

INCLUSIVE LEARNING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

EKC Group has a commitment to provide all learners with fair and equal opportunities to support their educational aspirations. This policy conforms to the expectations of the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice. Details of related EKC Group policies and the definition of SEN and Disability are on page 6. The EKC ethos is to promote learner independence in all aspects of learning by supporting them to take responsibility for using the learning resources available.

Meeting Learners needs

EKC Group is committed to providing flexible learning programmes that are designed to meet the needs and aspirations of learners with needs.

Specific conditions and the support that is available is detailed within the EKC Group Accessibility Statement. External professionals provide advice, training and individual therapy programmes where required.

EKC provides three tiers of teaching and support.

1. Universal Level: it is expected that, all teachers are teachers of SEND and lecturers will plan and teach to meet the needs of all learners within their programmes. Inclusive Learning staff will provide information on the learners needs and support lecturers to understand and adapt teaching to meet learners needs.
2. Targeted Level: It is recognised that some learners will require short term interventions from lecturers, or support staff that will enable them to practice, learn new skills and concepts through small group or individual activities.
3. Specialist Level: Some learners require bespoke programmes, interventions, and strategies to be delivered by lecturers and support staff who are trained to meet learner's specific needs.

The majority of learners across colleges and other Business Units will access the Universal Level of support with some targeted provision being offered. Learners with a high level of need on Vocational and Inclusive Learning Programmes will receive the specialist level of teaching and support.

Process for identifying and assessing learners who require Learning Support

All learners who apply for a programme of study at an EKC Group college or Business Unit are asked to identify a support need on the online application form. This will alert learning support staff of the need for a support meeting. A member of staff from the Inclusive Learning team will meet with the applicant to identify the support required and strategies to meet needs. Inclusive Learning staff will liaise with curriculum staff and subsequently a conditional programme offer may be made, dependant on exam results, support needs being met, and safeguarding matters being followed up. Curriculum and support staff are responsible for making any 'reasonable adjustments' should this be a prerequisite to a learner's start at college. All information disclosed for the purposes of providing learning support to learners will be stored electronically in the learners' on-line folder in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the learner's agreement to share information.

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Inclusive Learning staff will write a Personalised Plan for a learner who has a high level of need who requires support and interventions beyond the universal learning teaching and support provided. Evidence must be sourced to support the claim for high needs funding for a learner with a personalised plan.

For applicants with an Education Health Care Plan: Higher Level of Need

Decisions on the placement of learners with an Education Health Care Plan are made through the statutory consultation process, which is overseen by the Local Authority, whose responsibility it is to make the final decision on where a learner with an Education Health Care Plan is placed. This process commences in the autumn prior to the learner leaving school. On the occasion of a learner making a direct application to the college and then disclosing that they have an Education Health Care Plan the college or Business Unit will notify the local authority who will then formally consult with EKC Group.

Learning Support staff work in partnership with schools and where feasible attend year 9/10 annual review meetings where the Education Health Care Plan and transition opportunities are discussed. Early meetings with schools are held to identify the learners who are planning to progress to college.

Following this, subsequent meetings are held to ascertain the activities that will be established in order that an effective personalised transition programme can be put in place. A range of activities will be organised to support a learner to transition into the next stage of their life.

There may be exceptional circumstances when EKC is unable to meet the learners needs and outcomes. This may be due to the suitability of the environment, significant health, or safeguarding concerns that impact on the learner, other learners, and staff. In all instances the college/Business Unit will first consider any “reasonable adjustments” that can be made to enable the learner to attend.

On identification of a learner’s need Inclusive Learning staff will contact the school and other services to obtain additional information and request that the learner attend college to undertake an assessment of need, ability, and level of vulnerability.

Evaluation and effectiveness of the provision for learners with Learning Support Needs

Judgements on the quality and effectiveness of provision are made by Ofsted within the Ofsted cycle of inspections. Annually, all areas within the EKC Group undertake a self-assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of provision for which the governing body are notified of the outcomes.

Termly subject pathway walks contribute to the assessment of the effectiveness of a programme of learning, teaching, and support.

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Assessing and reviewing the progress of learners with support needs

Learners' academic and support progress is continually monitored, and learners informed of their progress. Parents/carers are invited to meet with curriculum staff to discuss the learner's progress. Learners with an Education Health Care Plan or Personalised Plan will have a formal annual review for which the learner is prepared and able to contribute to any changes made. At any stage, learners support needs will be reviewed, and support adapted accordingly to the learner's progression. Some learners with a higher level of learning need may require parent/ carer support with their decision making.

