculum. As literacy skills underpin learning in all subjects, it will be the aim that within the broad curriculum, all key stage 3 and 4 staff take responsibility for addressing pupil's literacy needs within their subject area by creating opportunities for them to make progress towards their individual literacy targets. To ensure this is appropriate and meaningful support, all staff will be given the same training in the methods used to teach literacy at Grove House School listed below.

Grammar

Children with SLCN have a grammatical deficit which affects both syntax and morphology. A system using their visual strengths can, however, support language learning. Susan Ebbels' *Shape Coding*, a visual coding system that represents the

¹⁴ Snow, P.C. and Powell, M.B. *Developmental Language Disorders and Adolescent Risk: A Public-health Advocacy Role for Speech Pathologists?* Advances in Speech Language Pathology, 6 (4), 2004, 221.

¹⁵ Bishop, D.V.M. and Snowling, M. *Developmental Dyslexia and Specific Language Impairment: Same or Different?* Psychological Bulletin Vol. 130, 204.

¹⁶ Ican, *Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Literacy Difficulties*, 2006, 3.

grammatical features of English, is based on this hypothesis. It uses colours (parts of speech), arrows (tense and aspect) and shapes (syntactic and argument structure). Initially, pupils will be introduced to elements of Ebbels' strategy, currently used at other SLCN schools to teach grammatical rules to younger pupils. It is reported to increase awareness of grammatical rules, to decrease anxiety around written tasks, to improve comprehension and to adapt to different learning styles. It will underpin literacy work in all key stage 2 and 3 subjects, and will be integrated into other forms of written communication, for example reflection sheets used by pupils to record their thoughts on issues with peers (see section D4). The aim will be to gradually withdraw the shapes toward the end of key stage 3 once pupils fully understand the grammatical structures and are able to apply them automatically. One 45 minute English lesson a week will be dedicated to shape coding for year 5, 6 and 7 pupils, supported by a SLT.

Vocabulary

Acquisition, retention and then use of vocabulary can be a major area of difficulty for pupils with SLCN. Pupils with poor working memories, typically those with ASD, ADHD or dyslexia, will demonstrate vocabulary deficits. Pupils with ASD may also struggle to generalise new language.

One of the most significant ways in which speech and language therapy will be integrated into the curriculum will be through the systematic and multisensory teaching of vocabulary.¹⁷ The aim is to provide pupils with strategies that enable them to decode, categorise and retrieve vocabulary through:

- Direct instruction
- Contextual abstraction
- Morphological analysis.

Younger pupils will be introduced to strategies for vocabulary development. New vocabulary will be represented through visual memory (image) and auditory memory (phonological elements). The meanings of words will be explored through mapping definitions and semantic links (the words that go with it) drawing on Ebbel's shape coding system. Multisensory learning, recommended for all pupils with SLCN and particularly those with dyslexia will involve the use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic-tactile pathways simultaneously to enhance memory and learning of language. In practice, a word will be linked to a topic or subject (category), then the phonological properties of the word will be discussed (number of syllables, initial sound and rhyming words) along with what type of word it is (part of speech). This process will lead into [REDACTED] more advanced [REDACTED] This will be tailored to the developmental level and language profiles of the pupils. The programme includes:

- The creation of word maps
- Understanding root, base, suffixes and prefixes
- Etymology
- Strategies for word learning
- Understanding of figurative and idiomatic languages
- Cuing techniques to aid word retrieval

¹⁷ The International Dyslexia Association, *Multisensory Structured Language Learning*, 2009.

- Support for use of more compound and complex sentence structures

Vocabulary enrichment will be taught as part of the English programme and supported where possible by SLTs.

Narrative

Pupils need narrative skills to describe events in their lives in an organised, understandable manner for their listeners. Narrative forms the basis of social interactions with peers and is essential to the organisation of more complex written work. Without explicit teaching in the areas of weakness, narrative will prove challenging to all children with SLCN, even those without phonological level problems.¹⁸

Key stage 2 and 3 pupils will use a narrative planner that links in with the system of shape coding. Ideas will be planned using the relevant shapes:

- Setting: Where? When? What like?
- Main characters: Who?
- Actions/Events: What?

This helps make links to form between narrative and grammar. At a suitable point in key stage 3 pupils will follow [REDACTED] for a number of weeks, focussing on enhancing the understanding and expression of stories. This will again be taught as part of the English programme in a manner that is consistent with [REDACTED]

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening activities will be prioritised in all areas of the curriculum as improvements in pupils' oral skills directly impact pupils' academic progress.¹⁹ Jean Gross, the government's former Communication Champion, recently reported on the impact of specific small group language intervention on SLCN pupils: following the programme 90% of them met or exceeded the progress expected for *all* children of their age group in reading, 69% in writing and 76% in maths.²⁰ There is growing recognition nationally of the benefits of working on pupils' communication skills:

- 'Articulacy' has been included in the new teacher standards.
- Communication skills will be evaluated for the first time in the new Ofsted Inspection Framework for schools.
- The Expert Panel for the National Curriculum have recommended that speech, language and communication should form part of the curriculum for all subjects from September 2014 right through compulsory schooling, rather than being focused in the national curriculum for English.

Ofsted has also made a clear case for the changes:

A common feature of the most successful schools in the survey was the attention they gave to developing speaking and listening.²¹

In the most effective schools, inspectors saw teacher thread rich opportunities for speaking and listening into lessons. In turn, this led to improved standards of writing.²²

¹⁸ ican, op. cit., 4.

¹⁹ Jean Gross, *The National Picture*, Presentation, 2014.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Ofsted, *Removing Barriers to Literacy*, 2011.

Where inspectors saw links between oral language, reading and writing in lessons, standards at GCSE English Language were higher.²³

It has been reported that on average each pupil contributes just four words in an average lesson. At Grove House School all lessons will be expected to deliver opportunities for all pupils to work on their speaking and listening skills, using a variety of strategies including talk targets, talk frames, role play, barrier games, philosophy for children and debating.

Where appropriate, technology can be used to support such activities. Pupils could, for example, create podcasts or even school radio shows. Parents will also be encouraged to take part in speaking and listening activities with their children. Talking homework will be set each week and an 'ask me about . . .' section will be included in their home-school diary to be completed at the end of each day during form time. Meal times at school will also be used to their full potential, with therapists and LSAs eating at tables with pupils to encourage social interaction and follow up on talking homework.

There will be a whole school approach to listening activities as a number of pupils will need to be explicitly taught how to be active listeners, particularly those with auditory processing difficulties and/or ADHD.

Reading and Spelling

Children with impoverished vocabulary, limited understanding of language or phonological difficulties will find it difficult to make sense of what they read. Pupils with dyslexia, especially, will have to be taught all the rules and conventions and exceptions of English reading and spelling in an organised way.²⁴

Reading and Spelling will be taught using the English Phonics Chart Programme (published by THRASS). The system's 120 keywords will help children read words by sight and to visualise and name the right letters when spelling. This programme has been used with great success to narrow the attainment gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils at Dawn House School, so will be implemented for all pupils at Grove House School at the outset. ACE dictionaries, based on word sound, will be used to support literacy work in all subjects. Low ability readers will be targeted with intensive reading interventions during Form Time.

Summary

These programmes will enable all pupils to move through the school with a range of strategies that will improve their access to learning in all subjects. All staff will be familiar with the systems and visual reminders will be prominently displayed in all classrooms.

English

The curriculum in English will be supported by the school's literacy programme. Role play will be used with pupils in each key stage to develop material and model language in preparation for written work. Pupils with ASD who may struggle with unstructured imaginative play may need such activities to be highly-structured. A space in each classroom will be set aside for role play and other talk activities.

²² Ofsted, *Annual Report*, 2010.

²³ Ofsted, *Excellence in English*, 2011.

²⁴ British Dyslexia Association, *Specialist Literacy Tuition*, Website.

Materials will be chosen carefully to reflect pupils' levels of comprehension, ensuring access to the curriculum for all pupils.

Maths

Statistics show also, that some children with SLCN may also have difficulties acquiring mathematical skills. Jean Gross reported that 'in 2010 32% of pupils with SLCN made the expected level of progress in maths, compared to 61.2% of all pupils'.²⁵ We could expect some pupils to have dyscalculia, a specific developmental disorder giving rise to difficulties with arithmetic, as this regularly co-exists with SLCN. Typically, these pupils may have difficulties understanding number concepts, they may lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and may have problems learning number facts and procedures. All maths teachers will be trained in Unicorn Maths, a structured, cumulative multi-sensory maths development programme for the remediation of dyscalculia (supported by the British Dyslexia Association). The method and resources will benefit all SLCN pupils regardless of a dyscalculia diagnosis.

In contrast, there may be pupils whose specific language impairment has no bearing on their ability to do well in maths. To accommodate all learners between these extremes in maths lessons, it will be necessary to teach key stage 3 pupils in maths ability groups, and to offer examinations and accreditations at different levels.

Science

Science is also a core part of the curriculum as it is an entry requirement for a number of local further education courses. Language, however, is at its heart. Some children will have difficulty pronouncing technical terms which will in turn affect their recall, understanding and use of words. Difficulties may also come, for some pupils, with the use of higher-order language skills, for example, to understand cause and effect, to make predictions, to reason, to justify or to provide more than one possible explanation. SLTs will be able to provide intensive support to help pupils with the development of inferential language and to apply literacy strategies to written descriptions of practical work. Pupils with impaired fine motor skills, for example those with dyspraxia or cerebral palsy may need OT support when attempting practical work in Science.

Modern Foreign Languages

In contrast with other SLCN schools, it is the view of [REDACTED] that Grove House School should offer key stage 2 and 3 pupils a Modern Foreign Language as part of the mandatory curriculum. It is possible that learning a language may not be easy for pupils who are struggling to acquire skills in their first language. Not all pupils with SLCN, however, are the same. All will have something to gain from learning about another culture and being able to achieve a closer understanding of others by communicating in their language, at whatever level can be achieved. It will be possible in this lesson, as with others, to use the subject area more broadly to work on pupils' literacy and numeracy, discussing for example aspects of the country's geography, landmarks, currency and customs.

Other Subjects

²⁵ Jean Gross, *Two Years On: Final Report of the Communication Champion for Children*, 2011, 20.

All other areas of the curriculum will provide opportunities for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. All staff will be trained in the strategies outlined above and will deliver lessons according to the specialist methods outlined in section D4.

2. Therapeutic Curriculum

Direct Therapy

Speech and language therapy will be delivered, wherever possible, through the collaborative, curriculum-based model of therapy, with speech and language targets embedded in their learning across a range of settings in the school. Some pupils may, however, require more specific, focused work and may have therapy included on their statement. In order to support inclusion, **speech and language direct therapy should still take place with typical peers in the classroom environment**, which can include the classroom as well as the lunchroom, playground, art room, PE field, and school trips. In a systematic review of research on school service delivery models, Cirrin et al. (2010) found that in many instances classroom-based services were at least as effective, if not more effective in helping students to meet speech and language objectives.²⁶

OTs and occasionally physiotherapists, arts or psychotherapists may also work with individual pupils where the need has been identified by the therapists or is required by pupils' statements.²⁷ Where appropriate, small group sessions will be timetabled with therapists during the school day to work on specific issues. It may, for example, be appropriate for the OT to run *The Alert Programme* with small groups of pupils (typically those with a diagnosis of ADHD or ASD) who require a better understanding of self-regulation. There will be a flexible approach to the delivery of therapy, with the type and intensity of intervention tailored to the changing needs of individual pupils as they move through the school.

Integrated Therapy

Therapists will support approximately ten lessons a week for each class, selected during discussions of lesson content in joint planning sessions with teachers. SLTs will deliver sessions on shape coding, vocabulary enrichment and narrative then support a number of additional English lessons to oversee the application of these strategies. They will regularly contribute to Maths, Science and Humanities lessons, particularly when new topics require the direct teaching of new vocabulary, and will be heavily involved with the life skills and PSHE programmes. The OT will be able to support pupils with handwriting in academic subjects and fine motor control in DT and food technology. The OT's time will also be organised according to the needs of individual pupils.

The following shows how their roles could interact:

Case Study: Collaborative Practice in a Year 8 English Lesson

1. *Academic Learning Objective: To identify features of a contemporary poem*
2. *Speech and Language Objectives: To give an opinion To use the topic key words.*
3. *Social, Emotional and Communication Objective: To take turns to talk. To make sure everyone has a turn.*

The teacher writes the learning objectives on the board and explains them clearly to pupils, drawing on learning from previous lessons. A visual timetable is provided at the side of the board to outline what will happen in the lesson, with images to support understanding and memory.

Pupils take turns to contribute to a whole-class reading of a contemporary poem. Pupils with poor fluency read together in small groups. The teacher assists where necessary with decoding and sight vocabulary and the SLT provides support with cued articulation. The SLT introduces pupils to new vocabulary and explores its meaning with the use of word maps drawing on Ebbel's *Shape Coding* system. The OT oversees strategies to optimise students' visual and auditory attention. After 20 minutes the OT supervises a two minute sensory break giving pupils vestibular and proprioceptive input to improve focus, concentration and

Form Time (Personalised Intervention Programmes)

Grove House School will be committed to following the model of collaborative practice, with therapy integrated into every aspect of school life, not delivered exclusively by the more traditional model of withdrawal. It is likely, however, that pupils will have specific needs that must be addressed in order to improve their access to the curriculum. It is important that there is time allowed in the day for such interventions to be put in place without withdrawal from other lessons. Each day half an hour of Form Time will provide an opportunity for pupils to follow programmes that have been recommended for them by teachers or therapists. Some programmes may be delivered in small groups with the teacher or an LSA, but many will be based on laptops or ipads, requiring only floating supervision. They may include the following:

- Multisensory reading and spelling programmes for pupils with SpLD.
- Reading to an adult
- Computer-based working memory training
- Therapeutic listening programme
- Handwriting programme/fine motor skills tasks
- Auditory memory training
- Social stories
- Listening skills
- ipad apps to address SLCN eg. *Splingo*, *Colourful Semantics*, *Articulation Station*
- *Nessy Fingers* typing
- THRASS resources

During the pre-opening stage the team will consult with the Wolfson Neurodisability Service at Great Ormond Street Hospital for up to date recommendations for ICT-based programmes that may benefit pupils and drive progress.

3. Social, Emotional and Communication Curriculum

Life Skills

The Life Skills programme will be developed collaboratively by the trans-disciplinary team to help pupils relate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the curriculum to their everyday lives. The curriculum will focus on various settings, including school, home, the community then later college and work, and develop skills required for each through role play and community visits wherever possible. In each scenario, useful concepts, vocabulary and phrases will be directly taught and pupils will rehearse associated social skills. Pupils with ASD, for example, may need help to understand different ways of speaking in different contexts and how tone of voice and posture can influence meaning. To support and develop pupils' life skills at key stages 4 and 5, all pupils will work towards ASDAN's CoPE Bronze and Silver Awards and will complete a social use of language programme. Learning in this subject will continue across the curriculum, as all staff will be expected to focus on developing pupils' life skills in their own subjects.

PSHE

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be a key part of the Grove House curriculum. It will be taught discretely to pupils in all key stages. Pupils will be taught to assess risk, make safe and informed decisions and to be taught the language associated with communicating these decisions to others. Drug education, financial education, sex education and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle will be covered within this programme in addition to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). There will be value in spending time focusing on pupils' emotional literacy by drawing on relevant parts of the old SEAL framework, for example, areas of learning such as:

- New beginnings
- Getting on and falling out
- Relationships
- Bullying
- Going for goals
- Changes

Role play and drama will be a vital tool for staff to model language and for pupils to rehearse difficult situations. In all key stages, the PSHE programme will provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their individual strengths and weaknesses including the specific nature of their SEN. They will be helped to develop a range of strategies to support and compensate for their difficulties. This work will serve to support pupils' self-esteem and confidence and help prepare them for the emotional aspects of life.

This curriculum should again be taught using practical work and visits at every opportunity, giving pupils the chance to apply their learning to real life situations. A coordinated whole-school approach to PSHE themes, using assemblies, visual displays and lessons in all areas of the curriculum, will reinforce learning ensuring *all* pupils have a solid understanding and can generalise this vital learning to all contexts.

Projects

To supplement the curriculum, Grove House School will run a number of projects throughout the year, delivering a range of academic and social outcomes. Typically, activities will be linked to the academic curriculum, providing vivid learning experiences that inspire and challenge. They may, alternatively, draw on specific interests of pupils, validating who they are, and boosting self-esteem. A pupil with an obsessive interest in dinosaurs, for example, could inspire and lead a 'dinosaur day'. Crucially, these projects will also provide an opportunity for pupils to develop new social circles, improving their sense of belonging within the school. Staff will be encouraged to propose appropriate projects for their pupils, for example a Roald Dahl day, a 'grow a pound' project, a readathon, a space day, 'The Great Grove Bake Off', an African drumming workshop, school cafe.

Where possible, **trips or visits** will be arranged for pupils, taking them out of their comfort zone and preparing them for life beyond school. There are many museums, cinemas, theatres, tourist attractions etc that offer special days for SEN pupils, enabling pupils to spend calm, productive time in a novel learning environment.

Older pupils may benefit from **residential trips** to develop self help and independence skills within a safe, controlled environment. Outward bounds courses, for example, are regularly used by special schools to help pupils build confidence and self esteem whilst developing friendships based on trust, cooperation, communication and understanding. Pupils will also be encouraged to plan their own trips and visits linked to the curriculum.

