

SEND – February 2025

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# Phoenix College

## SEND Policy

February 2025

**This policy refers to ‘the organisation’ throughout and in doing so is referring to Phoenix Autism Trust.**

Written February 2025 – Review February 2025

## **SEND Policy**

### **1. Vision and purpose**

1.1 Phoenix Autism Trust (PAT) is a charity dedicated to supporting young students with autism and related difficulties affecting communication to be able to learn, thrive and reach their full potential.

1.2 The Trust's purpose is to enable service users and students to live ordinary lives and be active in their home communities, enjoying community living as independently as possible, accessing community services and employment or meaningful activity and enjoying friends and relationships. The Trust regards these as the foundations of good health and wellbeing and representing the best prospect of avoiding long term institutionalisation, which remains one of the major risks to young people with autism where they also have a significant learning disability.

### **2. Our Values**

2.1 At Phoenix College we are:

- Dedicated to delivering excellence – By developing expertise, outstanding services and positive engagement, always seeking to go above and beyond expectations.
- Respectful and Fair – By embracing diversity, showing integrity, acting with compassion and always treating people with dignity
- Proud to challenge – By being Open and Honest, listening, changing thinking, shifting attitudes.

### **3. Our Service**

3.1 We want to see our students prepared for adulthood with a skill set that enables them to have choice and control over where and how they live, what they do and with whom. We believe that adults with autism should;

- Have a voice;
- Be involved in decision making;
- Be able to contribute to society as active citizens.

3.2 Through an individualised personal curriculum, our students follow a programme of study that best prepares them for adulthood, focusing on the skills required for independent or supported living, training and employment, health and wellbeing and community participation. By providing just enough support we are preparing our students for their lives after education.

3.3 PAT – Phoenix College is a registered charity which teaches and supports young students in and around London, aged 19–25 years old, with autism and related communication disorders. The service is registered with the Department for Education as a special post-16 institution. Our approach is underpinned by the principles of SCERTS. Our students follow an individualised programme focused on developing communication, employment and independent living skills in preparation for adulthood. Our students spend around 50% of their week working and learning in their local communities.

3.5 The service includes a multi-disciplinary team approach, including Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists. We access specialist support from outside the service as needed.

#### **4. Compliance**

4.1 This policy complies with the statutory requirements laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure • Children's and Families (2014)
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- KCSIE (2019)

#### **5. Objectives of the provision**

5.1 This policy provides a framework for the identification of and provision for adults with special educational needs detailing how the needs of the most complex and challenging students within our provision will be met for them to make as much progress in the curriculum as possible. All the students will have additional and special educational needs and there will be a proportion who, for the following reasons, find it extremely difficult to make the progress which would usually be expected by society. The reasons include:

- A varied starting point.
- Exceptional difficulty in meeting the behavioural expectations of the College.
- Exceptional difficulty in progressing in one or more curriculum area or one or more aspect of the curriculum e.g. literacy, maths or communication
- Exceptional barriers to social development which limits the benefit the student can gain from community-based activities.

5.2 It is written for the benefit of all members of the College community to ensure that the potential of every student is maximised, irrespective of ability, disability, race, gender and social origin and to enable equality of access to the curriculum in an environment where every student is valued and respected. Phoenix College is an Independent FE Specialist Provision for young adults with autism; we therefore welcome students with a primary diagnosis of autism and special educational needs ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to engage in the curriculum.

5.3 We aim to create a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to students who may have experienced previous difficulties. We aim to provide every opportunity for the adults within our service to access the community.

5.4 We recognise that we will need to consider the individual needs of students when planning our curriculum. We will provide a curriculum, underpinned by SCERTS which is accessible to the individual needs of our students and maximises the opportunity to integrate students into group learning and their local community.

5.5 All students attending Phoenix College will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Students will have a diagnosis of autism and therefore will experience difficulties with language, communication and interaction. Students may have other needs such as behavioural/sensory and/or

medical needs. As an independent FE specialist provider every aspect of our provision is designed to meet the special educational needs of our students. Our aims and purposes summarise the principles underpinning everything that we do.

