Inclusion Strategy – Knotty Ash Primary School

This statement details our school's approach to delivering inclusive practice for all children, including those with SEND, funded by our core school budget (including the notional SEN budget) and the inclusive mainstream fund (IMF).

Strategy overview

Detail	Date
Academic year/years that our current Inclusion Strategy covers	2026-27
Date this statement was published	12/10/2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	1/9/2027
Statement authorised by	R Clements

Statement of intent

At Knotty Ash Primary, we are extremely proud of our strong local and national reputation for inclusion. Our inclusive ethos is central to our school's identity and culture. We believe that every child should feel a sense of belonging, being valued and being loved within our school community. Importantly, we believe that belonging does not always mean everyone doing the same thing. Some children need something different in order to belong successfully at Knotty Ash. Our school-based Nurture Provision, Resourced Provision and flexible approaches to mainstream participation recognise that inclusion is not simply about where a child is taught. It is about whether they feel safe, valued, connected and able to participate meaningfully in school life.

School leaders, including governors, promote high expectations of staff and pupils within the school to value the contributions of all our learners. Staff model kindness, patience and respect, and children learn to embrace these attitudes too. We also have high aspirations for the achievement of our children with additional learning needs and SEND. We utilise a range of assessments and measures, appropriate to each child, to ensure that we are able to track progress and plan support and challenge at the right stage for each individual.

Our school curriculum is specifically designed to be accessible to all learners. The Inclusive Curriculum incorporating the Foundation Subjects, with integral links to Reading and Writing, allows for adaptation to enable all children, including those with SEND, to enjoy and access its overarching themes. These themes are drawn from the UN Sustainability Goals and include: Social Justice & Equity, Identity & Diversity, Human Rights; Power & Conflict; Sustainable Development. At Knotty Ash, we believe all children have the right to learn a broad curriculum, gaining an enriching understanding of the world, society and themselves. We are also committed to ensuring every child in our school learns to read with confidence and enjoyment. Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants are dedicated to this aim. Reading is the doorway to academic access and success, and we invest in children's reading from their first days in Knotty Ash Primary.

At Knotty Ash, we do not see barriers to learning simply as difficulties that sit within a child. We consider what may be preventing a child from being present, feeling safe, communicating, participating, belonging and achieving. Sometimes the barrier relates to an individual need or circumstance; at other times, it is the environment, curriculum, organisation or support around the child that needs to change. Our role is to identify those barriers early and, wherever we can, remove or reduce them.

We have developed a SEND Graduated Approach, bespoke to our school which clearly outlines the levels of support from universal to targeted to personalised. This ensures that every member of the school community has a consistent understanding of our school offer for learners with additional needs and SEND. School environments have been designed with the help of Educational Psychologist and Occupational Therapist colleagues, to promote accessibility for all learners, including those facing significant barriers.

At Knotty Ash, we also believe in the power of the wider curriculum and enrichment opportunities to support children's broader development, their enjoyment of school and their preparation for life-long learning. Leaders and staff in school are committed to providing an enriching range of experiences, including sporting opportunities for enjoyment and/or competition, drama activities, arts and crafts, music, and British Sign Language. We believe that individual SEND need should not be a barrier to participation in enrichment opportunities, and offer flexibility and adaptation to ensure the widest possible access.

We believe that the key to strong attendance for the vast majority of our children at Knotty Ash Primary, is an inclusive culture, engaging curriculum, sense of achievement and enjoyable enrichments beyond the classroom. However, some of our families have specific challenges to regular attendance and we are committed to working collaboratively with them to ensure their children have the very best opportunities to thrive in school.

For families facing particular challenges, as well as all those who form part of our Knotty Ash family, we believe in open communication, collaboration and support. School staff are committed to providing consistent, accessible support to our community and relationships with our families are very strong. In order to support our children to the very best of our abilities, we also work closely with a wide range of external

services, drawing on specialised expertise to provide support for individual children, as well as developing whole-staff skills through tailored Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Barriers to learning and participation

This details the key barriers to learning and participation that we have identified amongst our pupils, necessitating inclusive universal approaches and targeted support

	Detail of barrier to learning
1	**The complexity of need within our school community** We have a high proportion of children with SEND, including children with significant and complex needs and a much higher proportion of EHCPs than is typical nationally. Some children require highly personalised approaches, significant curriculum adaptation and carefully planned support to access learning successfully.
2	**Communication is not equally accessible to every child** Some of our children experience significant speech, language and communication difficulties. Others communicate in different ways or need additional processing time, visual support, signing or alternative approaches. We recognise that children cannot fully participate, develop relationships or demonstrate what they know if communication is not accessible to them.
3	**Feeling safe and regulated enough to learn** For some children, anxiety, attachment needs, emotional regulation difficulties or previous experiences can make the demands of a busy mainstream school difficult to manage. Learning becomes much more accessible when children feel safe, understood and connected to trusted adults. Our relational, therapeutic and nurture approaches are particularly important in removing this barrier.
4	**The sensory and physical demands of the school environment** Busy classrooms, noise, movement, transitions and other sensory demands can present significant barriers for some of our children. We therefore need to think carefully about classroom environments, sensory regulation, movement, communication and access to quieter or more specialist spaces.
5	**Disadvantage and inequality of opportunity**