Work Experience

Work experience placements for key stage 4 pupils will be essential to the process of preparing pupils for the workplace, one of the key curriculum principles. Placements will, however, need to be very carefully managed to ensure that pupils are supported appropriately. The key stage 4 and 5 coordinator will take responsibility for liaising with parents and employers and procuring suitable and meaningful placements. They will carefully match each pupil to a placement with full consideration of the pupil's individual needs and safeguarding issues. Pupils will need to be fully prepared for their placement in Life Skills lessons, so they arrive with a range of work-related skills and a good understanding of expectations. All pupils will spend time assisting staff in the school office during their time at the school. The work experience programme will be highly valued, with resources and staff made available where necessary to supervise placements, as in many cases pupils' futures will depend on the experience and on the community connections they will make. Ideally, opportunities will be created for pupils to be involved in work-related activities during key stage 3 on a fairly regular basis, whether serving drinks at a local church/nursing home or creating a cafe at the school for members of the community to attend. Such activities will allow skills to be consolidated over a longer period of time and valuable links to be built with the local community.

Pupils will also be prepared for independent life by completing a **travel training** programme, perhaps led by charity-trained volunteers, who will teach them how to travel safely, effectively and independently. They will work in small groups towards targets enabling them to gain 'red', 'yellow' or 'green' lights, relating to their

level of safety as independent travellers.²⁸ Similarly, all pupils will take a cycling proficiency course.

These types of projects and activities will allow the true collaboration of the three areas of the Grove House School curriculum, with pupils able to work on outcomes for each. They will play a key role in preparing pupils for life beyond school by developing pupils' social communication and work-related skills.

Qualifications

The programme of assessment for pupils at Grove House School is discussed in detail in section *D2*. Within this, Grove House fully recognises its responsibility for the delivery of controlled assessments at standard points. At **key stage 2** pupils will take end of key stage tests in year six. It is possible that some pupils will be working at a level below these tests, therefore they will be registered as doing so with the Standards and Testing Agency. It is not impossible that the occasional pupil may be able to attempt a level six test, perhaps in Maths. If this were the case it would certainly be offered and the pupil would be prepared.

At the end of **key stage 3**, pupils will again be assessed to give a measure of their progress since entry to the school. This information will be used to make careful decisions on the pupils' **key stage 4** package of subjects and qualifications. Staff, parents and pupils will be involved in this process. Each pupil's choice of examinations and/or accreditations will be tailored to their areas of strength and interest and will reflect the curriculum principles of Grove House School. They will be able to take a mixture of subjects and levels from across the offering. Thought will always be given to progression so that each pupil's programme supports future employability and enables further study. Pupils will receive careers counselling throughout key stages 3 and 4 to ensure they make the most appropriate choices at each stage. At key stage 4, pupils will typically take appropriate level qualifications in English and Maths and four others, forming a solid base for post 16 education.

Pupils will also take the ASDAN Youth Programme Award (Bronze or Silver) as this qualification fosters the development of personal, emotional and academic skills in preparation for the workplace and provides a continuation of the social emotional and communication skills curriculum for pupils of this age. Where appropriate, pupils will be encouraged to include an ICT qualification, given the centrality of ICT to independent life. It will be essential for pupils to be able to navigate new technology and use it as an effective communication tool. Pupils will continue to be taught PSHE, Life Skills and Form Time with their form group in key stage 4.

The **key stage 5** provision will enable pupils who have not yet taken five GCSEs to work towards examinations at their own pace.

Pupils will again be placed in age-appropriate form groups for PHSE, Life skills and Form Time. Assuming they have successfully obtained entry level qualifications in Maths and English, they will progress to GCSE courses in these subjects and choose a further four courses at the most appropriate level.

Enrichment Activities

²⁸ This system was devised by OTs at Moor House School in Surrey.

The enrichment programme at Grove House will be crucial to the delivery of the curriculum principles. An integrated programme of activities will contribute a number of positive outcomes:

- **Pupils will spend informal time with their peers developing social skills and the confidence to communicate on a daily basis.** Research carried out by Moor House School reports that pupils involved in clubs whilst at the school, particularly team sports, were far more likely to have a social life after leaving school. Such activities will provide an opportunity for pupils to develop new social circles across the year groups, contributing very positively to the life of the school community.
- **An integrated enrichment programme will restore the balance between the academic, therapeutic and social, emotional and communication skills curricula.** Pupils will spend over half of their school day learning Maths, English and Science. The extended school day allows activities to be included that address pupils' broader needs.
- **Pupils will enjoy their time at school.** It is important that pupils engage in appealing and memorable experiences to motivate a love of learning and willingness to embrace school life.
- **The school provides a safe and supportive environment for activities.** It is not always easy for parents to find suitable community clubs for pupils with SEN. At school, the pupils will, instead, be in an appropriate peer group and will be supervised by staff or other fully-trained adults.

Key Stages 2 and 3

In younger year groups pupils will be able to select from a range of enrichment activities (see *Curriculum Models*). On some afternoons they may choose to spend informal time with their friends as they would on a play date at home, taking gradually more responsibility for organising their time together, making snacks etc. It could be difficult for this to happen otherwise as this group of children are likely to travel in from a relatively wide geographical area.

Key Stages 4 and 5

At key stages 4 and 5 the time will instead be spent doing prep, supervised by the LSAs that spend the day with them.²⁹ [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] It will be important that key stage 4 and 5 pupils have a range of lunchtime clubs to which they can belong instead, with at least two sports clubs being compulsory.

The Programme of Activities

The range of activities will need to reflect all pupils' interests and accommodate all personalities. The curriculum tables give suggestions for activities to be included in the programme, but as with all areas of the curriculum the final choices will be determined by the interests and enthusiasms of both the staff, pupils and in this case any willing parents. All members of staff will be expected to organise one lunchtime or after school club, and parental involvement will be encouraged, as the skills and experience they can bring into the school will result in a broader range of learning opportunities for the pupils. Entry level training including safeguarding training and

²⁹ LSAs will have their hours annualised so that they may finish at 4.30pm.

DBS checks will be provided for any adults involved in clubs who are not employed by the school, and an LSA will stay with the group to ensure the needs of individual pupils are met.

It will be key to offer a good choice of activities where pupils can work together, either in a team sport or a music or drama club in order to make the most of the informal context to work on communication skills. A school council will provide an ideal opportunity for pupils to develop their speech and language in a more formal setting and to become more comfortable communicating with adults, eg. staff, governors and parents. Being a small school, all pupils will be able to take a turn.

In all activities it will be important to ensure accessibility, catering for the different levels of ability and differences in age. A music club like a school band, for example, should include parts for pupils who can play a musical instrument, and opportunities for complete beginners using percussion instruments and xylophones. It will also be important to offer a range of physical outdoor lunchtime clubs for pupils requiring vestibular and proprioceptive input, but also quiet indoor activities like lego, ICT and art clubs to accommodate pupils' differing needs.

It would be ideal, with the slightly later end to the school day, if an arrangement could be made for admitting children from other schools to certain clubs/activities to aid integration and increase awareness of SLCN in the general population, an aim of the Bercow Review

Homework

Homework will give pupils a chance to reinforce learning through the completion of tasks directly related to classwork. It will be set according to a timetable, allowing pupils to follow a routine, but it will be accepted that some pupils may find it challenging to complete tasks at the end of a day in the home environment. Teachers will be sensitive and flexible and make special arrangements with parents where necessary, for example, agreeing that a pupil will stop working after 20 minutes. The work set will, in the same way as work completed at school, be suitably differentiated to accommodate the learning needs of each individual, and will vary in activity type throughout the week. Talk homework will be set each week, requiring pupils to carry out a focussed discussion with members of their family. This will become the focus of talking activities carried out once a week over lunch at school with an LSA or speech therapist.

Younger pupils will be given a variety of short tasks throughout the week including learning spellings, pre-learning vocabulary and reading to an adult. Parents will be actively encouraged to support children's progress by supervising homework and will be invited into school regularly to be given basic training on the specialist approaches taken, for example *shape coding*. As pupils advance, the homework tasks will develop and lengthen, but there will be the opportunity to complete some of this at school in enrichment time. Local special schools have a policy of not setting homework, yet this seems a missed opportunity to consolidate learning, gain the support of parents and raise expectations.

Pupil Transition

The transfer from one school to another is a significant change for any child, but especially one with SEN. Grove House School will have a highly supportive system

in place to aid the smooth transition of pupils into the school, between classes and into their next role/placement. Pupils who have been offered a place at the school will typically start no sooner than six weeks later in order to prepare the child suitably for the change. During this time:

- A member of staff will visit the child in their current placement
- The member of staff will meet with their current teacher
- The child will visit their new class at least twice, depending on the child
- A senior member of staff will meet with the child's parents
- Grove House School will request formal information from the child's previous school/parents eg medical reports, school reports, assessment data
- A picture/information book will be provided for the child describing their new school

Where a number of pupils will be starting at the same time, a transition day will be held for all new pupils, enabling them to spend time together as a group in their new environment with their key group team (KGT).³⁰ A selection of older pupils will be encouraged to participate in the day's activities and act as mentors to the new intake.

Within a week of a child starting at the school their academic work, reading etc will be assessed to give a reliable entry point, then an IEP will be drawn up with parents within two months. In the first few weeks there will be intensive monitoring of the placement with pupil interviews and regular observations by the SMT. During this period staff will be in close contact with parents. Pupils may occasionally require additional support during this period of adjustment in which case they will be provided with an LSA, either from within the class or drawing on the extra LSA allowed for in the budget. This process will be managed by the pupil's Form Teacher and the SMT. It will be the same whatever the entry point to the school.

Pupils will be carefully prepared for transitions between classes and key stages. They will spend time with new members of staff and in new classrooms to reduce anxiety. Any new members of staff will need to hold meetings with the class's KGT to discuss the needs of the pupils and where necessary will be in contact with parents. Wherever possible pupils will continue working with their KGT as they move through the school.

A formal transition plan will be drawn up with pupils and parents during their year 9 annual review. Some pupils will plan to remain at Grove House School for key stage 5, others will be prepared for a new placement in year 12. During years 10 and 11, pupils will participate in a number of projects and activities to help prepare them for further study and employment. They will receive, for example:

- Help with the preparation of a CV
- Help with the preparation of a Personal Development Plan
- Mock interviews
- Travel training to the college/employer
- Practice filling in forms

³⁰ Each pupil will be linked to a key group team, consisting of a form teacher, a speech and language therapist and two LSAs/speech and language therapy assistants (see D3).

- Visits to the college/employer with orientation
- Employability lessons
- Intensive careers guidance
- Talks by parents/volunteers/past pupils on different jobs/placements

The school will develop a close relationship with appropriate local colleges and schools, arranging for year 10 and 11 pupils to take part in on site and off site events, activities and taster days. They will also work with charities that support pupils with SEN going into employment.

Pupils and parents will be fully involved in the decision making process, receiving guidance from the key stages 4 and 5 coordinator and the LA careers service. The annual review six months before leaving the school will be used to formalise plans.

This process of preparing pupils for independent life will be one of the school's main priorities, as set out in curriculum principle 3.

Summary

Teachers, therapists and academics have collaborated to create a new, specialised curriculum for the pupils at Grove House School. Its core principles address the need to provide a holistic curriculum for each child, targeting their academic, therapeutic and social and communication needs. The curriculum will be flexible, allowing for differentiation and personalisation to cater for a variety of SLCN and additional needs. These plans will enable pupils to reach their potential in each of the curriculum areas and give them the skills to apply what they have learnt functionally in the wider community.

D2: Measuring Pupil Performance Effectively and Setting Challenging Targets

Measuring Performance and Setting Targets

In order to deliver the outcomes for pupils outlined in the vision, the targets and metrics must be closely aligned to the curriculum plan (*D1*) and must demonstrate the same priorities. This synergy means that Grove House School targets are suitable measures for the delivery of the educational vision, the performance of the pupils and consequently the effectiveness of the school. The targets are credible and realistic as they are based on a thorough understanding of the cohort of pupils and the specialist strategies employed by Grove House School to ensure excellent progress academically, therapeutically and social-behaviourally.

Performance data for outstanding Essex Special Schools has been considered in detail (see *Rationale*). Given their more generalist approach and very broad profile of pupil needs, they are not suitable as a benchmark for our performance measures. Indeed, Grove House School would expect to outperform them very considerably. The specialist SLCN schools are non-maintained and highly-funded, but share high levels of aspiration and an integrated approach to the delivery of therapy. Cohort information provided by our parental support surveys indicates that Dawn House School would be our closest peer so we would seek to benchmark our key stage 4 performance against their returns. This parity has been reflected in our performance measures at key stages 2 and 3. Once a full cohort has completed an entire key stage, and year 7 pupils have completed key stage 4, then the rate of progress and point scores become more reliable quantitative indicators. In the interim, we will use [REDACTED] and an external peer Head from an outstanding SLCN school to monitor and evaluate our systems and processes. They will scrutinise examples of pupils' work to ensure progress and achievement are robustly benchmarked.

Grove House School targets address the Key Performance Indicators of:

- Academic achievement, including qualifications
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Pastoral care and pupil well-being
- Quality of teaching
- Pupil and parental/carer satisfaction
- Staff morale
- Pupil participation in various activities

The following table charts the targets, which have been organised under the Grove House School desired pupil outcomes.

	When/ Frequency/ Location	Responsible Staff Member
1. High levels of aspiration and achievement in all areas of learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of pupils to make better than expected progress in core subjects relative to starting points (a minimum of 1.8 sub levels per annum) 	Termly. Computer Target Tracker (CTT)	Subject Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of all pupils to perform in the upper quartile of SEN pupils nationally in Maths, English and Science following the completion of a full key stage 	Termly to end of key stage. CTT	Subject Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils to reach their point score targets at the end of KS4 relative to their starting points 	Termly to end of KS4. CTT	KS4/5 coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of pupils who gained level 4 at KS2 in core subjects to achieve at least level Cs at GCSE 	Qualifications	KS4/5 coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of pupils to achieve a range of foundation, Entry Level or GCSE qualifications including Maths and English at an appropriate level 	Qualifications	KS4/5 coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of pupils to attend post 16 education or take on meaningful employment after completing year 11 	Enrolment in courses, apprenticeships, employment	Form Teacher, KS4/5 coordinator
2. Excellent and demonstrable progress in pupils' speech, language and communication through highest quality education and therapy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CELF-4 (Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals): All pupils making age appropriate progress and 25% making additional progress 	Before entry, then end of key stage. Specific needs assessed annually.	Head of Therapy and therapeutic team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of pupils to achieve IEP targets (rising to 100% after 2 years when GHS has had the opportunity to ensure realistic yet challenging targets are set, and have effective ways of monitoring them) 	Set in Annual Review. Monitored half termly; revised termly. Report and updates	Head of Therapy. KGT to update weekly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of pupils will make progress with their functional communication skills, enabling them to use their chosen form of communication to express meaningful choices 	Observations from teaching sessions and enrichment activities recorded daily	KGT to collate and report

3. Pupils to be prepared for an independent life with effective social skills and good emotional well-being		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A term on term increase in evidence of satisfaction across relevant measures of the POAT (Profiling Outcomes Across Time) tool by [REDACTED]. 	End of Term. Recorded daily, monitored termly. CTT.	Form Teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil attendance to be above 90% (absence 10%), and for those where school refusal and non-attendance have been issues, their attendance to improve year-on-year. 	Daily. Attendance records. CTT.	Input: Form Teacher Monitoring: Business Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction Survey – 90% of all pupils, parents/carers/staff consider the school is responding well to the personal development, safety and well-being of all learners. 	Annual confidential survey. Data logged by office staff.	Deputy Head
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour: A reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour year on year. Each behaviour incident type to have a code for logging in the MIS. Pupils to participate in the process through the use of 'reflection sheets'. 	Daily Log (ABC sheet) of incidents. CTT produces charts detailing weekly pattern of incidents.	KGT to update weekly. Scrutinised by Head and Business Manager.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of pupils to participate in a range of school and community-based activities. 	Termly. Attendance records. CTT.	Logged by activity leader. Form Teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% to gain ASDAN CoPE either Silver or Bronze 	End of key stage 4.	KS4/5 coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of pupils to have undertaken an external work placement 	Timetabled activity in years 10 and 11.	KS4/5 coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of pupils to have undertaken an internal placement (this could include school council, peer mentoring, drama productions, transition mentors) 	Daily/ weekly activities	Form Teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT travel training: 100% of pupils to have undertaken the travel training programme by year 11. Individual success to be signalled by a 'green card'. 	Detailed in the IEP at the appropriate time for the pupil. On-going.	OT + external charity

Assessment and Data Tracking

At Grove House School we will value pupils' progress in the academic, the therapeutic and the social-behavioural curricula as the key indicator of success.

1. Academic

In terms of academic attainment the Information Management System will rely heavily on recording and tracking national curriculum levels to measure pupil attainment and evaluate the efficacy of the collaborative approach. We acknowledge that the best fit model can sometimes be subjective so here too collaboration will be vital to ensure accuracy of assessment. Staff will need to come together regularly to carry out moderation exercises to unify, as far as possible, grading criteria. Middle managers and the SMT will have non-contact time to allow this. Pupils' academic progress will be demonstrated summatively at the end of key stages 4 and 5 by the achievement of formal qualifications.

Early in the first term each pupil's national curriculum level information for the core subjects will be confirmed. In addition, pupils will have formal baseline assessments in reading, writing, comprehension and mathematics. These tests will be repeated annually and used for tracking progress, setting IEP targets and informing planning and support. They will facilitate the evaluation of progress relative to each pupil's starting point and needs.

It will be important to liaise regarding the language content of the intended test tasks. Given the needs of our pupils, assessments must test target concepts rather than the pupils' ability to process and formulate language.