## **6. Vision and aims**

6.1 Our vision is to enable our students to live ordinary lives and be active in their home communities, enjoying community living as independently as possible, accessing community services and employment or meaningful activity and enjoying friends and relationships. By providing a life enhancing education we expect all our students to achieve at Phoenix College, at home and in their local communities. We aim to achieve this by:

- Having consistently high expectations and achievements for every individual.
- Offering high quality, inspirational and innovative teaching and learning, based on the principles of SCERTS
- Providing a safe, secure, caring and enjoyable environment where students can thrive, work, learn, and demonstrate a move towards being as independent as possible.
- Providing inspirational and accountable leadership at all levels.
- Providing a personalised curriculum for the 21st Century, which meets each student's individual education plan, based on the students EHCP, functional life and independent skills
- Working in partnership with parents, providing support, training and information.
- Providing an ambitious and comprehensive staff training and development programme.
- Work collaboratively with the local authority career advisor and other outside agencies to ensure that all areas of the ECHP are met.
- Ensuring that each student has an opportunity of a sustainable outcome

6.2 We are committed to self-evaluation and professional growth and are striving to be a learning organisation changing how we do things where feedback or evaluation indicates that this will lead to improvement. We believe in cooperation and partnership with families, as well as with others in the local community and further afield, who share our commitment to improving the lives of our students and young adults with autism.

## **7. Person responsible for the coordination of the SEND provision, its coordination and delivery**

7.1 The Principal is responsible for the coordination of SEND. The Principal is supported by Phase Leaders, Teachers, Therapists and Support Workers

The Principal can be contacted at:

Phoenix College

2 Paton Close E3 2QE.

Email: [renato.marques@phoenixcollege.london](mailto:renato.marques@phoenixcollege.london)

7.2 The Principal has responsibility to oversee the following and is accountable to the Phoenix College Board of Trustees.

- Co-ordinating the provision for SEND,
- Assisting with the identification and assessment of students with additional SEND.
- Advising and supporting staff working with the students.
- Working with Parents; including termly communication about goals and targets through ILPs.
- Ensuring that suitable resources are provided.
- Ensuring that ILP's are drawn up and monitoring their quality and impact.
- Assisting with the implementation of the IEP's and their reviews.
- Ensuring that the records of SEND students are updated and reviewed.
- Contributing to in-service training.
- Undertaking quality assurance of all aspects of SEN provision.

## **8. The special educational needs for which provision is made**

8.1 Phoenix College specialises in the education of young adults with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and complex needs. We recognise that the student's needs are best met by spending all or most of the college day in a setting which takes account of the impact of autism on the individual and has the specialist skills to provide an adapted curriculum, communicative and learning environment. This environment can be within their local community or within a class-based setting.

8.2 All students will have an EHCP for with a primary diagnosis of autism or a closely related communication disability or difficulty. The learning disability or difficulty may be in the range of moderate to severe. This will include student with autism spectrum disorder with associated language, communication and interaction difficulties. Students will have a formal diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (Autism, Asperger's Syndrome)

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

9.1 The Principal has delegated responsibility from Phoenix College Board of Trustees to discharge the statutory duty to ensure that the necessary provision is made for students with SEND and to ensure that staff in the service are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those students. The Principal will oversee the service's provision and report annually on SEND policy and practice.

9.2 Phoenix College Trustees and Principal establishes the appropriate staffing and funding for all students with special needs.

### **The role of the Principal**

9.3 The Principal has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the provision's work including provision for young adults with SEND. He/she works closely with the Phase Leader, teachers and instructors, speech and occupational therapists, and keeps Trustees informed through termly reporting.

9.4 The Principal will report on the proportion of our student group for whom making good progress in their learning is made more challenging by:

- An exceptionally varied starting point.
- Difficulty in meeting the behavioural expectations of the provision.
- Difficulty in progressing in one or more curriculum area or one or more aspect of the curriculum. E.g. Communication.
- Exceptional barriers to social development which limits the benefit the student can gain from community-based activities and / or enrichment activities.

## **10. Facilities available**

10.1 Students will be offered a range of specialist facilities including:

- A needs-led high support/student ratio.
- Staff team with specialist additional qualifications.
- A team of skilled and committed support staff, who have undertaken specialist training.
- Organisation and approaches to teaching and learning designed to take account of the characteristics of students with autism and associated language, communication and interaction difficulties, reflecting a range of evidence-based approaches.
- Access to a curriculum appropriate to their ages, needs and abilities, built around their EHCP Outcomes and an emphasis on social interaction and communication skills and community learning.
- A physically secure environment with good curriculum related facilities and other specialist facilities.
- Appropriate community based and extended education opportunities that are specifically designed to meet the needs of students with autism and associated language, communication and interaction difficulties.
- Multi-agency links and close partnership working with associated professionals.