A more detailed assessment may be undertaken to inform on specific resources and alternative approaches that may be required to enable the learner to progress.

Details of the outcome will be documented and shared with learners, parents/carers, and teaching staff. If at any stage a learner demonstrates a continued high level of need, the learner (if under 19 years old) can request that the college applies to the Local Authority for an Education Health Care Plan. EKC Group will collaborate with parents and Carers to enable them to engage with the learner's learning while at college through the 'Parent Portal.'

If at any stage a learner is not progressing or engaging with learning, a meeting will be held with the learner, parent/carer to address the points of concern and adjustments put in place. The college/Business Unit will hold an early review of the EHCP and facilitate a change of placement if requested by the learner and their parent/carers. The college may also instigate the discussion to change a placement if the college is not a suitable environment for the learner. The EHCP Review document is sent to the local authority for their decision.

As for any other learner, EKC Group's disciplinary procedures will be followed should the need arise and with evidence of reasonable adjustments having been made. The local authority will be informed of any concerns related to the suitability of the placement and changing needs.

Teaching learners with support needs

Inclusive Learning staff are available to inform lecturers and support staff on how to adapt resources and plan teaching to meet all learners needs. The partnership of learning support with the curriculum contribute to the quality of teaching and learning. All learner support documents are held on the EKC Group, information system and are available for all staff to view. This identifies the support strategies to enable the lecturer to meet the learner needs. Learners with Education Health Care and Personalised Plans will be supported to build on their personal skills through personal and social achievement activities where the plan identifies a need. EKC supports learners to increase their independence and to reduce the reliance on support from staff. Learners will be taught to become proficient in the use of assistive technology when entitled to exam access arrangements and to develop skills for employment.

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Adapting the curriculum and learning environment

Adaptations can be made to enable learners to access the curriculum e.g., producing work in Braille, individualised timetable, use of coloured overlays. Where feasible, adaptations can be made to the facilities to enable safe access for learners with sensory and/or physical needs.

In addition, an Inclusive Learning department is available for learners with cognitive and complex learning needs at Broadstairs, Folkestone and Canterbury Colleges. All colleges have a retreat facility for learners who experience a high level of anxiety and/or sensory need and for learners with language and communication needs. All colleges/ Business Units have support for learners with social, emotional, and mental health needs.

Resources to support learners

External professionals are engaged to advise on adaptations to equipment or facilities and to provide specific interventions: Qualified Teacher for the Visually Impaired, Teacher for the Deaf, Kent Association for the Blind. For highly specialist communication equipment the EKC Group will seek the advice of the Local authority Communication and Assistive Technology Team and other external agencies. EKC has a sensory room at Folkestone and Canterbury Colleges, details can be found in the Accessibility Statement for learners with support needs.

EKC has Speech and Language Therapists who provide therapy for learners where the need is identified within their EHCP.

Funding support for learners with a higher level of need

The respective local authority* has responsibility to ensure that where required, high needs Funding is allocated to meet the needs of learners requiring a high level of support, (aged 0 – 25 years, who are in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan), and other learners to 19 years who have a clearly identified high level of need and a Personalised Plan is in place. The ESFA funding guidance requires Further Education Colleges to provide up to £6,000 per year of resource for learners with an identified need. EKC are in receipt of high needs block funding and independently manage this resource to meet learner's support needs. The Local Authority provide high needs funding for exceptional cases when the support costs are above 28K and will directly engage Continuing Health Care agency support for learners with a high level of medical need.

*A looked after learner with an EHCP 16-19 years has their high needs support paid for by their original home local authority. This arrangement may change when the learner turns 19 years. The original home local authority may then contact the authority for which the learner has become a resident to, 'transfer the responsibility' of payment for support, while the learner remains in education. This written statement must be produced for EKC Group to evidence that the learner is an adult residing in Kent. If a learner with an Education Health Care Plan aged 16-25 moves from another local authority with their parents/carers to Kent, the original local authority should formally transfer the responsibility for the Education Health Care Plan to Kent's SEND education office.

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The College will notify the original local authority of a looked after learner who has made an application to the College to seek confirmation of funding.

Funding support for adults

All learners over 19 years with a learning support need are entitled to learning support which will be funded by the Adult Education Budget. Support for learners will have learning support provided within their community provision. Where required advice on support and exam access arrangements will be sought from the nearest college Inclusive Learning team.