Whilst pre and post module assessments for a range of skills and subjects are useful, on-going observation will be a more accurate and useful record of pupils' functional and value-added progress with the curriculum. Pupils with ASD in particular can find formal assessment very stressful. All staff engaged in the delivery of the curriculum will use a pro forma to record written comments on the learning that has taken place after each taught session. Teaching will then be reappraised and adapted in the light of the observations (see below: *Monitoring and Improving the Quality of Teaching*)

Weekly KGT meetings in the teacher's PPA time will provide the opportunity for a collaborative discussion on pupil progress and for data to be updated on the computer-based Information Management System. The collaborative approach will help ensure the accuracy of assessments.

2. Therapeutic

Progress in speech, language and communication will be gauged using a number of mechanisms (see *D4* for details). Whilst in practice feedback from staff, parents and pupils regarding functional communication skills is a useful measure, assessments like the CELF-4 provide a formal, quantifiable corroboration for observations

Once assessments have been completed and initial results analysed, KGTs will meet to draft the IEPs, producing a set of prioritised targets under each of the curricula outcomes. When the KGT is satisfied with the draft, a meeting will be arranged with the pupil (if appropriate) and their parents to share, adapt and finalise the IEP. This formal record of individual targets will be shared with all staff involved with the pupil, then will be monitored daily and tracked weekly in KGT meetings. Finally, targets will be re-assessed and updated on a termly basis, and distributed to staff and parents. Reports will be written to be shared with all staff and parents (and pupils as

appropriate), the educational authorities and any other professionals involved with the pupils.

3. Social, Emotional and Communication

Progress and attainment in the social and behavioural curriculum will be assessed using a range of tools including externally devised and benchmarked rating scales eg. POAT, in-house logs, confidential surveys, attendance registers and teaching observations. As discussed in *C1* and *D4*, many pupils with SLCN require direct teaching and practice of the socially agreed rules of communication. Behaviour must, therefore, be a core part of the teaching in all areas of the curriculum. All staff will then reflect on and assess behaviour regularly. These assessments can only be made in a reliable and robust way if they are located in the context of a school in which there is a culture of high expectations around behaviour, relationships and communication. The Head will need to ensure that all school policies are written clearly, cross referenced to other policies, regularly updated and understood by the whole school community.

POAT and satisfaction surveys (completed by parents, pupil and staff) will be used to determine the extent to which members of the school community feel happy, safe, well looked after, confident about the way that the school deals with bullying and responds well to any concerns raised. The results will be tracked on the Target Tracker and monitored by the SMT.

Behaviour management and safeguarding will be assessed and tracked rigorously in line with school policies. Incidents will be logged in an ABC log and tracked on the central computer system. The Business Manager, along with the designated member of the SMT will oversee the records and will prepare a weekly report for the Head. Issues will be tracked over time and trends analysed, resulting in interventions as appropriate.

A positive attitude to learning will also be tracked and assessed through attendance and punctuality. Attendance is a strong measure of a school's overall success as it reflects the level of pupil and parent engagement and happiness with the school. Trends will be derived from analysis of data from the computer log.

As noted in the tables and explanations above much of the paper-based assessment and tracking data will be input into a central, secure computer-based tracking system. There are many packages available, B Squared being one such example, which is useful given its compatibility with CAPSA. However, given the specific range of assessments and data needing to be tracked, Grove House School will generate and use its own bespoke system, buying in software only if appropriate. This approach is comparable with that of other leading SLCN schools. Examples of the types of data that will be presented on the Target Tracker include:

- Socio-economic contextual data
- Attainment on entry
- Gender
- Free school meals
- Primary and secondary diagnosis/need
- Pupil mobility
- Base-line assessments (academic and therapeutic)
- Teacher assessment data (national curriculum levels)
- Progress in achieving IEP targets
- Behavioural incidents
- Attendance

The system will facilitate the creation of comparative graphs and charts. Pupil progress in particular will be tracked with a red, amber and green (RAG) alert system. This will enable prompt action and interventions to occur. The Head will have oversight and control of this system, ensuring that a detailed knowledge of pupil progression and attainment runs throughout the school at all levels.

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Individual pupil progress will be carefully monitored and evaluated through the IEP process as well as through the bespoke Target Tracker with the RAG alert system. Monitoring and evaluating at class and group level will also be essential to ensure that different groups of pupils are not being disadvantaged. The Head, supported by the SMT, will analyse findings to identify underperforming groups of pupils including those with different characteristics. The Head will focus on the following data sets:

- The rate of progress of different diagnostic categories
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium
- Attainment on entry
- Rate of progress of class and subject groupings

A judgement will be made as to whether the curriculum and methodologies used are preventing gaps to appear between the performance of different groups of pupils within the school. *RAISEonline* will be useful once there is sufficient information on performance in assessments over time to be statistically significant and comparable with national data sets.

Where gaps in attainment can be seen, the SMT can identify appropriate short, medium and long-term actions. Some interventions will be put into effect immediately. Others, however, will be presented as part of a self evaluation exercise and lead directly into the School Development Plan (SDP) and strategic discussions with the Board of Governors. Regular reports will be prepared for the Governors who will monitor the effect of the school's policies and procedures upon the school population. Reports will be sent to parents who, in turn, will be in close contact with the school and can liaise about their children's requirements.

Monitoring and Improving the Quality of Teaching

The quality of the delivery of the three components of the curriculum will have a profound impact on pupil performance and school effectiveness. To this end Grove House School will place considerable emphasis on supporting, developing, measuring and improving the quality of teaching in the classroom. The Head, referring to national standards for the quality of teaching (Ofsted criteria and National Teachers' Standards), will have ultimate responsibility for this area, supported by the SMT, and accountable to the Governing Body (see *F2*).

There will always be a need for the school to be monitoring and evaluating how it will improve on an on-going basis. In addition to the systems and processes outlined above, satisfaction surveys, monitoring patterns of staff changes and developments in pupil profiles across the curricula, will provide evidence that the school is operating successfully at all levels. These will be evaluated, actions taken and then adapted priorities will be fed back into the planning cycle.

Methodologies

The following three sections outline some of the essential methodologies for supporting, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching across the school as a whole and over time. For each methodology we have indicated how the information will be recorded, how it will be used to judge areas for improvement and then how information will be fed back into the process of raising standards.

1. Improving the quality of teaching in the classroom through Individual Development Plans, the Appraisal Process and Performance-related Pay

Individual Development Plans (IDP). All staff will be appraised annually by the Head or designated members of staff from the SMT. Personal targets will be set relating to a member of staff's roles and responsibilities within the school, their teaching and classroom practice and their pupils' progress. Targets will also be set in line with the School Development Plan to ensure that progress is made strategically. Performance at appraisal will be linked to pay progression to encourage the recruitment and retention of excellent staff. The Governing Body will work with the SMT to decide how appraisal outcomes will lead to pay decisions and make this clear to staff. Requests for training (internal or external) will need to be linked as closely as possible with the school's overall priorities and the roles of the person concerned.

Patterns of staff recruitment and retention will be tracked and exit interviews will be performed and recorded to give feedback on the effectiveness of the leadership and management of teaching and learning.

Formal lesson observations will form a key part of the process. Observations will focus on such areas as: behaviour and safety of pupils, appropriateness of planning, the level to which needs have been addressed (e.g. language levels used), the quality of the teaching and learning that has taken place and the standard and usefulness of marking. The observation report will be logged in a central file for that member of staff and action points tracked on the staff section of the Target Tracker by the Head to ensure that progress is being made.

In addition to formal observations, all members of staff will select one or two peer observations that they would like to carry out as part of their yearly IDP. This cross-fertilisation, along with the benefits of KGT working, will have the advantage of strengthening collaborative practice by the interweaving of methods and practices.

2. Measuring and improving the quality of teaching in the classroom through tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of the collaborative practice model

Explicit management and team structures are essential for effective collaboration. Delivery of lessons is typically undertaken by KGTs. The daily sharing of a range of ideas, knowledge and skills means that there is the potential for continual observation and discussion of each other's teaching, therapeutic and behaviour management strategies. Time has been allocated every week to share observations and reflect on the quality of the teaching and learning. This way of working promotes a natural sharing of good practice at all levels.

3. Improving Quality of Teaching by the effective analysis and sharing of pupil data

Systems will be established for sharing information on pupils, enabling all staff to be kept up-to-date on pupils' needs and the strategies used to support them:

- **Pupil folders on the Management Information System.** Each pupil will be allocated a folder on the staff network which all staff will be able to update.
- **New Pupil Presentations.** A 'This is Me' sheet will be prepared for each pupil including a family history, learning and communication strengths and needs, behavioural information and any specific medical concerns.
- **Assessment summaries (including Communication Profile).** Summaries of needs and strategies will be produced by therapists after each re-assessment.
- **Pupil handover packs.** At the end of each academic year KGT members will prepare handover packs for every pupil that will be transferring to a new class or placement.

Summary

Our top-down and bottom-up focus on delivering excellent outcomes for our pupils will ensure teaching is at least 'good' by the time it is inspected and will ensure that improvements are made year-on-year. The Grove House School's focus on ensuring pupil success will build upon whole-school improvement systems. Planning, delivering, assessing, tracking and re-evaluating will be at the core of our activities. The key messages from the evaluation of the school at every level will ultimately be fed back through the school planning cycle into its Self-Assessment and School Development Plan, which will be scrutinised and challenged by the Governing Body (see F2).

Liaising with and Reporting to Parents/Carers

Effective and excellent communication is a priority at every level for Grove House School. The whole-school approach to communication will be captured in a clearly articulated and shared Communication Policy. It will emphasise that communication with parents and carers about attainment, progress, lesson content, behaviour and attendance as well as any concerns about each pupil's experience can have a profound impact on pupil progress.

The school will communicate with parents using formal and informal means. It should be noted that reasonable alternative arrangements will be made for parents/carers who could otherwise be disadvantaged by any of the modes of communication used.

Formal Communication Channels

- **Parents' Evenings.** Each pupil's KGT and parents will meet twice a year to discuss the child's progress towards IEP targets and enjoyment of life at school.
- **Annual Reviews.** The Head or Deputy Head, KGT, parents, pupil (if appropriate) and other professionals will meet to discuss progress and to set future targets. A report will be produced, agreed and distributed.
- **Termly IEP Updates.** The Deputy Head will supervise the creation of termly IEP updates by the KGT. These reviews will be agreed and shared with all relevant staff including the parents as a means of indicating progress and performance across the elements of the curriculum.

- **Log of Parental Complaints and Compliments.** These will be logged by the School Office. The Head, in conjunction with appropriate staff, will consider and deal with all urgent issues in a timely manner. A summative report will be presented to the Governing Body.
- **Parent Satisfaction Survey.** Each year parents will be invited to complete a formal, anonymous satisfaction survey to evaluate the quality all aspects of the provision. The survey will focus on the school's performance in areas like, supporting pupils' progress, sharing information, keeping pupils safe and preparing them for life beyond school.

Parental Involvement in Measuring the Success of the School.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to contribute to the academic and therapeutic success of their child and the school by reinforcing and extending learning at home. Grove House School will do this explicitly in two main ways:

1. **Communicating Learning Objectives.** At the beginning of each term parents will be sent the scheme of work for each subject. The scheme of work will detail lesson topics, vocabulary and suggestions for supporting classroom learning. The school website will be an invaluable communication tool, providing up to date news and resources for parents.
2. **Training.** Workshops will be held to teach parents how to best support homework. They will discuss and demonstrate the specialist approaches used by the school to support children's learning, and will give advice on how to address individual learning needs (for example, simplification of input, repetition, thinking time and modelling responses).

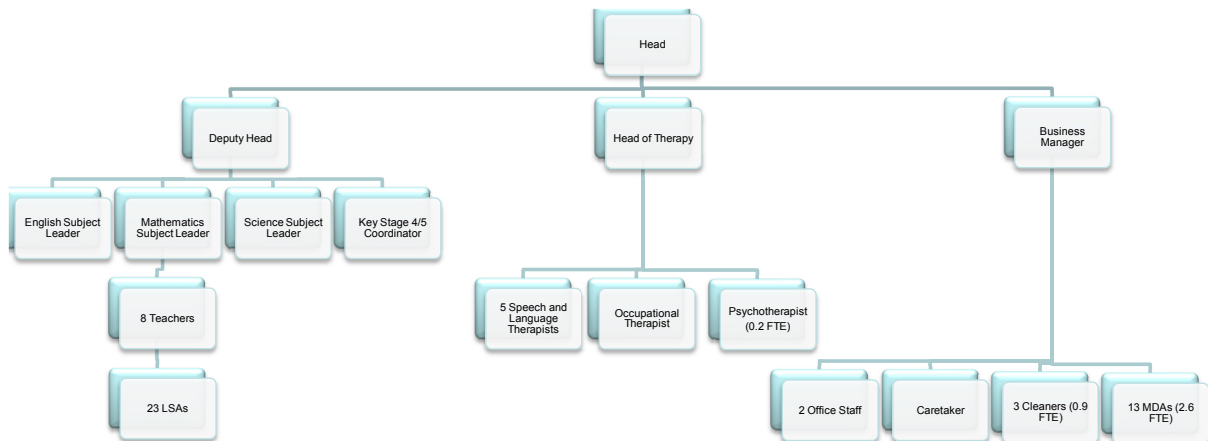
Parents will be strongly encouraged to support progress towards behaviour and attendance targets. They will receive copies of the whole school Behaviour and Safeguarding Policy, the Communication Policy and the Attendance Policy. Clearly articulated policies will drive good practice at all times.

Summary

Grove House School has a clear vision, driven by its needs-based outcomes for pupils and actualised through its collaboratively-delivered curriculum. The ambitious expectations for every pupil will be assessed, tracked, monitored and adjusted on the basis of analysis through robust strategies and systems from governance to front-line teaching. This will be supported by effective communication with all stakeholders. These systems and processes, along with their time and resource requirements, have been accounted for in the budget and the staffing structure, both at the outset and as it develops over time (see *D3, G*).

D3: Staffing Structure

Grove House School will adopt a clearly-defined team structure with strict divisions of responsibility and clear lines of authority and accountability. The organisational chart below shows the staffing structure for the fourth year of operation.



The staffing structure emphasises the value placed upon the range of the professions within Grove House School. The SMT will include representatives of the school's teaching and therapeutic staff, widening the perspective in whole-school planning and policy development, and promoting collaboration from the top down.

To aid the development of effective collaborative practice in the lower part of the structure, established SLCN school Heads recommend the establishment of 'key group teams' (KGT). They consist of a teacher, SLT and LSAs/SLTAs who work predominantly with a given group of pupils. The OT and other therapists will work with any of the staff teams where a need has been identified.

The staffing levels at Grove House School will enable each class of no more than ten pupils to be supported by the following team of staff:

- 1 Teacher
- 0.5 Speech and Language Therapist
- 2 LSAs or Speech and Language Assistants (SLTA)

Careful timetabling will allow KGTs to work with their own pupils in a number of lessons each week, allowing continuity for pupils and for staff to develop a depth of knowledge regarding pupils' needs, support strategies and targets. The budget allows planned ratios of staff to pupils to be maintained during the phased growth of the school, enabling these KGTs to operate from year one and to remain with a class of pupils as they move through the school (see table below). This will aid transitions and ensure continuity in the quality of provision for pupils.

Grouping of Pupils

At full capacity, there will be a total of 105 pupils on roll. They will be grouped as follows:

	Year group	No. of classes	No. of pupils in each class
Key Stages 2 and 3	5, 6, 7, 8, 9	6 vertically-streamed classes	9-10
Key Stage 4	10, 11	For Form Time, PSHE, Life Skills: 2 classes	15
		For other subjects: 3/4 classes	Will depend on option choices of cohort, <i>Very small</i>
Key Stage 5	12, 13	For Form Time, PSHE, Life Skills: 2 classes	10
		For other subjects: 2/3 classes	Will depend on option choices of cohort. <i>Very small</i>

Development of the Curriculum

The curriculum plan in section *D1* will be used to guide the development of schemes of work based on the national curriculum. The decisions taken during this planning stage will be fundamental to the success of the curriculum. To ensure that schemes of work are consistent and progressive, it will be necessary for a single, experienced member of staff to have an overview of the planning in a subject area. For this reason, the teaching staff employed in year one will include three middle managers with the subject knowledge to develop effective schemes of work for each of the core subject areas: English, Maths and Science. These members of staff will be on a slightly reduced timetable throughout, giving them time to devote to planning and assessing the quality of delivery of their subject by other members of staff. The other key components of the curriculum: the therapeutic and social, emotional and communication skills curricula will also be developed by senior members of staff. The Deputy Head will supervise the development of the PSHE programme and the Head of Therapy will take responsibility for the Life Skills curriculum and the coordination of therapeutic programmes. A holistic educational environment will be set up at the outset.

Beyond these subjects, staff will write schemes of work for the subjects they teach until the point at which an obvious subject coordinator is appointed. The SMT will spend time with each subject leader ensuring the plans are of high quality and are consistent with the vision.

Delivery of the Curriculum

English and Maths lessons will be taught at the same time each morning, in many cases by the form teacher. This will allow:

- Flexibility for pupils who require different teaching groups in Maths and English to be accommodated.
- One teacher to gain a better understanding of pupils' learning styles and needs, aiding learning in core subjects.
- Strong working relationships to develop between staff members of the KGT.

Where possible, KGTs will also be responsible for the delivery of PSHE and Life Skills for their class. All other areas of the curriculum will be delivered by subject specialists, but where appropriate in the same classroom. Limiting the number of staff, settings and transitions will help any pupils in the intake with high functioning autism or aspergers to cope better with the day.

At capacity, the full range of subjects will be covered without the requirement for many of the staff to teach more than one subject area. Where necessary this will be arranged so the member of staff will only teach key stage 3 pupils in their second subject. As a result, Grove House School will be able to recruit candidates of the

highest quality rather than searching for 'best fits'. Teaching groups will be smaller at key stages 4 and 5 to allow pupils to follow a broad range of subjects. This has been reflected in the overall staff count.