10.2 All our basic teaching, social and administration areas will be fully accessible and compatible with all relevant equalities legislation.

10.3 We aim to create a calm, low stimulus, structured environment. We will make every effort to meet the medical needs of students, for example through implementing a clear and practical policy on medications in our Medicines Policy.

## **11. Allocation of resources**

11.1 We are committed to the recruitment and professional development of staff in appropriate numbers to meet the needs of all students in the light of our stated objectives. We also aim to provide high levels of materials and equipment to support effective teaching and learning, and to develop Phoenix College premises and facilities to provide a high-quality environment. Decisions about the allocation of resources to students will be guided by the provision specified for individual need in their EHCPs.

11.2 Where new challenges arise that impact on the student's ability to make good progress in their learning an emergency meeting will be held to determine a clear pathway of success. Input from the pupil's Parents/Carers, Persons responsible for SEND, Class Team, relevant specialists and the Local Authority will be required to ensure that the right resources are made available.

11.3 Action to meet students' SEND aims to promote independent learning falls within 4 broad strands:

- Assessment, planning and review;
- Additional resources - Human, Physical and Environment;
- Curriculum and teaching methods;
- Community Learning;

11.4 Each year our Quality Improvement Plan will focus on agreed improvements in a range of areas. Within each area several targets will be addressed and funding from available sources will be allocated for these developments.

11.5 Annual review of the deployment of staff and the use of the building is essential to ensure that we utilise resources effectively to meet student's needs. We are keen to secure best value for all expenditure and we carefully monitor and evaluate the impact of all our work.

## **12. Identification and review of student needs**

12.1 The individual special educational needs of students are outlined in their EHCP and these include clear educational objectives. The Provision will use these objectives to plan appropriate educational provision for each student.

12.2 All EHCPs are reviewed annually at the Annual Review Meeting and we are committed to providing sufficient time for each meeting so that parents, staff and others involved in the student's education and care can discuss progress and plan carefully for the future. The Principal and class teacher are present at each review meeting. We also encourage and enable the involvement of students in their own reviews.

12.3 The calendar for the annual review of students' statements is drawn up at the start of each academic year by the Principal. The calendar is circulated to all the relevant agencies so that they can make plans for their involvement wherever appropriate.

12.4 As part of the review process the educational objectives listed in EHCP are considered and it may be recommended that they are amended, removed or added to. Key short to medium term targets relating to these longer-term objectives are included in the Annual Review report and form the basis of an Individual Learning Plan for each student. Progress towards targets is reviewed termly and they are amended as appropriate through the academic year.

12.5 It is important to remember that the ILP represents a significant part of the planning undertaken for each student, there is also careful consideration of individual needs and more detailed definition of intended learning outcomes in all areas of the curriculum.

12.6 The development of assessment procedures is on-going and under regular review so that we can adapt our curriculum and use our resources efficiently to take account of group and individual needs.

The present form of assessment we deliver is through RARPA and NCFE English and Maths. This includes written, video, photographic and witness statement evidence

### **13. Access to the curriculum**

13.1 Students receive an individual curriculum which is relevant to their starting point, development, learning needs, EHCP targets and agreed outcome.

13.2 The curriculum is planned and differentiated to meet the range of individual needs of all students. The curriculum is further modified on a short-term planning basis to meet specific individual's SEND including a clear pathway that illustrates and demonstrates the steps a student takes to overcome their exceptional challenges.

### **14. Evaluation of provision**

14.1 We are committed to effective self-evaluation as a basis for raising standards; this is paramount if we are to achieve our SEND policy objectives. Our provision is evaluated in several ways:

- External evaluation e.g. by OFSTED.
- Monitoring of individual progress across all areas of development and learning.
- External accreditation results.
- Attendance and exclusions.
- Progress in terms of ILP targets.
- Progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Regular review and evaluation of the whole provision using scrutiny of work and monitoring of planning.
- Review of the work of individual staff members through their Appraisal (this includes regular lesson observations and quality assurance of learning documentation such as ILPs, termly planning and records of progress).
- Evaluation of other coordinated approaches to Provision self-evaluation, for example surveys of parents, listening carefully to students, which together with the information detailed above, will contribute to the production of a well-founded evaluation of our strengths and areas for improvement.