	A significant proportion of our children experience socioeconomic disadvantage. We recognise that financial pressures and wider circumstances can affect children's experiences both within and beyond school. Our responsibility is to ensure that these circumstances do not result in lower expectations, reduced opportunities or poorer outcomes.
6	**Being in school consistently** For some children and families, attending school regularly can itself be a significant challenge. SEND, anxiety, family circumstances and disadvantage can intersect with attendance. We recognise that improving attendance sometimes requires much more than reminding families of expectations; it requires us to understand and work with them to address the barriers underneath absence.
7	**Gaps in literacy, language and learning** Some children arrive at, or progress through, school with gaps in language, reading, writing or mathematical understanding which can make accessing an increasingly complex curriculum difficult. Early identification, strong teaching of fundamental skills and appropriate intervention are therefore essential to preventing these gaps from widening.
8	**Accessing an ambitious curriculum when learning needs are very different** Some of our children are working significantly below age-related expectations, while others require greater challenge. Our barrier is not difference itself, but ensuring that our curriculum and teaching are flexible enough for children with very different starting points to learn alongside one another wherever possible, without lowering expectations or narrowing entitlement.
9	**Challenges experienced by families beyond the school gate** Some of our families experience circumstances which inevitably affect children's readiness and ability to engage with school. Strong relationships with families, early help and effective partnership with external professionals are therefore an important part of our approach to inclusion.
10	**The capacity to respond flexibly to individual need** The complexity of need within Knotty Ash means that there will always be considerable demand for adult support and flexible provision. Financial pressures and reduced staffing mean that we must be increasingly thoughtful about how adults, expertise and resources are deployed, building children's independence and staff expertise while ensuring that those with the greatest needs continue to receive appropriate support.

Activity in this academic year

What activities will we prioritise this academic year to alleviate the above barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with additional needs and SEND.

In this context, ‘activity’ is a reporting term to help understand where funding has been allocated to build an inclusive core offer and does not indicate only targeted provision. Activity may address multiple barriers identified, particularly for improvements to your universal offer.

Inclusive Mainstream Funding £16,300 + £1500 EYFS = £17,800

Description of activity	**Activity type** (*whether it is universal or targeted)*	**Total budgeted cost** *(from IMF and core budget allocations)*	**Rationale**	**Intended outcome**	**Success criteria**
My Happy Mind / My Happy Mind Plus – whole-school provision	Universal	£4,000	Some children experience anxiety, emotional dysregulation or difficulty recognising, understanding and communicating their emotions. These difficulties can affect relationships, behaviour, readiness to learn and successful participation in the classroom. Developing emotional literacy and regulation as part of the universal curriculum helps all children build these skills, while providing an important	Provide a consistent whole-school approach to supporting children's emotional literacy, wellbeing and self-regulation. Children will develop a shared language for recognising and communicating emotions and learn strategies to support regulation, relationships and readiness to learn.	• Pupils increasingly recognise and communicate emotions and use taught strategies to support self-regulation. • Staff consistently reinforce the shared language and approaches across school.

			foundation for pupils with additional SEMH needs.		
• Metacognition and self-regulation | EEF • Social and emotional learning | EEF • *https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/self-regulation-and-executive-function*					
Read Write Inc Phonics 1:1 Tutoring delivered to identified children on 2 afternoons per week.	Targeted	£5,200	Difficulties with early reading can quickly become a barrier to learning across the curriculum. This is particularly significant for children with SEND and others who require additional repetition, carefully sequenced teaching and early intervention to secure foundational skills. A consistent systematic approach enables gaps to be identified quickly and support to be closely matched to children's learning needs.	Strengthen the teaching of foundational reading skills through a consistent approach to phonics, assessment and intervention. Early identification and additional support will help pupils at risk of falling behind, including pupils with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage, to develop the reading skills needed to access the wider curriculum.	• Pupils make measurable progress from their starting points in phonics and early reading. • Gaps are identified promptly and pupils requiring additional support receive appropriately targeted teaching.
• Phonics | EEF					
Weekly British Sign Language teaching across school	Universal	£5,000	Communication is not equally accessible to every member of our school community. For Deaf children in particular, reliance upon spoken language can create barriers to communication, relationships and belonging. Teaching BSL universally places responsibility on the school community to become more communication-accessible, rather than expecting individual children to overcome that barrier themselves.	Develop communication skills and awareness across the whole school community through weekly BSL teaching. This strengthens an inclusive communication culture, supports interaction between Deaf and hearing members of the school community and reinforces the principle that adapting communication is everyone's responsibility. It promotes understanding of Deaf culture and reinforce a whole-school culture in	• Pupils and staff demonstrate increased confidence in using BSL for everyday communication. • Deaf pupils experience increased opportunities for communication, participation and belonging across school.