All teaching staff will be given 10% non-contact time in accordance with Teacher' Pay and Conditions to provide additional time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). An hour of this time will be spent with the KGT's SLT.

The vision refers to the importance of high quality pastoral care, which must be provided at the outset as a large number of pupils transition into the school. Form teachers will deal with the everyday pastoral needs of the pupils in their class. They will teach their group of pupils regularly and as a result will get to know them exceptionally well. The Deputy Head will take responsibility for pastoral care on a whole school basis.

Phased growth

The growth years will see the gradual phasing in of staff as shown:

	Staff/Year	Sept 15	Sept 16	Sept 17	Sept 18
SMT	Students on roll	40	60	90	105
	Head	1	1	1	1
	Deputy Head	1	1	1	1
	Head of Therapy (SLT)	1	1	1	1
	Business Manager	1	1	1	1
	Total Leadership	4	4	4	4
Teaching Staff	English/Maths/Science Core Subject Leaders	3	3	3	3
	Key Stage 4 & 5 Coordinator		1	1	1
	Class Teachers	1	3	6.5	8
	Total Teaching Staff (Ex SMT)	4	7	10.5	12
	Ratio of Teaching Staff to Children (Incl Head)	1:7	1:7	1:7	1:7.5
Therapeutic Staff	SLTs (Ex SMT)	1	2	4	5
	Ratio of SLT to pupils	1:20	1:20	1:18	1:18
	Occupational Therapist	0.5	0.5	1	1
	Psychotherapist				0.2
Support Staff	LSAs or SLTAs	8	12	18	23
	Ratio of LSAs/SLTAs to pupils	1:5	1:5	1:5	1:5
	MDAs (P/T)	4	6	9	11
	Ratio of MDAs to pupils	1:10	1:10	1:10	1:10
	Catering assistants (P/T)	0	1	2	2
Ad-min/Site	Office Staff	1	1.5	2	2
	Caretaker	1	1	1	1
	Cleaners (P/T)	2	2	3	3

The level of staffing in years one and two will be supported by the leadership grant. The Head will form a SMT comprising:

- Head
- Deputy Head
- Head of Therapy
- Business Manager

By collaborating, they will have the experience and specialist knowledge required to draw up an appropriate whole School Development Plan that can drive progress in the three areas of the curriculum. They will also set a standard for parity and cooperation between the professions that can be reproduced throughout the staff

team. The expertise of these managers will be required to monitor the quality of the early delivery of the curriculum, assess the standards being achieved by pupils and support staff in their new roles.

Delivery of Curriculum

The tables below are included to demonstrate the viability of the curriculum offer for a small school, during the first four years of growth. They are, of course, only an example of how the roles might be distributed. The 'form core' refers to the package of six 45 minute English lessons, six Maths lessons and one PSHE lesson, delivered where possible by the form teacher. The seventh English lesson each week and Life Skills lessons listed in Section *D1* will be delivered by the KGT's SLT.³¹

Year One – 1 Head, 5 Teaching Staff

	Form (Yes/No and No. of Sessions)	KS3 (Number of Sessions)	Total Sessions x 45 mins
Maths Subject Leader/PE	Yes Form Core x 13	PE x 8	21
English Subject Leader/ Humanities	Yes Form Core x 13	Humanities x 8	21
Science Subject Leader/ICT/Food/PE	No Form (so extra 5 hours a week free)	Science x 12 ICT x 4 Food x 4 PE x 4	24 (but no form)
Music/MFL/PE	Yes Form Core x 13	Music x 4 MFL x 4	21
Art/DT/Drama	Yes Form Core x 13	Art x 4 DT x 4 Drama x 4	25

Year Two – 1 Head, 8 Teaching Staff

	Form (Yes/No and No. of Sessions)	KS3 (Number of Sessions)	KS4/5	Total Sessions x 45 mins
Head			ASDAN x 2	2
English Subject Leader	Form Core x 13		English GCSE x 5, ELC x 5	23
Maths Subject Leader	Form Core x 13		Maths GCSE x 5, ELC x 5	23
Science Subject Leader	No Form	Science x 12 Maths x 6	Science GCSE x 4, ELC x 4	26, but no form
Humanities	Yes English only x 6	Humanities x 8	Humanities GCSE x 4, ELC x 4	22, perhaps Deputy
ICT	Form Core x 13	ICT x 4 PSHE x 1	ICT GCSE x 4, ELC x 4	26
DT/Food	KS4/5 Form	Food x 4 DT x 4	DT GCSE x 4, ELC x 4, Food GCSE x 4, ELC x 4	24
Art/Music/Drama	No	Art x 4 Music x 4 Drama x 4	Art GCSE x 4, Art ELC x 4, Exp Arts GCSE x 4, Exp Arts ELC x 4	28
PE	KS4/5 Form	PE x 16 PSHE x 2	PE GCSE x 4, PE ELC x 4	26

Year Three – 1 Head, 11.5 Teaching Staff

	Form (Yes/No and No. of Sessions)	KS3 (Number of Sessions)	KS4/5	Total Sessions x 45 mins
Head			ASDAN x 4	4
English Subject Leader	No form, so an extra 5 hours a week	English x 6	English GCSE x 10, ELC x 10	26, but no form
Maths Subject Leader	No	Maths x 6	Maths GCSE X 10, ELC x 10	26, but no form

³¹ Charts have also been completed with a 70% reduction in pupil numbers to demonstrate how the staffing structure would adapt. In this situation one GCSE and ELC option will not be offered.

Science Subject Leader	No	Science x 12	Science GCSE x 8, Science ELC x 8	28, but no form
ICT	Yes Maths only x 6	ICT x 5	ICT GCSE x 8, ICT ELC x 8	27
DT	Yes Maths only x 6	DT x 5	DT GCSE x 8, DT ELC x 8	27
Food	Yes English only x 6	Food x 5	Food GCSE x 8, Food ELC x 8	27
Humanities	Yes Form core x 12 (No PSHE)		Hums GCSE x 8, Hums ELC x 8	28
Music	No	Music x 5 English x 6	Exp Art GCSE x 8, Exp Art ELC x 8	27
Art/Drama	Yes KS4/5 Form	Art x 5 Drama x 5	Art GCSE x 8, Art ELC x 8	26
PE	Yes KS4/5 Form	PE x 12	PE GCSE x 8, PE ELC x 8	28*
Teacher	No	Hums x 10 English x 6 Science x 3		19, perhaps Deputy
PT Teacher		PSHE x 8 PE x 8		16

* 28 is the maximum number of 45 minute sessions per week that allows 10% PPA time.

Year Four – 1 Head, 13 Teaching Staff

	Form (Yes/No and No. of Sessions)	KS3 (Number of Sessions)	KS4/5	Total Sessions x 45 mins
Head				
English Subject Leader	No		English GCSE x 10, ELC x 10	20, no form
Maths Subject Leader	No		Maths GCSE X 10, ELC x 10	20, no form
Science Subject Leader	No	Science x 6	Science GCSE x 8, Science ELC x 8	22, no form
ICT	Yes Maths only x 6	ICT x 5	ICT GCSE x 8, ICT ELC x 8	27
DT	Yes Maths only x 6	DT x 5	DT GCSE x 8, DT ELC x 8	27
Food	Yes English only x 6	Food x 5	Food GCSE x 8, Food ELC x 8	27
Humanities	Yes	Humanities x 8	Hums GCSE x 8, Hums ELC x 8	24
Music	No	Music x 5 English x 6	Exp Art GCSE x 8, Exp Art ELC x 8	27
Art/Drama	Yes KS4/5 Form	Art x 5 Drama x 5	Art GCSE x 8, Art ELC x 8	26
PE	Yes KS4/5 Form	PE x 8	PE GCSE x 8, PE ELC x 8	24
Teacher	Yes English only x 6	Hums x 2 PE x 4 Maths x 6	Asdan x 4	16, perhaps Deputy
Teacher	Yes KS4/5 Form	Maths x 12 Science x 9		21
Teacher	Yes KS4/5 Form	English x 12 PE x 4 PSHE x 9		25

Academic Staff

The delivery of the core subjects will be given priority throughout the phasing in of the staff. At first, the school will have the feel of a primary school, easing the transition for a cohort of new children. In year one, teachers will spend most of the morning with their form covering the Maths and English curriculum, then will be required to teach one or two other subjects that match their interests and skill sets. A key stage 2 teacher may be allocated to the lowest stream, although they will teach key stage 3 pupils throughout the phasing so a key stage 3 teacher could be considered for the

role. Senior members of staff will provide intensive support to these members of staff at the outset.

In following years the process will need to be flexible, with the quality of the applicant being the foremost concern as the staff count grows. In year two key staff will need to be in place to deliver key stage 4 qualifications. Part time positions may be offered to cover certain subjects if this provides a good long term option. Higher level LSAs, also, may be able to contribute to the delivery of certain subjects, for example, MFL, under the supervision of teaching staff.

The staffing structure and budget supports a total of ten GCSE options, ten Entry Level Course options and the compulsory ASDAN qualification (see D1). Teaching groups will inevitably be smaller in size for these courses.

In years one to three many staff will operate on reduced timetables, allowing time to be spent developing new schemes of work and lesson plans. Teachers will be given the time to carry out peer observations and spend time with therapists to develop their understanding of the pupils' needs and the strategies used to support them. The quality of the provision from the outset will need to be carefully monitored to ensure the outcomes are achieved for pupils. This will require a rigorous approach to the assessment of teaching and learning by all senior managers. Care has been taken to ensure sufficient time can be allocated to this process through the budget.

If uptake of places were reduced by 70% the model would be flexible enough to adapt to a lower number of pupils as shown in section G3. In key stages 2 and 3 this would be absorbed by a reduction in the number of staff employed. Pupils will be vertically grouped so this would be managed quite simply. In key stages 4 and 5 it would be necessary to reduce the offer of GCSE and ELC subjects by just one to reduce the staffing level slightly. Crucially, both solutions would not interfere with the quality of the provision.

Therapeutic Staff

The Head of Therapy will be a key appointment for the school. They will ideally have experience of working in an educational setting and delivering training programmes. [REDACTED] will meet with them on a regular basis to monitor the development of the role. If permitted, they will be recruited in advance of opening and will guide the appointments in their department and pupil admissions. New SLTs will be employed each year to join the classes of pupils coming into the school. A number of Essex-based therapists have already expressed an interest in applying for these roles. The OT will be part time in year one, then full time thereafter. This could again be two part time posts. We have again had interest in this post, but if it were difficult to find an occupational therapist with sensory integration training, a leading practice of OTs in Surrey, *The Sensory Smart Child*, have offered to supervise a newly-qualified OT as they are trained. Additional therapists may be required for pupils with Physiotherapy, Arts Therapy or Psychotherapy on their statements. It will be possible to provide these at the school as local professionals have suggested they would be prepared to work with us on a needs-led basis. This would be budget neutral so doesn't appear in Section G. In year one a newly-qualified Arts Therapist and Psychotherapist has requested a placement at the school on a voluntary basis.

An analysis of a SLT's working week has been carried out for each year of growth to inform the budget and staffing structure. In line with the vision for Grove House School, priority will be given to classroom-based therapy: each class will have speech and language support in around ten of their lessons each week.

Support Staff

23 LSAs or SLTAs will be employed at Grove House School at full capacity. At the outset it will be essential that they have experience of working with pupils with SEN. The precise balance between LSAs and SLTAs has not been suggested as this will be determined by recruitment choices and does not impact the budget. The use of SLTAs, where appropriate, will make a very positive contribution to the specialist nature of the learning environment. The ratios of support staff to pupils match those of comparable schools on the Schools Financial Benchmarking website and are able to be sustained throughout the growth years.

Parents

Parents will be invited to contribute skills and time to the school, particularly to enhance the programme of activities offered to pupils at lunchtime and after school. Their help might also be needed to support pupils on trips and visits. The health, safety and welfare of pupils will be a prime concern of the school so all volunteers will receive training on school policies and procedures for child protection and will be DBS checked.

SMT Roles

The Head will work closely with the SMT which will share collective responsibility for the delivery of the vision for the new school. The members of the team will each be assigned a number of strategic and day-to-day responsibilities. They will be directly accountable to the Head and will work cooperatively with the Governors.

Head

The Head will take the lead role in ensuring the strategic direction of the school. They will be responsible for establishing effective collaborative practice between the school's professional teams and training and supporting all members of staff. The Head must be child-focussed, with all decisions taken reflecting their needs and serving their holistic development. They will work with their SMT to identify targets and initiatives to be included in a carefully considered School Development Plan then take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating progress towards them. The Head will be required to forge positive links with local mainstream schools, support services and the wider community. He or she will ensure best practice is disseminated throughout the school.

Deputy Head

The Deputy Head will take full responsibility for the smooth running of the school in the absence of the Head. They will be given a number of specific roles, which will be decided in due course in collaboration with the Head. They may, for example, take responsibility for any of the following:

- Pastoral Care
- Discipline
- Attendance
- SEN policy and provision
- Personnel Issues
- Marketing/PR
- CPD
- Curriculum
- Timetable
- Assessment and Reporting

One of the SMT, most likely the Deputy Head, will need to take the role of SENCO. As SENCO, they will have day to day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision to be made to support individual pupils. They will also be the key point of contact for parents, external agencies, LAs and support services. Their timetable will allow time for attending annual reviews and IEP meetings and for completing the associated paperwork for all pupils.

Head of Therapy

The Head of Therapy will be a key appointment for the school. They will work cross-departmentally with the SMT to ensure that therapeutic interventions are embedded into educational priorities and agendas. Their main responsibility will be for the translation of professional standards into this new setting, creating effective and high quality therapeutic provision within a new evidence base. Their understanding of the vision for the school will be critical as they will be required to take responsibility for the pre-admissions procedures, effectively managing the selection of the school's cohort of children. The Head of Therapy will also take the role of SENCO. As SENCO, they will have day to day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils. They will also be the key point of contact for parents, external agencies, the LA and support services. Their timetable will allow time for attending annual reviews and IEP meetings and for completing the associated paperwork for all pupils.

The Head of Therapy will be responsible for:

- Working to promote and facilitate a culture of reflective collaborative practice
- The recruitment of therapeutic staff
- Ensuring a robust system of continuing professional development is in place
- Developing a training strategy for all school staff
- Collaborating with a wide range of agencies and professional services
- Developing and implementing an outreach strategy across Essex
- Devising a range of highly specialist speech and language therapy intervention packages for use across all key stages at Grove House School.
- Providing highly specialist speech and language therapy assessment and analysis of students communication profile to measure progress
- Writing reports for Annual Reviews and LA referrals which are sufficiently robust to stand up to external scrutiny
- Providing training to parents and carers in order to ensure therapeutic aims are being generalised to the home environment.

At capacity, it might be appropriate for members of the therapeutic team to be given additional responsibilities, for example:

- **Responsibility for pragmatic language.** Looking at how the whole school is operating in terms of providing opportunities for pragmatic language interaction.
- **Head of Research.** Coordinating requests for academic research.
- **Head of Therapy for key stages 4 and 5.** It might be appropriate for one member of staff to specialise in working with older pupils.

Business Manager

The school Business Manager will work closely with the Head to make sure that the school's budget and resources are used in the most efficient way. They will be responsible for:

- Keeping accounts and reporting on the school's financial position

- Advising the Head and Governors on financial policy
- Planning how to spend the budget and finding ways to reduce costs
- Ordering goods and services and paying suppliers and contractors
- Processing salaries
- Managing lettings and out of hours therapeutic services
- Recruiting, training and managing school support staff
- Managing school building maintenance
- Handling contracts and tenders for services like cleaning, catering and ICT
- Being responsible for security and health and safety on school premises
- Managing the school's administrative systems
- Preparing information and reports

The Business Manager will be closely involved in leadership activities and strategic decision making as part of the SMT.

Subject Leaders

Subject Leaders will form a middle layer in the school staffing structure, reporting to the SMT. They will play a crucial role in developing and maintaining the quality of pupils' learning experience in their subject area as previously described. In year one an English, Maths and Science subject leader will be identified, then in year two a key stages 4 and 5 coordinator will be recruited. They will manage timetabling for key stages 4 and 5, trips and visits, the work experience programme, public examinations and transitions. They will need also to liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.

Subject leaders may also be delegated additional responsibilities and where appropriate may provide assistance to the SMT. They will have a reduced timetable from the outset to reflect these additional roles and by year three will not teach a form group, giving them an additional five hours a week non-contact time.

All Staff

It may be appropriate for various responsibilities to be given to other members of staff, for example, Key stage 3 Coordinator, Gifted and Talented Coordinator, School Council.

Grove House School will choose to adhere to the regulations in the current *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* and will expect staff to carry out the outlined duties.

Summary

Working relationships between all professionals employed at the school will be supported by a strong line management structure with clear roles, clear lines of accountability and a clear system of performance management. The staffing structure will be flexible enough to respond to a reduction in pupil numbers and the changes in curriculum that will be required to accommodate the needs of all pupils. It demonstrates good value for money and supports a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils at all key stages, even during the four growth years.

Section D4: Assessing and Meeting the Needs of all Pupils

'Expected Pupil Intake' in D1 offers a detailed analysis of the anticipated SLCN and additional needs of our cohort of pupils. This section will describe the ways in which Grove House School will accommodate these varying strengths and needs.

Before entry to the school, each pupil's profile will need to be thoroughly assessed to ensure that is the right placement for the applicant and that the specialist nature of the provision is maintained.