Funding support for Supported Interns

All Supported Interns are required to have an EHCP. Funding for Job Coach and other support to enable the Intern to access work is funded by an application to the Department of Work and Pensions, 'Access to Work.'

Enabling learners with learning needs to engage in work experience and extra-curricular activities

EKC Group will endeavour to support all learners to access work experience and other educational extra-curricular activities. Following an assessment of need, the college/Business Unit, where reasonable, will use resources available to provide staff support to enable safe participation in the activity where there is evidence of need.

Welfare Support for all learners

All learners are allocated a mentor who has responsibility for learner welfare. The mentor, with the learner's permission, will liaise directly with parents /carers. A college counsellor can be available, with support from the well-being centre. A referral can be made to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Early Intervention and Psychosis Team, with access to the safeguarding team if required. Therapists advise and train staff in specific feeding and personal care programmes to meet the care requirements of learners with physical needs. Learners can contact Support Services regarding funding welfare support: including bursary, travel costs, support with paying for consumables relating to their course and childcare. Prior to starting college, parents /carers of learners with a high level of need contact the local authority travel department to discuss support with travel.

Qualifications required and training related to support roles

- Inclusive Learning Heads and Tutors hold a teaching qualification and an enhanced qualification related to a specific area of responsibility.
- Inclusive Learning Team Leaders: hold a Level 3 qualification in Learning Support or equivalent, specific area of study related to conditions.
- SEND Officers undertake training related to frequently identified conditions and are updated in best practice related to transition, and statutory expectations for learners with and EHCP.
- Learning Support Practitioners: undertake training related to frequently identified conditions and a level two qualification in Learning Support.
- Job Coaches: hold a level 3 qualification in Job Coaching.

Dealing with complaints

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Should there be a cause for complaint related to Inclusive Learning, parent/carers are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Head or Deputy of Inclusive Learning at the relevant college to resolve the issue before making a formal complaint via the EKC Group's Complaints Procedure.

For learners who have an Education Health Care Plan there is a statutory right for parent/ carer to appeal against a decision, made by the Local Authority regarding suitability of provision, complaints within this category are the responsibility of the Local Authority and cannot be investigated by EKC. The college encourages parent/Carers to take impartial guidance on the long-term implications if the application for an Education Health Care plan is declined by the Local Authority.

Working with external agencies

EKC Group engages with the following partners who provide advice for staff and support for learners: -

- Kent Communication Assistive Technology Team (CAT)
- NHS Occupational Therapists/Physiotherapists
- Kent Association for the Blind (KAB)
- Hi Kent
- IASK (independent advice service for parents/carers and learner
- KCC Independent Travel Trainers (ITT)
- CAMHS
- NHS Continuing Health Care
- Supporting Teaching and Learning Support Service (STLS) sensory and SEMH)
- Virtual school for LAC/ young persons

HE Learners

Any applicant with a support need who is on a Higher Education programme can declare this via UCAS. Learners support needs will be met by quality first teaching, inclusive approaches. Learners and their lecturers can access specialist advice and support from the local college Inclusive Learning staff. On application, or at any time during their programme, learners may apply for a Disabled Learners Allowance (DSA). Advice and guidance on this process can be offered by the nearest college Inclusive Learning team. If learners are eligible for DSA, they may be offered a package of support. Learners can choose to share their needs assessment with their lecturers and other support staff in order to further inform on adaptations to be made for them to access the curriculum.

14-16 learners

This Inclusive Learning Policy applies for EKC Junior College learners aged 14-16.

Looked after Children

EKC has a commitment to provide learning support for young care leavers, to support access and engagement with learning in order to facilitate retention and achievement.

ESOL/International learners, undertaking vocational programmes are also able to access the services of the Inclusive Learning team. Each college have a Counselling Team to help learners deal with a wide range of mental health needs.

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Related Policies and Procedures

- Admissions Policy
- Accessibility Statement for Learners with Learning Needs
- Safeguarding Policy
- Support Plan to Manage risk
- Learner Health and Wellbeing policy
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Process
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Procedure for Learners with an EHCP
- Procedure for Supporting the management of Learners who present with Challenging Behaviour & Complex Needs
- Procedure and manual for Health and Personal Care
- Funding for adults with learning support needs

Local Offer

The Local Authority's "local offer" is published on the Kent County Council KELS website.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or learner has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a learner has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions SEN Code of Practice (2014, p4).

Definition of disability

Many children and learners who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' SEN Code of Practice (2014, p5).

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