				which different forms of communication are recognised and valued.	
• https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit/communication-and-language-approaches					
Staffing and resources for the school-based Nurture Provision	Targeted	(minus HNTU funding) £84,000	For some children with complex SEND, developmental, communication and/or regulation needs, the demands of a conventional mainstream classroom can present a significant barrier to successful learning and participation. These children may require a smaller, more predictable environment, a developmentally appropriate curriculum and increased opportunities for regulation before they can successfully access aspects of mainstream provision.	Provide safe, nurturing and appropriately adapted learning environment, curriculum resources and regulation/sensory resources for pupils whose needs currently present significant barriers to successful participation within a conventional mainstream classroom. The provision will support regulation, communication, learning and belonging, alongside carefully planned opportunities for participation within mainstream classes and wider school life.	• Pupils demonstrate progress in regulation, communication, engagement and learning from their individual starting points. • Increased readiness enables appropriately planned participation in mainstream classes and wider school life.
• https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w_GiximlIXAESjHjap4BliHT8ths3YGa/view?usp=sharing					
Cubbie immersive regulation space	Targeted	£4,000	Some children experience sensory overload and/or significant difficulty regulating their emotions within a busy mainstream environment. When children become overwhelmed, this can create a substantial barrier to learning,	Rental of the Cubbie provides access to a specialist immersive space in which children can regulate through a personalised sensory experience. The aim is to help children recognise and respond to their own regulation needs, access	• Identified pupils use the Cubbie effectively to regulate and are able to return successfully to learning. • Over time, pupils develop greater awareness of their regulation needs and

			participation and successful interaction with others.	effective strategies and return to learning within a relatively short period of time. Over time, this supports the development of greater self-regulation and independence.	increased independence in managing them.
• https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/self-regulation-and-executive-function • https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/toolkit/self-regulation-strategies					
Occupational Therapy Service – one day per week		£7,500	Sensory processing and regulation needs can significantly affect children's ability to access classroom environments, maintain attention, manage transitions and participate successfully in learning. Specialist expertise is needed both to support individual children and to develop provision around them.	An Occupational Therapist is based in school for one day each week, providing specialist assessment and advice, developing individual sensory diets and targeted support plans, and working with staff to strengthen universal sensory provision. This builds staff expertise as well as providing direct support for pupils, enabling strategies to become embedded within children's everyday school experience rather than existing only as isolated interventions.	• Pupils requiring targeted OT input have clear, appropriate strategies and plans which are implemented consistently. • OT advice strengthens staff practice and universal sensory provision across school as well as supporting individual pupils.
• https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/self-regulation-and-executive-function • https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/rethinking-child-neurodiversity •					
Sensory and regulation resources across school and appropriate classroom furniture and design that supports sensory regulation	Universal	£5,000	Sensory processing differences can make busy classrooms and other school environments	Ensure children can access appropriate sensory and regulation strategies	• Pupils increasingly recognise their sensory/regulation needs and use appropriate

			difficult for some children to manage. Noise, movement, transitions, physical proximity and other sensory demands may affect regulation, attention and participation. Appropriate resources and predictable access to regulation strategies can reduce these barriers without unnecessarily removing children from learning.	throughout the school day. Develop children's ability to recognise their own needs, increasingly select appropriate strategies independently and remain successfully engaged in learning.	strategies and resources, with greater independence and reduced disruption to their participation in learning.
• https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/rethinking-child-neurodiversity					
Additional adult support for pupils with EHCPs and complex SEND within mainstream classes	Targeted	£55,000 (shortfall after HNTU funding deducted from total cost of staff)	Some pupils with EHCPs and/or complex SEND require additional adult support to access teaching, communicate, regulate, manage transitions and participate successfully alongside their peers. Without appropriate support, the demands of the mainstream classroom can present a significant barrier to learning and inclusion. Adults are deployed flexibly according to need, with an emphasis on enabling participation rather than creating unnecessary dependence.	Pupils with significant additional needs are supported to access an ambitious curriculum, participate meaningfully in their mainstream class and develop relationships with peers. Skilled adult support provides appropriate scaffolding while promoting communication, regulation and increasing independence wherever possible.	• Pupils with EHCPs/SEND participate successfully in mainstream learning and make progress towards identified outcomes. • Support is appropriately matched to need, with evidence that adults promote engagement and independence rather than dependency.