Admissions Arrangements

The initial enquiry might be made by parents or by the Local Authority. Parents will be asked first to submit the child's:

- Statement (or Education and Health Care Plan)
- School reports
- Up-to-date Educational Psychologist's report
- Up-to-date Speech and Language Therapist's report
- Any reports from medical professionals.

The Educational Psychologist's report will be particularly useful as it will assess the full range of a child's difficulties beyond their SLCN. These documents will be discussed by the Head and Head of Therapy, and if appearing to fit the admissions criteria the pupil will be invited to attend a two-day trans-disciplinary assessment at the school. This will enable staff to look beyond the information provided to assess *all* the child's strengths and needs. The visit will include:

- **Case History.**
- **Formal speech and language testing.** The Head of Therapy will complete formal tests such as a CELF-4 and a CCC-2 where possible.
- **Informal speech and language testing.** This will include less formal interactions between the SLT and the child and where appropriate any non-standardised assessments of specific parts of language. This gives the opportunity for discourse analysis not provided by the CELF.
- **Testing with the OT.** The OT will use systematic observation in a clinical setting to assess the pupils' sensory processing skills, motor skills and manual dexterity. If necessary, they will use standardised assessments (sensory integration and praxis tests) or non-standardised tests to investigate any patterns of dysfunction.
- **Academic testing.** The pupil will be asked to carry out some short tasks with peers to check their abilities are in line with assessment data provided by their current placement. If required, staff may carry out a Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA), a Vernon Graded Word Spelling Test and a standardised maths assessment eg Hodder Test.
- **Teachers' observations**
The pupil will spend time in the most appropriate class and will be observed by a member of the SMT. He or she will assess the child's behaviour and their ability to mix acceptably with their peers.

A small number of pupils will not be able to be tested due to anxiety or inability to comply in test situations, so in these cases staff's observational assessments will be used.

These tests and observations will enable staff to unpick a diagnosis and check that a child's profile is appropriate for placement at the school. They will also gather

information on the specific nature of their SLCN and any comorbid issues. The precise format of the pre-admission assessment is subject to change as issues might arise that necessitate further investigation, for example a child might demonstrate a reading score that suggests the need for dyslexia or Irlen screening.

If it is felt that the pupil's needs can be met by the school, the LA will be asked to confirm that it will be willing to accept financial responsibility for the placement.

In preparation for the first year of operation, these assessments will have to be carried out at the child's current school.

The use of Assessment Information

The Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF-4) carried out during the pre-admissions assessment will provide an accurate and reliable baseline assessment of the child's language difficulties. This CELF assesses all areas of language with the strictest academic rigour and is relied upon by all SLCN schools. It will give a good view, for example, of receptive and expressive language skills, use of grammar, working memory, central auditory processing, phonemic awareness and vocabulary. The therapist will be able to assess the child's profile with the core tests, then use individual subtests to probe any deficits. A CELF will be only be given at the end of a key stage as more regular use will enable pupils to learn the test.

The information collected during the pre-admission assessment will be used to inform initial groupings for key stage 2/3 classes. They will be organised predominantly according to their receptive language skills and ability in literacy, but the social needs of each pupil will also be taken into account. The information will also be used to identify pupils that would benefit from direct therapy, provided for pupils on a needs-led basis. They may, for example, need to work with a speech therapist on a specific aspect of speech, language or communication, or require input from the OT.

During the assessment the OT will screen for comorbid conditions using observations in a clinical setting to assess real-life movement and reactivity to stimulation. It will be crucial to identify any pupils with sensory processing disorder (SPD), often associated with ASD or dyspraxia as without specialist management this condition will interfere with the pupils' ability to make progress and cope with school life. Pupils with SPD will be given sensory integration therapy for at least an hour a week in the sensory integration room and will follow the *alert programme* to support self-regulation, an issue for many children with ADHD or autism. Those with coordination difficulties may receive support with handwriting and practical lessons. All pupils on the OT's caseload will have an IEP target for occupational therapy.

Information from standardised assessments will also enable therapists to recommend personal intervention programmes for pupils to follow during form time. The CELF-4 is able, for example, to detect difficulties with working memory, regularly a feature of ADHD. A government-funded study testing more than 3000 school children found that one in ten had very poor working memory. They found working memory to be a more powerful predictor than IQ when it comes to learning. 'Ninety-eight percent with poor working memory had very low scores in standardized tests of reading comprehension and maths.'³² Evidence-based computer programmes for improving working memory can be used by these pupils during form time.

³² Alloway, T. et al. *Child Development*, 2009; 80: 606-621.

The school must be proactive in the diagnosis and treatment of such issues as they can be remediated. By addressing their SLCN *and* additional needs, Grove House will improve pupils' capacity for learning and deliver better outcomes in each of the three curricula.

Tracking and On-going Assessment

The information provided by the pre-admissions assessment will enable the SLT to identify areas of difficulty for the child and then respond with a plan for targeted support. They will set highly specific speech and language targets to be included in pupils' IEPs. The therapist will then work as part of a KGT to ensure lessons provide suitable opportunities for pupils to work towards their individual targets and that the curriculum is adapted to reflect any specific needs.

The therapist will monitor pupils continually through a range of informal activities and classroom observations. They will measure pupils' progress towards their targets which can then be updated, evaluated through the Target Tracker and shared with pupils, parents and staff. Where appropriate, CELF subtests or other non-standardised tests will be used to measure pupils' progress more formally towards the end of each academic year. The CELF-4 will then be repeated at the end of the key stage to formally measure the pupils' progress towards the deficits and in turn, the success of the school in catering for their needs. It will also be important to re-examine the child's full profile at this stage to check for any change in their balance of difficulties.

The OT will continually monitor pupils over the course of an intervention and will re-evaluate their skills every half term to update pupils' IEP targets. A report will be produced as part of the annual review process for each pupil on their caseload. The OT will continue to scrutinize the needs of all pupils when supporting lessons in order to identify any difficulties that might arise as children move through the school. They will of course respond to any concerns raised by other members of staff by offering a full clinical assessment. Interventions will be offered flexibly on a needs-led basis.

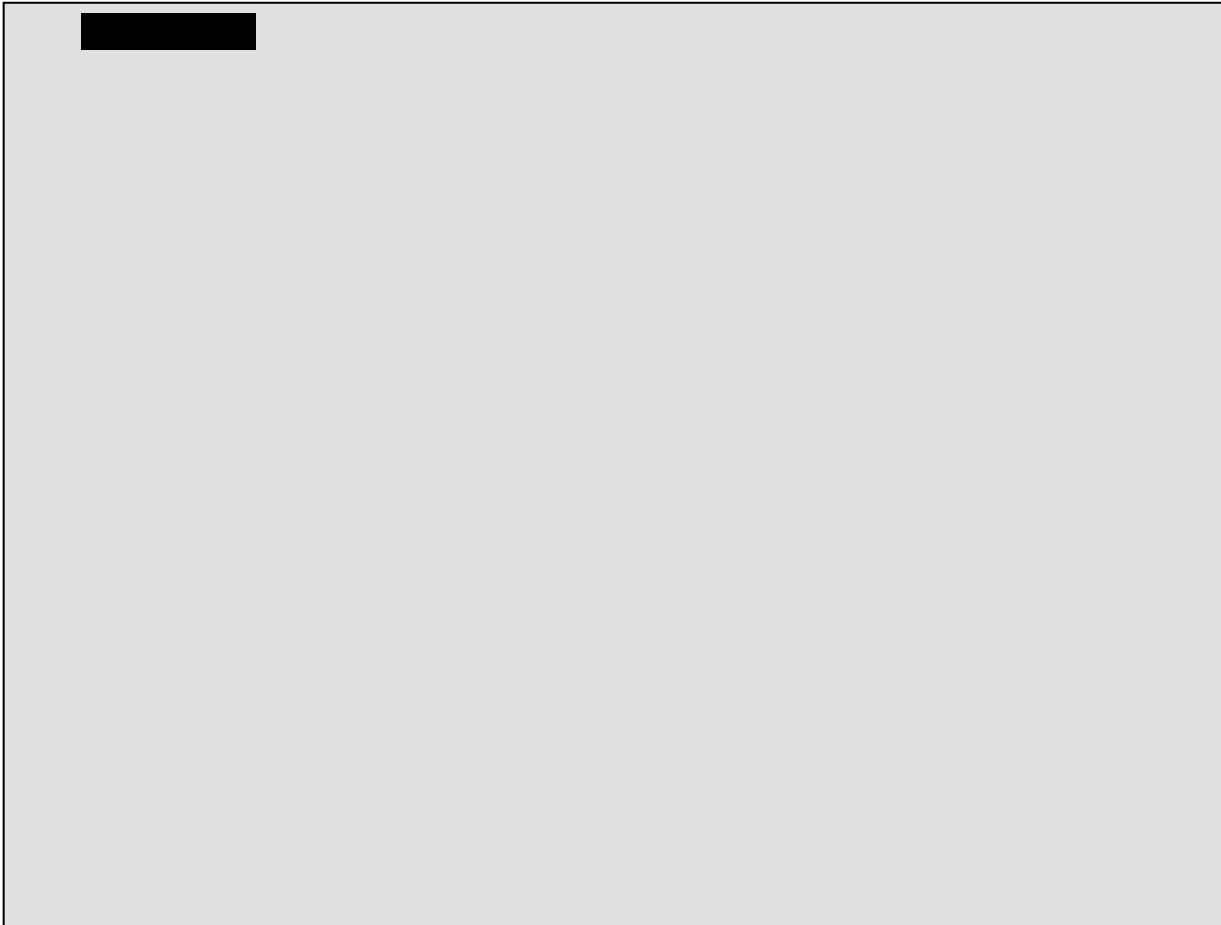
All pupils will be tracked according to their primary and secondary diagnoses, enabling the school to evaluate the efficacy of the provision for pupils with different types of need. Prompt action will be taken if a group is seen to be underperforming.

If interventions do not result in measurable success i.e. appear as red or amber on Target Tracker, the therapist will confer with the Head of Therapy and together they will consider whether:

- the target was realistic
- sufficient time was allowed
- the most suitable intervention method or materials were used
- relevant and accurate criteria were used to evaluate the intervention
- other issues have interfered with progress eg pupil motivation, parental support, quality of teaching

Suitable adjustments will be made and where necessary the IEP may be altered in agreement with the SENCO (Deputy Head). The impact of these changes will be monitored by the therapist under the supervision of the Head of Therapy. Throughout this process, however, all members of staff will ensure that learning will continue.





Approaches to Meeting Different Needs

Meeting the Needs of Pupils with SLCN

Research has shown that collaborative practice maximises the effectiveness of services provided for pupils with SLCN. The model of practice at Grove House School will be trans-disciplinary, meaning the disciplines are interwoven, providing a fully-integrated approach.³³

The exchange between the different professionals, known as 'cross-fertilisation', is mutually productive and benefits pupils beyond their SLT-supported lessons. With extended skills and knowledge, staff will be able to employ a number of specialist strategies to support the delivery of the curriculum to all pupils:

- **Modified Language.** Through training and cross-fertilisation staff will learn to adapt language to the needs of individual pupils. They may need to shorten sentences, simplify syntax, talk slowly and repeat key vocabulary and phrases.
- **Cross-curricular Links.** Staff will attempt to make links between curriculum subjects to support pupils with acquisition and generalisation of language.
- **Direct pre-teaching of vocabulary.** A multi-sensory approach will be used to pre-teach vocabulary. Parental involvement will be encouraged.
- **Approaches to Literacy.** Specialist programmes and strategies in literacy will be used to support the acquisition of language skills.
- **Signing** Many pupils with SLCN find visual and kinaesthetic support helps them to focus on and process spoken language. SLTs will be able to deliver training to all staff in staff meetings/INSET days.
- **Cued Articulation.** A system used to assist pupils in learning the sounds of speech.

³³ Claire Hatcher, *Making Collaborative Practice Work: A Model for Teachers and SLTs*, J & R Press Ltd, 2011.

- **Visual supports.** Pupils with SLCN are often visual learners. Symbols, photographs and objects help to convey meaning and support understanding.
- **Experiential Learning.** Real life experiences and practical activities will be used whenever possible. Functional situations will always be used to demonstrate abstract concepts.
- **Over-learning.** Pupils with SLI don't retain language as well so need to over-learn new vocabulary. Teachers will need to repeat key words many times in a lesson and regularly check for comprehension and retention.
- **Parental Involvement.** Parent will be asked to reinforce and extend pupils' learning of language at home.
- **Slow Pace.** It is recognised that many pupils with SLI can attain, but at a slower rate.
- **Auditory Memory.** Memory aids will be used to prevent poor memory interfering with learning. Instructions will be given one at a time and repeated where necessary.
- **Social Skills.** Teachers will identify and focus on social learning to help pupils build effective relationships and communication skills.

These strategies respond directly to the core deficits of pupils with primary SLCN outlined in 'Expected Pupil Intake' in Section D1. All staff will be trained in these strategies in staff meetings and as part of their INSET.

Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Additional SEN

In order to make provision for the full range of needs set out in each pupil's statement, teaching staff will need to be aware of the challenges faced by pupils with additional needs and will need to be able to modify their style of delivery accordingly.

- **ASD/Sensory Processing Difficulties.** Pupils will benefit from a carefully-controlled environment, with carpet, blinds, a shielded 'chill-out' area, a shut door and low-glare lighting. Staff will need to be sensitive to pupils' likes and dislikes to control their anxiety levels. It might be necessary to control seating plans. Pupils will follow a visual timetable for each lesson at the side of the board. ASD pupils will need direct teaching of social skills and the pragmatic use of language in Life Skills classes. The OT will establish a sensory timetable for the whole class and will provide sensory integration therapy for these pupils.
- **ADHD.** Pupils will sit out of the sight-line of distractions, windows or doors. Key lessons will be taught early in the day. Gross motor breaks will be included in all lessons. A whole-school approach to encouraging active listening will be developed.
- **Dyslexia.** Reading, writing and spelling will be taught using the *THRASS* system. Vocabulary and concepts will be taught in a multi-sensory way. Computer-based multisensory reading programmes may be used by pupils in Form Time. High interest, low level reading books will be provided. There will be a whole school awareness of dyslexia through ongoing in-house training for all staff.
- **Irlen Syndrome.** Artificial lights should be avoided for reading activities and reading material should have large text. Writing on the whiteboard should be large and use different colours for each line with large gaps between words.
- **Dyspraxia.** Teachers will structure lessons in short bursts with regular breaks. Time and support will be allowed for completing practical tasks. The OT will offer specific strategies for supporting these children and will assist in lessons where appropriate.

- **Physical Difficulties.** The school will promote the inclusion of pupils with physical difficulties and will ensure that staff understand their individual needs. The OT will be involved with the support of these pupils.
- **Hearing Impairment.** These pupils will sit at the front of the class and will need a quiet environment with lots of visual cues. Staff may use signing.
- **Dyscalculia.** All staff will be trained in the multi-sensory Unicorn Maths programme.

As a team, the staff will be highly adaptable and will be able to offer effective support for any of the needs catered for by the school. The SENCO (Deputy Head) will be responsible for coordinating support for SEN and will refer to external agencies if necessary (see the description of the role of SENCO in Section D3). He or she will work with the SMT to develop a school SEN policy and will oversee the day to day operation of the policy.³⁴ Formal training in the specific SEN of pupils at the school will be given internally by different professionals eg. SLTs, OT. [REDACTED]. On an everyday basis, the team of therapists will work with teaching staff in the classroom to develop strategies for the effective management of additional SEN.

Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Pupils

A member of staff will be given the role of gifted and talented coordinator. They will be responsible for ensuring all pupils are sufficiently challenged in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils should always receive appropriately differentiated work and homework, but the G & T coordinator will ensure additional opportunities are provided to further develop their abilities. Strategies will be developed in response to the needs of each individual and recorded on the pupil's IEP.

Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Different Characteristics

The Target Tracker will separate data according to socio-economic context, attainment on entry, gender, free school meals, and pupil mobility. If a particular group is underachieving, interventions will be put in place immediately to improve progress.



Grove House School have responded by including the *THRASS* programme for all pupils, but will monitor the outcomes of these groups closely to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Summary

The quality of initial staff training and the ongoing relationship between members of the trans-disciplinary team will be essential to the consistency and quality of the support for pupils' full range of strengths and needs.

Safeguarding, Behaviour and Attendance

³⁴ The SEN policy will refer to the following legislation and guidance: Draft Special educational needs code of practice (2013); Special educational needs and disability act (2001); Disability discrimination act (1995); Every Child Matters (2003); Children's act 2006; Modified National Curriculum.

Safeguarding

Grove House School will provide a safe and secure environment for all of its pupils. A safeguarding policy will be developed by the SMT that will apply to all staff and volunteers working at the school. It will:

- **Ensure safe recruitment.** All staff and volunteers will be checked for suitability. This will be managed by the Head who will take overall responsibility for safeguarding. DfE guidance on 'Safer Recruitment' will be followed at all times.
- **Raise awareness of child protection issues.** Staff will work to equip pupils with the skills needed to keep them safe in PSHE, Life Skills lessons and beyond.
- **Establish procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.** All staff and volunteers will be given training and information to help them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. They will be taught what to do if a pupil makes a disclosure and what to do if a pupil's behaviour or physical condition causes concern.
- **Support pupils who have been abused.** A child protection plan will be followed.
- **Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.** Staff will be expected to work in an open environment, maintaining a safe and appropriate relationship with pupils. Staff will avoid private or unobserved situations and will always encourage open communication with no secrets.