### **15. In-service training on SEN**

15.1 We are committed to supporting the continued professional development of all staff through appropriate in-service training.

15.2 Training is provided for individual members of staff to enable them to fulfil their role. This includes specialist training related to autism and associated language, communication and interaction difficulties. Training is provided for needs identified through the QIP, monitoring of teaching and staff appraisal. The service is supportive of staff who want to advance their general educational qualifications, through a range of CPD opportunities.

15.3 New members of staff or those changing their role will be supported by an induction programme.



15.4 Phoenix College will provide training to increase the knowledge and understanding of staff and to develop effective practice aligned to our priorities.

## **16. The use of external support services and agencies**

16.1 Phoenix College will liaise with Phoenix School to use its specialist staff including Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, behaviour and specialists where appropriate, to support students and provide training. The College will access other services through key relationships with placing Local Authorities.

16.2 We will cooperate closely with Social Care colleagues who support families, arrange respite care and also help in the transition from Phoenix College into supported living. We will also work with Local Community Commissioning Groups in Health where appropriate and other community agencies who offer support and expertise to enrich our provision for students. High quality family support will be available on an individual basis.

## **17. The role of parents**

17.1 First and foremost, parents and carers are a key part of the College team to ensure that each student makes progress in their learning, has aspirational goals and can overcome additional challenges as they arise.

17.2 We welcome and encourage the participation of parents and appreciate their help and support.

17.3 We believe in consulting and cooperating with parents to help all students to make optimum progress in all areas of their development. We follow an 'open door' policy which means that parents can approach the service whenever they have a concern and time will be made for them.

17.4 Opportunities will be provided for parents/carers to visit College to observe their young person, where appropriate, and attend social events such as coffee mornings, special support groups and reward and achievement events when these are organised

17.5 There are formal opportunities for parents to meet with staff through the annual review processes and through progress review meetings. We will also provide daily communication through a home-college book or by email where preferred. Each class has a dedicated parent/carer liaison learning mentor who will communicate by telephone where prompt contact is needed, acting as translators where required. We are happy to use ICT to keep in touch, for example sharing resources, pictures and information, through maintaining an up to date website, and distributing our newsletters electronically.

17.6 We will ensure that parents are aware of other services that they can access locally that support and provide information and advice either formally as part of the SEND Code of Practice and the local offer or informally from local groups.

17.7 We will ensure that all information is provided to parents in a format that they can access and understand.

17.8 We recognise that transition is likely to be particularly challenging for our students with autism and are committed to facilitating a smooth transition for all students joining or leaving College. Detailed transition planning will take place which, as a minimum, is compliant with the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice.

17.9 We recognise that planning for transition needs to start early and consideration will be given to that from the moment the student is on roll.

17.10 During the time the students are with us, we look for relevant opportunities to provide experiences in the community through a range of inclusion arrangements. These links not only strengthen our capacity to deliver a personalised curriculum, they will also lead to improved outcomes for our students.

17.11 We will offer work experience placements and volunteering opportunities. We see this as an important link which provides valuable experience for both the work placement and for our students.

17.12 In order to coordinate provision for our students with SEND, Phoenix College has links with a variety of outside agencies, such as: speech and language services, Education Welfare Office, occupational therapy, social services and educational psychologists.

## **18. The voice of the student**

18.1 We will encourage students to participate in their learning by:

- Career and Pathway guidance (one-to-one interviews / work experience placement/curriculum activities).
- Annual review / EHCP contributions.
- Peer-to-peer learning.
- Capturing and contriving motivation for activities and items and then providing access to those things.
- Preference Assessments.
- Accessing their local community and making informed choices as to how they would like to spend their day.
- Involvement in planning work placements.
- Capturing their voice in several different ways such as, one to one conversations, surveys, forums and events

## **19. Handling complaints and concerns**

19.1 We welcome feedback and will handle all complaints in line with our Complaints Policy.