The policy will outline the protocol for most of the above in accordance with DfE guidance and in preparation for inspection by OFSTED. The final point, however, is less specific and will be critical to the vision, measured by outcome 3. Pupils with SLCN value, above everything, feeling safe, being protected and receiving help.³⁵ All forms of bullying, including cyber bullying will, therefore, need to be confronted and dealt with. Pupils will be taught that it is not acceptable to make comments or jokes that make others feel uneasy or unhappy. Many pupils will have social communication difficulties and will need help to interact successfully with their peers. Research shows that many of the children will also have issues with confidence and self-esteem, requiring staff to create a positive environment that will encourage inclusion and participation. In some situations this will involve making suitable adaptations to the physical environment to enable all pupils to cope and thrive (an access policy will also be developed). In all interactions with pupils, staff must always be fair, respectful and act as excellent role models.

An ethos of dignity and fairness, where pupils know that difference is respected, will contribute greatly to achievement at Grove House School.

Behaviour

As part of the creation of a positive learning environment Grove House School will encourage and reinforce positive behaviour and mutual respect for all. It will be recognised that difficulties in controlling behaviour or understanding social interaction or norms may be intrinsic to pupils' SEN. Through positive management strategies, the curriculum, IEP targets and therapy, all pupils, whatever their difficulties will be supported, enabling them to make a positive contribution to the school community.

The Head/Deputy Head will develop a whole school behaviour policy, supported and followed by staff members, parents and children. The policy will make use of the multi-disciplinary team in understanding and then supporting behavioural needs. It will include:

³⁵ Roulstone et al, *The Preferred Outcomes of Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs and their Parents*, Better Communication Research Programme, DfE, 32.

- **Positive policies to encourage good behaviour.** A range of rewards will be suggested for pupils of all ages and abilities to help children understand that they will gain attention through appropriate means.
- **Responsible behaviour will be taught through the school curriculum.** Values and attitudes will be taught formally in Life Skills and PSHE lessons, but will be reinforced in all subject areas.
- **Staff will model positive values, attitudes and behaviour.** This will help pupils to learn these and generalise them in a wide variety of contexts.
- **Staff will treat problems when they occur.**
- **Therapeutic input will develop pupils' self-regulation skills.** Pupils with sensory processing difficulties will be given gross motor breaks and sensory integration therapy to manage their level of arousal. At an appropriate point pupils will follow the *alert programme* to teach them to self-regulate.
- **Developing independent management of behaviour.** Older pupils will be supported in gradually developing independent behavioural modification strategies, with less reliance upon external motivation.

Incentives

A major aim of the school policy will be to encourage pupils to practice good behaviour by operating a system of specific praise and reward. Staff will use, for example, stars, stickers, tallies, tokens, comments in homework diaries or certificates to reward academic and non-academic achievements. These rewards will be relative to the individual's needs and capabilities. Individual certificates celebrating achievements will be awarded throughout the year. Informally, all members of staff will give verbal, descriptive praise as often as possible. Pupils will be encouraged to display their achievements in and out of school in assemblies and on display boards around the school. In accordance with Charlie Taylor's *Checklist for Teachers* the incentives tariff will be displayed for pupils to see in class.³⁶

Sanctions

Children with SLCN may struggle to make themselves understood by friends or may find it very hard to make sense of what is being said to them. Those with ASD or pragmatic difficulties may also find it difficult to interpret other people's behaviour and at times be clumsy, even unintentionally offensive, in their own attempts at interaction. Not surprisingly, research shows that communication difficulties can lead to frustration, withdrawal and emotional distress in older children. Problems will need to be treated in a caring and sympathetic manner in the hope of achieving an improvement in behaviour. They will need to be supported in discovering where the bounds of acceptable behaviour lie, as this is a part of growing up and becoming a member of society as a whole. The Behaviour Policy will state these boundaries firmly and clearly and staff will be directed to make these boundaries explicit to pupils throughout the school day. Breaches of discipline will be dealt with by the member of staff concerned or in the case of a major breach, the Head. Staff will be sensitive to the age of the child and their level of understanding and control over the behaviour, but on the recommendation of other SLCN schools, sanctions will be applied across the board.

Pupils may, for example, receive a verbal reprimand, a reminder of expected behaviour, the loss of free time or be moved to sit alone. 'Reflection sheets' using shape coding will be used when appropriate to prompt pupils to think about their

³⁶ Charlie Taylor, *Getting the Simple Things Right*, DfE, 2011.

behaviour. Major breaches of discipline may result in 'withdrawal'. Careful thought will be given to appropriate interventions in these cases and parents will be involved. The school's positive approach to behaviour management and ethos of ensuring success for all pupils means that formal 'exclusion' from school will be avoided wherever possible. Instead, considerable efforts will be made to investigate the root causes of behaviour and to design individual behaviour plans with the long term aim of reducing significantly disruptive or aggressive behaviour.

All staff will be given 'Team-Teach' training, a strategy used by other SLCN schools for managing challenging behaviour in the classroom. The method teaches positive behavioural strategies designed to reduce anxiety, risk and restraint. Any use of such techniques by staff will be logged and the pattern of their use will be scrutinized by the Head.

The key to the successful management of behaviour will be the consistency with which rewards and sanctions are applied and work through all areas of the curriculum on pupils' understanding of appropriate behaviour. The Head will follow Taylor's recommendation to monitor the amount of praise, rewards and punishments given by individual staff. The school will hold data on the behaviour of different groups of pupils and its use of rewards and sanctions, including permanent and fixed term exclusions. Where inequalities exist, interventions will be put in place to tackle them.

Attendance

Data shows a disproportionate number of pupils with SEN with persistent absence from school, both in mainstream and special schools. It will be vital to monitor and act decisively on absenteeism as there is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. The Government's *Guidance on the Attendance of Pupils with SEN* discusses a number of strategies to improve pupil attendance.³⁷ Most relate to the quality of pastoral care, support for pupils' SEN, suitability of curriculum and management of bullying. The attendance data at Grove House School will therefore be a key measure of the success of the provision on a number of levels. The Head will develop an attendance policy which will set out the school's expectations for attendance and the procedure for acting in cases of absenteeism. It will be essential to fully understand the causes and establish the school's role in these. It may be necessary to reflect on the quality of the child's experience, with input from a number of staff members. Any investigations will need to involve the pupil and parents and if absolutely necessary, EWOs or social services.

As children with the worst patterns of attendance tend to come from the lowest socio-economic groups, data will, as before, need to be extracted for different groups of pupils. The school will have to respond rapidly to any irregular patterns to promote and improve attendance amongst these groups.

Grove House School may admit pupils with health and medical needs as speech, language and communication difficulties can form a part of diagnoses like cerebral palsy and Worcester Drought Syndrome. In order to ensure that pupils' health and medical needs are met, a suitable member of staff will be made responsible for the coordination of any such provision. The pupils' EHC plans should in due course detail pupils' health needs and outline any medical requirements. Medical records will also be kept for all pupils. If a pupil requires medical input from the school, the member of

³⁷ DCFS, *Guidance on the Attendance of Pupils with Special Educational Needs*, 2009.

staff responsible will meet with parents when their child is admitted to the school and will oversee the administration of any medication necessary for the pupils at school.

Other Agencies

To ensure that pupils are successfully supported in their placement at Grove House School, agencies will be used appropriately and effectively to help identify and address pupils' needs.

Research has confirmed that pupils with SLCN and those with ASD are at greater risk of developing behavioural, emotional and social difficulties than typically developing children and young people. A number of our pupils may already have links with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and new referrals will be able to be made by the school. The SENCO (Deputy Head) will need to work closely with this service to ensure pupils get the best possible support. The service will provide treatment for pupils with emotional difficulties, anxiety, fears or unhappiness.

Most pupils will come to the school with a relatively recent Educational Psychologist's report. If, however, an issue arises during their time at the school that is beyond the school staff's SEN expertise, an Educational Psychologist's advice might be sought.

The local speech and language service may or may not provide speech and language therapy to pupils at Grove House School if it is included in their EHC plan. The LA is currently considering whether to pay the school to deliver this therapy instead. The NHS lead has been tremendously supportive of this proposal as her budget rarely extends to supporting secondary age pupils. Specialist SLTs may be brought in to support pupils with eating and drinking difficulties (dysphagia) as most SLTs do not have the appropriate training or experience to deal with this complex difficulty.

AFASIC is a national organisation that provides support for children with speech and language impairments and their families. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], has helped to obtain evidence of demand for this application and would like Grove House School to continue to have links with the organisation. AFASIC would be able to give specialist help to parents and carers and may set up a support group at the school for families in the wider community.

Summary

The cohort of pupils at Grove House School are likely to present with a broad range of SLCN and additional SEN. They can, however, receive all support required by their EHC plans in-house and for the majority of the time this will be delivered in the classroom. The collaborative practice model, regarded as best practice for the delivery of therapy in schools, will enable staff to share perspectives, knowledge and skills, and for immediate action to be taken when difficulties arise. A detailed assessment on entry will inform the KGT's precise understanding of pupils' SLCN enabling lessons to be delivered at a level that engages and challenges all pupils, transforming their rate of progress. Policies will reflect the specialist understanding of this cohort of children's SLCN, SEN and psychology and will enable all situations to be dealt with expertly and sensitively. Data will be used to highlight issues with individuals, cohort trends and the success of the provision in catering for pupils' full range of needs.

Section E - Evidence of Need – Part 1

The table below shows commissioner demand (column B) and support from parents and young people (column C), expressed as percentages of the total number of places available (column A).

Table 1: For Pupils with Statements of SEN

	2015				2016			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
Year 5	40*	40	13	128%	40	40	13	138%
Year 6			10				13	
Year 7			13				10	
Year 8			6				13	
Year 9			9				6	
Year 10	20*	20	9	100%	60	60	9	
Year 11			4				4	
Year 12			5				5	
Year 13			2				2	
Totals	40	40	51		60	60	75	

* These figures are combined as pupils in these year groups will be vertically streamed.

The above numbers are supplemented by 30 surveys from parents of younger pupils who would like their children to attend in future years. There are also 13 surveys from parents of year 10-13 pupils which haven't been included in year 1. Some of these parents may consider a placement for their child in a key stage 3 stream if they are not yet ready to start a key stage 4 course. The conversion rate of the above numbers is expected to be extremely high as all parents or students have already signed to say that they 'would request Grove House School to be named on their child's Statement of SEN'.

Local Authority Demand

Contact was made with the [REDACTED] at Essex County Council (ECC), [REDACTED], in September 2013. An initial meeting was held in October with [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. They asked us to provide more detailed information on the school's admissions criteria and to collect surveys to give them a feel for the numbers of parents who may choose the school. A document was prepared for commissioners shortly before the end of the year with a description of the provision, an approximate cost per place and detailed information about the pupil profile with a tick box method of identifying a target pupil linked to ECC's own *Descriptors for Determining Levels of SEN*.³⁸ Similar information was also sent to commissioners in Southend, Thurrock, Havering, Hertfordshire and Kent following telephone conversations. Havering, Hertfordshire and Kent soon confirmed that they would not seek to commission places at the school, despite some support from parents. The [REDACTED], [REDACTED] requested a meeting, held in March. We shared information and arranged for a letter of support to be sent, see below. A further meeting was also held in March with [REDACTED] at ECC to discuss pupil numbers, the level of top-up and possible sites.

³⁸ *Descriptors for Determining Levels of Special Educational Need*, [http://secure.essexcc.gov.uk/vip8/si/esi/content/binaries/documents/Service_Areas/SENaPS/SENCO_Manual/Manual_Assessment/e\)_School_Age_descriptors_-_final1.pdf](http://secure.essexcc.gov.uk/vip8/si/esi/content/binaries/documents/Service_Areas/SENaPS/SENCO_Manual/Manual_Assessment/e)_School_Age_descriptors_-_final1.pdf)

Letters of Demand



Essex County Council

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Sir or Madam,

Confirmation of support for Grove House School

We confirm that the Local Authority of Essex supports Grove House School's application. We understand that Grove House School is a special school catering for pupils aged 9 to 19 with complex or severe Speech, Language and Communication needs which is proposed to open in Essex in September 2015.

We confirm that we agree there is a need for the type of proposed provision in the local area and we will consider naming Grove House School in line with our statutory duties in appropriate pupils' statements of SEN. I'm sure you appreciate it is difficult to predict the number of admissions to a new special school, which will be unique within Essex, and the location of which is as yet unknown. We anticipate naming Grove House School on the Statement of Special Education Needs of up to 40 pupils for the first academic year following the school's opening and up to 60 in the second year.

We agree to pay the top up fee of [REDACTED] per pupil for children with Statements of Special Educational Need main category of need severe speech and language. Pupils with less complex needs would receive a lower top up sum in line with their needs or be inappropriate for admission to Grove House.

Signature: [REDACTED]

Print name: [REDACTED]

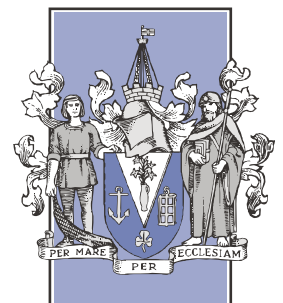
Date: 7/04/14

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Office of the Chief Executive & Town Clerk

Director details/service name

Our ref:		Telephone:	01702 534685
Your ref:		Fax:	01702 422273
Date:	22 April 2014	E-mail:	[REDACTED]
Contact Name:	[REDACTED]		DX 2812 Southend



Dear Sir,

RE: Grove House School

I am writing to indicate Southend Borough Council's position on the proposal to open the above free school supporting pupils aged 9 to 19 with Speech, Language or Communication Needs (SLCN) in Essex. The school has provided us with a clear

indication of the type of pupils they would aim to help and the proposed cost of a placement at the school.

Southend Borough Council has approximately 950 statements of SEN. Of these around 180 have SLCN recorded as their primary need. In this school's age range there are around 100 pupils, 60% of whom are currently educated in mainstream schools.

Currently the borough's SLCN pupils are educated in a range of settings. Southend has a resource unit for primary pupils with specific language impairment and a number of special schools covering autistic spectrum conditions, moderate and severe learning difficulties. Otherwise pupils attend mainstream school with varying levels of support. The health service provides the Speech and Language Therapy to all mainstream schools and but one of the special schools as it employs its own speech therapists.

There is currently no specific provision for pupils with SLCN within Southend or surrounding area, and as such if a child or young person or their parents requested a place at the above school, provided that it would not represent an unreasonable expenditure, the borough would consider this request. The cost of the placement would not only depend on the placement cost, which at [REDACTED] is similar in cost to local special school provision, but also on transport. Therefore whether Southend would be prepared to commission places would ultimately depend on the location of the school.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Marketing Materials

The following document was provided for commissioners, with slight alterations to reflect their different locations.



Grove House School

A COPY OF THE VISION WAS INCLUDED HERE

Who will Grove House School cater for?

Grove House will admit pupils between 9 and 19 with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (or an Education and Health Care Plan) whose primary issue is a complex or severe speech, language and/or communication difficulty. Some of these children will have a Specific Language Impairment (termed SLI) and will most likely be categorised with SLCN as their primary need. Their diagnoses may be more specific and refer to the aspects of language most affected eg. speech sound disorder, pragmatic language impairment, disorder affecting expressive and receptive language. Children may also come with a range of other diagnoses, possibly categorised by other areas of primary need, where speech, language and communication difficulties are their most significant issue within that diagnosis. Children with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder, difficulties in attention (attention deficit, ADD and hyperactivity disorder, ADHD), developmental coordination disorder (DCD, sometimes termed dyspraxia), cerebral palsy and a number of other syndromes will be eligible, provided non-verbal IQ is within or just below normal range.

Formal speech and language testing provided at Grove House School's pre-admission assessment and the submission of an up-to-date educational psychologist's report with the results of cognitive tests will allow an accurate measurement of the child's speech and language abilities. This, combined with an OT assessment and teacher's observations will enable staff to unpick a diagnosis and check that a child's profile is appropriate for placement at the School.

It is necessary at this early stage to give an indication of the number of children who fit this profile in order to provide evidence of demand for the DfE and to make decisions on the number of places to be commissioned. Using SENCAN's Descriptors for Determining Levels of SEN, the school's first set of target pupils would be those categorised with SLCN as their primary need. Secondly, the school would cater for pupils with 'additional' or 'complex' needs in other categories (not 'severe'), where there is also a 'complex' or 'severe' level SLCN. It would only be necessary to make exceptions in the categories of Personal, Emotional and Social Development (PESD) and Learning where it would only be appropriate for the school to admit pupils with additional needs. This information is presented perhaps more clearly in the following table:

Areas of Needs catered for by Grove House School

Key:

- ✓ - Will cater for
- ✓ - Will be able to consider

	Universal	Additional Needs	Complex	Severe
Physical Development	✓	✓	✓	
Vision	✓	✓	✓	
Hearing	✓	✓	✓	
Speech, Language and Communication Development			✓	✓
Personal, Emotional and Social Development	✓	✓		
SCD/ASD	✓	✓	✓	
Learning	✓	✓		

It is notable, especially as Essex has identified a need to develop its provision for children with ASD, that a number of pupils with Social Communication Difficulties (ASD) as their primary need would be suitable for the school, particularly as ASD can be more commonly diagnosed than a SLI. Each child's individual profile needs to be carefully scrutinized to establish whether their SLCN are significant enough within their Autism (we would suggest that their SLCN should at least be considered 'complex') and to check that their PESD or Learning Difficulties, as mentioned previously, would not affect the rest of the cohort negatively in the absence of more specialist management.

To offer an example:



As a rough indicator of the number of children we may expect to identify, the Bercow Review suggested that children with severe speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are likely to represent between one and two percent of the population. In his words, 'they are likely to need long term intensive support and can therefore be seen as a low incidence/high needs group'.⁴⁰

Early Evidence of Demand

We have carried out an initial mailshot to prospective parents via SNAP's database. As a result we have been sent 33 completed parental support surveys. On these the parent has to give details of the child's diagnosis, date of birth and postcode and they must sign to say 'I would request for this special Free School to be named on my child's statement of SEN', quite a significant show of support considering the early stage we are at in the development of the school. We have a large number of parents in addition who have contacted us for further information and are on a contact database to be kept in touch with developments. We are very encouraged by the results of just one mailshot and will expect the numbers of surveys to grow as we make contact with more parents via schools and other support networks in a wider geographical area.

The following information is based on the sample group of surveys we have received so far. Over half of these pupils have a diagnosis of ASD, a large number have severe SLI (speech and language impairment) and one has cerebral palsy. This is broadly the balance we would expect, based on the experience of other SLCN schools. It is likely that we would start in September 2015 with one primary and one key stage 3 class, then numbers would increase gradually once open to reach the full capacity of 105 pupils by the beginning of the third year. The majority of these pupils are currently in Essex special schools, but a significant proportion are at, or intend to pursue out of county independent placements. One is currently boarding at Moor House in Oxted and three more intend to pursue a place at this school. One other is a boarder at Northease Manor in East Sussex.

Cost of Provision

The budget documents are currently being developed by the school's finance team in line with the detail of the education plan. The final cost of a place at Grove House will be established in the Spring during the preparation of documents for the DfE, but based on early calculations we would anticipate this to be in the region of [redacted]

⁴⁰ Bercow, J., *The Bercow Report: A Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs*, 2008.

We have used the staffing ratios of the Community Learning in Partnership Schools, but have included the cost of two speech and language therapists, one OT, a part time physiotherapist and occasional sessions of arts and psychotherapy for those in need.⁴¹ The higher level of top-up funding will be required to provide the necessary level of therapy for this cohort of pupils' needs to be met and for further independent placements to be avoided.

Demand from Parents (or Students if Post-16)

The steering group began the process of engaging with parents in November 2013 in order to demonstrate the high level of need for the school, but also to gather information about the potential intake of children in time to inform the development of the education plan. The material on the following two pages has been supplied to parents throughout the process.

Every attempt has been made to engage with local parents and other stakeholders: information has been distributed by schools, support services and the media. Public meetings were held in six Essex towns, giving the opportunity for the steering group to spend time with prospective parents, SENCOs, teachers and charity workers. The insight gained from these meetings enabled the team to adapt the plans to the needs of local families. A number of parents, for example, wanted to hear how the school would meet pupils' additional needs and many expressed an interest in the provision of enrichment activities. Where appropriate to the vision, these priorities have been reflected in the school plans. The SEN Provision Development Manager at Essex County Council acknowledged this process when he wrote for the group's application to the NSN Development Programme Application 'the proposed model is fluid and is being refined as the application develops'.

The following concerns were regularly the theme of interactions with parents:

- The lack of therapy in local special schools
- The difficulty of obtaining a special school place
- The negative consequences of inappropriate mainstream placements

⁴¹ We are already aware of professionals who would apply for these part time positions.



Grove House School aims to open as a Free School in September 2015. Pupils will be admitted in a number of year groups at the outset.

Grove House School will help pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (or an EHCP) who have:

- Speech, language or communication difficulties which have a significant impact on their ability to access the educational curriculum.
- Broadly normal non-verbal abilities.

They may also have:

- Social interaction difficulties.
- Sensory processing, attention or co-ordination difficulties.

Grove House School

Supporting Excellence

Free School Proposal

We aim to establish a **specialist special school** in Essex for pupils between 9 and 19 whose primary issue is a severe **Speech, Language and Communication impairment**. The language-focused school will offer an adapted and differentiated mainstream curriculum, developed and delivered collaboratively by a team of specialist teaching and therapeutic staff.

Grove House School will offer pupils:

- Highly experienced teachers and Speech and Language Therapists working together to plan, deliver, monitor and evaluate lessons
- Regular speech and language therapy on an individual or small group basis
- Very small class sizes
- Occupational therapy including sensory integration therapy and arts therapies available
- Appropriate qualifications at a range of levels for pupils at Key Stages 4 and 5
- An exceptionally supportive learning environment giving pupils the confidence to communicate, with augmentative and alternative communication used where appropriate
- Various programmes and strategies to help prepare pupils fully for an independent life as part of society
- High levels of aspiration and achievement in all areas of learning, leading to places in FE, HE, apprenticeship schemes and employment, as appropriate for each learner

“Grove House will work to develop pupils’ confidence and self-belief, enabling pupils to engage with opportunities and fulfil their potential.”



Grove House School

Interested parents **must** complete one of our surveys if we are to build a strong case for this school.

To fill in a survey and find out more, please visit the website or email:

www.grovehouseschool.co.uk

grovehouseschool@gmail.com

Parental support Petition: Special Free School

We are currently seeking support for a new school in our area which we hope will open in September 2015. We may share the following information with the Department for Education/LA as part of our application for the new school.

We aim to establish a specialist Special School in the South Essex area for pupils between 9 and 19 whose primary issue is a severe Speech, Language and Communication impairment. The language-focussed school will offer an adapted and differentiated mainstream curriculum, developed and delivered collaboratively by a team of experienced teaching staff and speech and language therapists. This integrated approach, in combination with programmes of individual or group-based speech and language therapy, will enable pupils to make excellent progress with their speech, language and communication. Teaching staff will work with a range of different needs associated with the school's intake of pupils including sensory processing, concentration, social interaction and coordination difficulties,. They will be supported by occupational therapists and physiotherapists who will be available to work with children on an individual basis where necessary. The school will hold high expectations for pupils' academic achievements and will focus on the core areas of English, Maths, Science and Life Skills. Pupils will be offered a range of suitable qualifications at key stages four and five, preparing them for places in Further Education, Higher Education, apprentice schemes or employment as appropriate for each learner. Grove House will place great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development with very small class sizes and a safe, supportive environment enabling pupils to communicate with confidence.

Please register your interest in sending your child to this school/for the LA to name this school on your child's Statement by completing the form below. This does not guarantee a place, but rather is a show of support for the school's approval. If you provide us with your contact details we will keep you updated on the progress of the campaign.

			Answer the question below only if your child currently has a Statement	Answer the question below if your child does not currently have a Statement	Answer the question below if your child does not have a Statement	
Child's Date of Birth	Postcode (not for publication)	Type of SEN	I would request for this special Free School to be named on my child's statement of SEN (Please sign/type your name)	This special Free School will be my first choice for my child (Please sign/type your name)	What proof do you have that your child has the SEN for which the school is designated? E.g. note from doctor/medical professional, educational psychologist's report	Your email address

The following comments were made by parents during email correspondence:

██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████

The steering group also spent time with staff at local special schools to gain a better understanding of the existing local provision. Special school Heads spoke of:

- The overwhelming demand for places
- The frustration at the quality of therapy provided by contracted NHS services
- The shortage of therapist time – typically one or two days a week with a SLT for the whole school
- The absence of occupational therapy

The Lead Teacher at the Enhanced Provision Unit (SLCN) based in North Essex strongly supported the opening of Grove House School. She was most aware that the pupils in her unit were failing to thrive due to:

- Difficulties maintaining positive relationships with peers
- Difficulties coping with informal time – lunchtime, break
- Lack of opportunity as not included in sports teams, productions etc
- Unrealistic pressure to obtain A-C grade GCSEs
- Inappropriate curriculum and lack of differentiation
- Lack of range of qualifications

She described watching the development of mental health issues in some of her pupils and pushing for them to be given special school placements.

As part of the consultation a number of community groups were involved with the attempt to reach parents throughout Essex. SNAP, FACE, Families inFocus, PACT, PARC and SAFE all offered invaluable support. Each are acutely aware of impact of inappropriate school placements on pupils and their whole families.

██████████, ██████████, **Families InFocus (Essex)**

Local MPs often become involved with families experiencing such difficulties and can speak with authority on the quality of the local educational provision. The steering group has met twice with Eric Pickles who is enthusiastic about the proposal:

I think this is a great idea, and would fill a gap in the education system which currently exists in Essex. I know the team have visited other schools specialising in teaching children with severe speech, language and communication impairments and have been impressed by what children can do given the right level of support. To bring a school like this to Brentwood would be marvellous, and I hope they are able to put together a strong application to the Department for Education next year.

Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles MP

The Government's former Communication Champion has also provided the following statement as a record of her support for this specialist school for Essex:

As the Government's former Communication Champion for children, I was delighted to hear of this proposal. It is excellent that so many different partners have come together to make this application – parents, speech and language therapists, academics, teachers, the local authority. There is a real need for this new school. [REDACTED]

Jean Gross CBE

Contextual Evidence of Need

In Essex there is a clear need for more special school places and for higher standards for pupils with SLCN.

There are currently 480 pupils in Essex with statements for SLCN. They currently attend:

- Mainstream Schools – 148
- Academies – 193 (may be Mainstream or Special Schools)
- Enhanced Provision Units – 35
- Special Schools – 80
- PRU – 1
- Independent/out of Authority placements – 23

Grove House School is also likely to admit a proportion of pupils with ASD as their primary category of need leading to a far greater field of prospective pupils.

Mainstream Schools

Mainstream schools in Essex and beyond are poorly supported by local NHS services: at secondary age virtually no support is given.⁴² They are therefore unable to provide the specialist support required by pupils with SLCN, as outlined in the Code of Practice:

- Flexible teaching arrangements
- Help in acquiring, comprehending and using language
- Help in articulation
- Help in acquiring literacy skills
- Help in using augmentative and alternative means of communication
- Help to use different means of communication confidently and competently for a range of purposes, including formal situations

Crucially, mainstream schools are not able to offer the specialist model of delivery or modified curriculum regarded as best practice for pupils with SLCN. A mainstream peer group also may not always be appropriate for pupils with severe SLCN. Pupils become increasingly aware of social difference during adolescence and can experience great levels of isolation and distress, causing increasing levels of anxiety and internalisation and often resulting in refusal to attend or poor behaviour (see ECC quote in *Rationale*).

Enhanced Provision Units

⁴² Conversation with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Children's Speech and Language Therapy and Hearing Therapy.

The three Enhanced Provision Units in Essex and Thurrock do not always have support from therapists and according to their own staff do not support acceptable outcomes academically or socially for pupils with persistent SLCN (see above).

Special Schools

In special education, there are two types of school in Essex: CLiP schools catering for pupils with complex needs and NMSS catering for pupils with severe needs. The majority of pupils with primary SLCN attend the six CLiP schools which are always full. The competition for places is fierce, particularly at key stage 5 as only one school currently has 16-19 provision. The authority acknowledges the high level of demand for special school places and identifies in its SEN policy the need to 'Increase specialist provision to approximately 2,600 places, distributed proportionally across the four quadrants of Essex' (an additional 500 places).⁴³ It also recognises the need for *specialist* provision: 'Essex will seek to develop Specialist SEN Provision in consultation with, and in collaboration with, its customers, recognising the challenges imposed by financial constraints in times of austerity and the need to be opportunistic and flexible in its approach to developing specialist SEN provision.' Commissioners have discussed with us the merit of the application for Grove House School with reference to these development needs.

According to their SEN Managers, special schools in Thurrock and Southend are also always full and cater for large numbers of pupils from Essex due to their shortage of places. As with all Counties in the Eastern region, these neighbouring authorities do not have schools that cater specifically for SLCN. SLCN pupils will be educated alongside pupils with a broad range of needs including cognition and learning difficulties and autism. Such schools were shown to have poor outcomes for pupils with SLCN in the *rationale*.

OFSTED has judged all of the special schools in Essex, Thurrock and Southend as being good or outstanding, however, the levels of academic attainment do not reflect the aspirations of a great number of parents we have spoken to with children at these schools, or the potential of the pupils, as demonstrated by the vastly improved outcomes achieved by pupils at SLCN schools.

⁴³ Essex SEN Policy, 2010-12, 17.

F1 (a) Pre-opening Skills and Experience

The following table lists the members of the core applicant group with responsibility for driving the project forwards and a number of consultants who will give valuable input where required. The educational team will be collaborative. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will lead this team having experience of both teaching and various therapies, drawing heavily on the leadership experience and expertise of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The plans will then be discussed at regular intervals with a SLCN school Head, [REDACTED]. All members of the team will be working on a voluntary basis. On approval, a project working group will be established and a schedule of regular meetings will be agreed to promote good communication and drive progress.

Name	Core Applicant?	Role(s) in pre-opening	Summary of relevant expertise	Available Time (hrs per week)
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Up to 25
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Up to 25
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Ad hoc
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Ad hoc
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	2

[REDACTED]	N	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Consultant
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	10
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	Up to 25
[REDACTED]	Y	[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]	10

██████████	Y	██████████	• ██████████	10
██████████	N	██████████	• ██████████	Ad hoc
██████████	Y	██████████	• ██████████	10
██████████	Y	██████████	• ██████████	Ad hoc
██████████	N	██████████	• ██████████	Ad hoc
██████████	Y	██████████	• ██████████	5-10

In addition:

	N		A meeting every 1-2 months
The Sensory Smart Child	N	This private practice of Occupational Therapists have offered to assist the team on a voluntary basis, giving advice on the set-up of the therapy room and any other details relating to the provision of OT. Contact: [REDACTED].	Ad hoc

F1 (b) Skills Gap in Pre-opening

Skills/experience missing	How you plan to fill the gap
<p>Project Management The team holds some experience of managing large-scale projects, but in the pre-opening stage would appreciate the input of a project manager with direct experience of this process.</p>	<p>The project development grant will be used to buy in additional expertise when needed. A project manager will be sought to assist the team leader with the management of the project, to track progress and manage risks. This process will start following submission.</p>
<p>ICT Procurement and Planning Grove House School plans to make extensive use of ICT in the classroom to develop pupils' speech and language skills. It will be necessary to find out about available technology and software packages and work with our speech and therapists to develop plans for its use. It will be possible to draw on the experience of existing SLCN schools, but it would be helpful to find an ICT specialist with specific knowledge of SEN resources with whom we can explore new opportunities and work to develop best practice.</p>	<p>A secondary ICT teacher and parent of a child with ADHD and social communication difficulties has offered to work with the team to research best practice for the use of ICT with SEN pupils.</p>
<p>HR expertise The appointment of the Head will be critical. In order to generate the largest and most appropriate application field the process should be run professionally.</p>	<p>The team will secure professional HR support.</p>

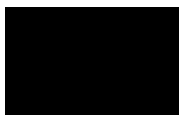
F2: Accountability and Decision Making (Post Opening)

Governance Structure

Please see below our proposed governance structure in diagrammatical form.



The Members at the point in time of the application will be as upon incorporation of the Company:



There are no plans to appoint any additional Members at the present time, but it could be considered should the current team require strengthening or meet any unforeseen contingencies as the school develops.

Members will be responsible for the majority of appointments to the Governing Body (GB). For every vacancy, Members will conduct a skills audit to identify any gaps that need to be filled in the skills, knowledge and experience of existing Governors. If selecting from a number of candidates, rigorous competency based interviews will be held to examine their inter-personal skills and ability to question.

Roles and Responsibilities

Members will exercise their strategic role of holding the Governors to account by examining a range of key reports at meetings. The Members may request additional information as required and in the case of errors or omissions, request remedial action be taken. Where problems of significant concern are brought to their attention, then the Members may have to resort to more direct action including, as a last resort, the removal of a Governor.

The Members will, for example, note the contents of:

- Ofsted reports received and proposed remedial action proposed by the Governors and the SMT
- The School Development Plan
- Details of any formal visits to the school made by Governors during the report period

- Details of any training undertaken by Governors during the report period
- Financial reports from the Governor’s Finance Committee including the draft annual accounts when due
- Any proposed alteration to the School’s Articles of Association, e.g. in order to enable it to achieve more effectively its objectives
- Action proposed/taken by the Governors in order to be compliant with changes in legislative requirements affecting the School
- Health and Safety Reports from the Governors
- Statistical reports from the Governors in respect of data subject access requests received and dealt with under the Data Protection Act during the report period
- Statistical information dealing with complaints received during the report period including the number received, settled, ongoing and any trends emerging in relation to particular types of complaint
- Any planned closures of the school proposed by the Governors
- Curriculum amendments proposed by the Governors
- Plans to alter and/or develop the school and/or site proposed by the Governors and endorsed by the Finance Committee
- Governor’s proposals for changes to the school’s admission code and/or admission appeal code
- Recommendations from the Governors for the appointment/dismissal of Governors
- Reports on an ad hoc basis for noting or approval dealing with miscellaneous matters e.g. cyber security etc.

It is the school’s intention that the terms of reference applicable to Members will be drawn so as to make clear that the Members will operate in ways which do not impinge on the responsibilities and operation of the GB whilst enabling them to be in a position to act and/or intervene whenever necessary to carry out its functions, such as dismissing and/or appointing new Governors. The Members will hold at least two meetings per calendar year and further meetings on an ad hoc basis as necessary.

To maintain a degree of separation between the Members and Governing Bodies, the number of Members who are also Governors will be less than half the total number of Governors. The school will ensure that this ratio restriction will be adhered to on an ongoing basis.

Expertise of the Governing Body (GB)

At this point in time, the GB comprises seven Governors with a strong core of relevant knowledge and skills. The final total will be no more than twelve to promote effective decision making.

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██████████ (██████████) will be formally appointed as a ██████████ at the first meeting of the GB.

It is submitted that the above group of Governors will provide a strong nucleus, which together with two staff and two parent Governors will create a GB of an appropriate size so as to enable effective decision making. Four of the above have served or are currently serving as Governors, so will come with prior experience and training. SEN expertise will be crucial to the GB's ability to support and improve the school. Of the appointees, almost all have direct experience of working with or raising children with SLCN and associated SEN. ██████████ will be able to provide strong strategic leadership, ██████████ to challenge and support the new school. ██████████ academic role will enable her to work with ██████████ to review the specialist aspects of the provision, ensuring it continues to reflect best practice and up to date research.

The majority of these Governors have also have been heavily involved in the process of preparing this application. They have an excellent working knowledge of the vision and the detailed written plans and in many cases have spent time at existing SLCN schools meeting with staff. Their specific knowledge of this school will ensure decision making is guided by a strong sense of direction and motivation.

The staff Governors will ideally include representatives of both the educational and therapeutic teams, reflecting the importance of a collaborative approach at policy-making level. It may be appropriate at any time to request input from external advisers on specific projects/issues.

Some members of the GB will be expected to complete a four year term of office, but where appropriate some members will be given shorter terms, preventing a full scale change of personnel after four years. Parent and staff Governors may, for example, be re-elected after two years as the body of staff and parents grow.

The GB will adopt the NGA's Code of Practice adapted to meet its needs and comply with its Articles. All members of the GB will be required to sign a copy of the code which will reviewed annually.

The Governors will be aware of the duties imposed upon them as Directors of an Academy Trust, for example in relation to financial regulation, as direct employers and in relation to the Equality Act, 2010. In this context it will be essential that decisions taken can be seen to be reasonable and that as a body and individually the above Code is complied with at all times. In the event of any uncertainty on regulatory matters, external professional advice will be sought. The school will arrange appropriate insurance cover to meet the above liabilities where appropriate.

Committee Structure

In order for Governors to work cohesively and decisively, the structure of the GB will be streamlined, with a full governing body and two committees. Each committee of approximately seven Governors will be small enough to promote efficient decision making but also large enough to generate a broad range of ideas and perspectives.

The Strategic Teaching and Learning Committee

The educational and SEN Governors will work together to evaluate:

- The impact of teachers on pupils' outcomes

- The data available to show pupil progress
- The ability of the provision to meet the pupils' SEN
- The impact of the school's improvement measures

Resources Committee

Finance and legal specialists will work together to evaluate:

- The effective deployment of the school budget to ensure the school can afford the staffing structure it has chosen
- The steps the school takes to ensure quality and safety of the teaching and learning environment
- How the school operates local authority financial regulations
- The promotion of community cohesion and extended services
- Professional development and work-life balance of the people who work in the school

The Head of the Committee will hold regular meetings with the school Business Manager, typically at month end.

The Resources Committee's remit will include the function of an audit committee to look at the trust's financial controls on an annual basis. The role of Responsible Officer will be taken by [REDACTED], see attached CV.

Further committees may be formed subsequently, should the volume of work in one area be too great. It may also be appropriate at any point to take advantage of the expertise available from external advisers when they have particular skills and experience not already present within the GB. The contacts made during the application stage, for example, may continue to help the team to meet all their accountabilities and drive the school forward effectively (see *F1 (a)*).

Co-opted Governors

The GB will have the power to consider the co-option of Governors as a means to extend its competences in specific areas or assist with validating specialised data/SI contained in the Head's reports. They may wish, for example, to bring in someone who lives or works close to the school for their knowledge of the local community. Links with local businesses would be particularly useful to the school.

Link Governors

A number of link Governors will support staff and subject leaders in specific subjects e.g. literacy, numeracy, Life Skills, or areas highlighted by the School Development Plan as requiring attention. Governors will develop their knowledge in their subject area, meet with staff and pupils and report back to GB meetings.

The Role of the Chair of the Governors

The Chair will direct and coordinate the work of the two committees and give the Chairs of each clear guidance on what their committees are expected to achieve. The Chair will communicate on a weekly basis with the Head and the Chairs of the two committees.

Effective Decision Making

Effective decision making by the GB will be ensured by the adoption of the following systems and procedures.

- At first, the GB will meet every half term and more frequently on an ad hoc basis as necessary. The committees will also meet once every half term prior to the GB meeting.
- The committees will have delegated powers (as opposed to acting as advisory bodies) acting under formal Terms of Reference issued by the GB. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the GB.
- All Governors will be supplied with a copy of The Governor's Handbook and information relating to the roles and responsibilities of committee members at Grove House School. All Governors will be given access to formal training via Essex Education Services. This will be made available prior to the school opening in 2014/15.
- Statistical Information (SI) will be required to be submitted by the SMT to the periodic meetings of the GB and additionally upon request to any ad hoc meetings of the GB. The SI which will be required to be prepared and submitted will, for example, relate to:
 - Pupil attendance
 - Staff turnover
 - Examination/test results from the Target Tracker
 - Outcomes for different groups of pupils – evidence of narrowing the gap
 - Outcomes for pupils on different pathways
 - POAT Data (see *Section D2*)
 - Outcomes of satisfaction surveys
 - Number of formal visits to the School made by Governors
 - Financial data (e.g. performance against budget)
 - Data subject access requests, under the DPA)
 - Complaints received, settled and ongoing, including classification of different types of complaint⁴⁵
 - Pupil disciplinary proceedings including exclusions and absenteeism
 - Absences by both staff and pupils
 - Other SI deemed necessary from time to time

The GB will satisfy itself of the objectivity and accuracy of the SI submitted to them by:

- Comparative analysis, i.e. comparing current SI against historical SI in respect of the same or similar periods and against other SLCN schools
- Self-checking by nominated members of the GB, for example SI relating to complaints received and record of pupil absenteeism and exclusions.
- Reconciliation of SI received, again by nominated members of the GB, for example in respect of financial SI
- External scrutiny by an appropriately qualified and/or experienced adviser, for example an SLCN Head

The GB will review and discuss the SI together with any commentary provided, with particular reference to the following:-

- Any significant variances from the 'norm' (adverse or beneficial)
- Attainment or otherwise to achieve targets set, internally or externally

⁴⁵ The GB will itself have in place procedures for handling complaints of a general nature and will publicise the procedures.

- The need for further information or clarification, perhaps as a matter of urgency
- The possible need for remedial action, generally to be communicated via the Head

It may be necessary for the GB to meet on an ad hoc basis prior to the next scheduled GB meeting should they need to consider further significant matters arising from their review of the SI. It is understood that the GB must act in a measured way in any response they make to the SI presented, so as not to interfere with the efficient running of the School.

In addition to the review of the Head's Report and SI, Governors will carry out regular pre-arranged visits to gather information. They will see whether the school is implementing the policies and improvement plans they have signed-off and how they are working in practice. Such visits will also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views.

Senior Management Team

The GB will expect and require the Head to deliver professional leadership and management of the school and to facilitate those objectives delegated to the Head in relation to:

- Ensuring that pupils are making good progress
- Staffing: recruitment
- Finance: working in conjunction with the Resources Committee to set appropriate priorities for expenditure and allocation of funds
- School building and site, i.e. be responsible for the school, its buildings, equipment and grounds
- Accountability for health and safety requirements
- Preparation of responses to Ofsted reports
- Curriculum: ensuring that the curriculum is appropriate for all pupils and is supported by high quality teaching
- Pastoral care: to develop a culture whereby all teaching staff accept that pastoral care underpins the performance and behaviour of pupils in all areas of school life
- Leadership: implementing the school's strategy in partnership with the SMT and the GB
- Personnel: leading the performance management of all staff.

The Head also act as an ex-officio trustee and will take the role of Accounting Officer.

Conflict of Interest

It will be important to identify the potential areas where financial and other conflicts of interest might arise and adopt the following procedures to manage these risks:

- The purchase from, or the sale of goods and services to, the school on non-commercial terms is prohibited under Article 6.6 (a) and (b) of the school's Articles of Association (Articles). We intend to manage and reduce the risk of non-compliance with these Articles by including the above activities as an approval category in our Delegation Terms of reference for the Finance Committee

- Under Article 50B of the Articles, only one third of the Governors (including the Head) may also be employees. We intend to manage compliance with this rule by ensuring that identification of 'Governor' status is part of the recruitment process. Notification of any prospective employee will be notified to the Clerk to the Governors to confirm that such appointment will not breach Article 50B. Such confirmation will be recorded in the minutes at the next Governor's meeting
- Under Article 98 Governors are required to declare to the GB any personal interest (financial or otherwise) which they have, which may conflict with their duty as a Governor. Following which, should any matter involving such personal interest come before the Governors for discussion, the Governor in question must absent themselves from such discussion. We will manage and mitigate the risk of non-disclosure of a personal interest by a Governor by the following means:
 - The school will maintain a Register of Material Interests in which all declarations of relevant personal interests (financial and otherwise) will be recorded. At each Governor's meeting a permanent agenda item will require the Chair to call for any new or revised personal interests to be declared.
 - The Chair when introducing a potentially sensitive topic for discussion will remind the GB that any personal interests needs to be disclosed. For example, a parent Governor might have a personal interest in any variation of the admission criteria. If nevertheless a decision is reached conferring a benefit upon a Governor, such benefit will be recorded in the minutes and monitoring arrangements put in place to ensure that the school gets good value for money.

F3 (a) Proposed Governors

Name	Role on governing body	Role(s) in pre-opening	Summary of relevant expertise	Available Time (hours per week)
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	15+
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	10
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	0.5
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	0.5
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	5
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	2
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	1 day a term
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	0.5

F3 (b) Skills Gap for Governing Body

The proposed initial Governing Body has been put together to ensure that the National Governor's Association areas of expertise detailed in their Skills Audit are appropriately covered across the team. All of the generic skills, knowledge and experience considered as essential for the GB as a whole is covered to moderate or extensive levels.

In the list of useful or in some case desirable, but not necessarily essential knowledge or experience for a GB to contain the following gaps have been identified.

Skills/experience missing	How you plan to fill the gap
Risk assessment	In the remaining GB appointments, priority will be given to candidates with experience in these areas. If any gaps remain, it may be appropriate to appoint external advisors to assist the GB to challenge, monitor and scrutinise effectively in these areas.
Knowledge of the local/ regional economy	
Premises and facilities management	
ICT systems	
HR expertise	HR consultancy purchased from Essex Education Services has been included in the budget

F4. Recruiting a High Quality Principal

Following approval, the steering group will embark on the process of recruiting an outstanding Headteacher for Grove House School. The right candidate will embrace the opportunity to take these plans forward and create an outstanding specialist provision for Essex.

Role of Principal

The Head will be required to devise, agree and implement a post-opening strategic plan that realises and sustains the vision for Grove House School. They will be expected to lead and manage the new school, promote and safeguard the welfare of the pupils and ensure the achievement of the desired outcomes. The Head will have the following professional responsibilities:

Whole School Organisation, Strategy and Development

- To ensure the vision for the school is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted on effectively by all.
- To translate this vision into agreed objectives and operational plans which will carry the school forward.
- To provide inspiring and purposeful leadership with a commitment to the collaborative practice model.
- To ensure that strategic planning takes account of the diversity of needs of the cohort of pupils.
- To work in partnership with the Governing Body, staff and parents to promote a positive culture of encouragement, support and challenge.
- To ensure creativity, innovation and the use of up to date research to achieve excellence and nurture well-being.

Teaching

- Demonstrate and articulate high expectations and set challenging targets for all pupils.
- Support and encourage good practice in teaching and learning, building a culture of excellence.
- Provide outstanding pastoral care for all pupils and ensure pupils achieve personal development outcomes.
- To determine, organise and implement a diverse and flexible curriculum to accommodate the pupils' range of needs, drawing on the education plan for Grove House School.
- Model good practice in all interactions with pupils.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, using data and benchmarks to monitor and improve progress and outcomes.
- To access, analyse and interpret information then establish creative and effective responses in order to raise standards in line with the vision.
- To challenge underperformance, particularly among subgroups.

Health, Safety and Discipline

- To ensure the school provides an efficient, effective and safe learning environment for all learners.
- To determine and implement positive strategies and programmes which will ensure good pupil behaviour and discipline.

Management of Staff and Resources

- Work with Governors and senior colleagues to recruit and deploy retain staff of the highest quality in order to sustain the quality of education.
- To lead, motivate, support, challenge and develop the SMT and through them all staff.
- To promote the integration of staff to improve the quality of education provided and standards achieved, and ensure that constructive working relationships are sustained between academic and therapeutic teams.
- Develop and maintain effective strategies and procedures for staff induction, professional development, pay and performance reviews.

- Lead and manage the school's workforce with a proper regard for their well-being and legitimate expectations, including the expectation of a healthy balance between work and other commitments.
- Set appropriate priorities for expenditure, allocation of funds and effective administration and control.
- Manage and organise the accommodation efficiently and effectively to ensure it meets the diverse needs of the pupils.
- Manage, monitor and review the range, quality and use of all available resources in order to improve the quality of education, improve pupils' achievements, ensure efficiency and secure value for money.

Communication/Work with Colleagues and Other Relevant Professionals

- To create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve student's academic progress in the three areas of the curriculum.
- To cooperate and work with external agencies to ensure the best quality support and care for pupils.
- To work with other schools to deliver outreach initiatives and share good practice.

Person Specification

The school will expect the Head to hold Qualified Teacher Status with a good honours degree. The NPQH qualification will be valued. It will not be a requirement if a candidate is already in a substantive Headteacher role, but for first-time Head teachers it would offer high quality leadership training which would be likely to have a positive impact on the school. The Head should have recent experience in senior management and show evidence of continuing and relevant professional development in school leadership and management.

The Head must have relevant experience as a teacher and leader with a proven track record of working with children with SEN. They should be able to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the following criteria:

- Experience of teaching KS3 to KS5
- Wide experience of teaching pupils with SEN
- Successful strategic leadership and management experience as Head, Deputy Head or Assistant Head in schools for secondary children
- Experience of school finances and understanding of the need for budgetary control
- Experience of supporting and empowering staff
- Knowledge of OFSTED Inspection
- Experience of developing, implementing and evaluating curriculum areas and school policies

In order to set the tone of the school and lead progress, it will be necessary for the Head to have the following personal qualities:

- The enthusiasm, initiative and commitment to ensure that the vision is embedded throughout the school
- The ability to build a collaborative and creative learning culture
- An effective communicator, engaging and confident
- Be sensitive and supportive of pupils' needs
- Flair to inspire a positive culture of high achievement for all
- Willingness to push boundaries with a determination to see through new initiatives and drive improvement
- Capable of maintaining good relationships with all those associated with the school

Process of Recruitment

<u>Timeline</u>	Complete by:
Prior to Approval:	
Prepare job specification	August 2014
Prepare advertisement and candidate brochure	August 2014
Prepare interview procedure and questions	August 2014
August 2014:	
Obtain HR support	Dependent on date of approval
Place advert	
Shortlist candidates	
September 2014:	
Take up references	
Interview leading candidates	
Confirm appointment at meeting of GB	
January 2015:	
Principal takes up post	

Preparations for the process of recruiting the Head will start following the submission of this application. Time will be of the essence as any serving Head will have to give up to a term's notice before taking up the post. A full job description, person specification and candidate brochure will be developed with input from the educational members of the team in line with the vision. An advert will be carefully crafted to create initial interest in the role, referring to a salary range encompassing the figure of [REDACTED] suggested in section G. This has been carefully benchmarked against those of local special schools of a similar size and has been set at a level deemed attractive but also sustainable over time. The range will enable Governors to base the final salary offer on the experience and performance of the chosen candidate. The right candidate will be motivated by the challenge of opening a new school and the unique opportunity this school presents to transform the life outcomes of SLCN pupils in Essex.

If the school is approved in the Summer of 2014, professional HR support will immediately be obtained to ensure the process follows best practice in recruitment. The position will be advertised in several ways including traditional print routes, websites, local and national notice boards and recruitment agencies. It is not anticipated that there will be a large field of candidates: the NGA currently reports low numbers of applicants for Headteacher roles. Local Heads of special schools, however, have reported frustration at the lack of therapeutic support for pupils in their schools. Senior staff at these schools may therefore be attracted by Grove House School's staffing model. There has already been great interest from prospective job applicants for both the educational and therapeutic teams, suggesting local candidates are embracing the prospect of being involved in a new, specialist provision. It will be essential to actively seek to grow the field for the post by all means necessary, including identifying potential applicants currently working within a sensible radius of the Grove House School site.

A selection panel consisting of at least three Governors will be established in accordance with *The School Staffing Regulations (2009)*. The panel will include [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (see *F1 (a)*), whose professional experience will be relied upon to judge the suitability of candidates, and at least one Governor with safer recruitment training. The highest quality candidates will be shortlisted for interview.

In September, applicants will be assessed according to a range of criteria determined by the team in the preceding weeks. References will be taken up for the highest quality candidates, then interviews will be led by the selection panel. Detailed and transparent marking criteria will be used to judge candidates. A variety of activities will be planned to test for the skills outlined in the specification including a presentation to Governors, carrying out a classroom observation, teaching a class (preferably in a special school context) and written exercises relating to school performance data and financial statements. It will be the hope that these activities can take place at one of the SLCN schools we have a relationship with. The selection panel's decision will be approved by a meeting of the full GB.

The successful candidate would need to be in post to oversee the preparations, appointments and assessments required to open the following September. The appointment would ideally be made before the end of September, enabling an existing Head to give notice and start in January 2015.

The new Head will need to feel well-supported by the GB from the outset. The GB will plan an induction and will work closely with the appointee to refine the plans for the school. The GB will consider supporting any additional training required by the new Head prior to opening. It might, for example, be beneficial for a first-time Headteacher to access professional and peer support via the Head Start programme offered by the National College for Teaching and Leadership. Alternatively, support may be provided less formally by [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED].

If, after this process, the right candidate has not been seen, the decision will be taken not to appoint and the position will be re-advertised. It will be possible to employ an acting Head on a temporary basis, as two members of the core team have experience in this role and will have excellent knowledge of the school.

Section G: Budget Planning and Affordability

Section G1 – Financial Plans

