



Special Educational Needs Policy

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| Adopted: | 1st September 2014 |
| Review date: | July 2015 |
| Review date: | July 2016 |
| Next Review date: | July 2017 |

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Introduction

New legislation (The Children and Families Act 2014) came into force from the 1st September 2014 that addresses the provision made for students with special educational needs. A new SEN Code of Practice also accompanies this legislation.

More details about these reforms and the SEN Code of Practice can be found on the Department for Education's website:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/sen

The SEND Local Offer is a resource which is designed to support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families. It describes the services and provision that are available both to those families in Sandwell that have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who do not have a plan, but still experience some form of special educational need. The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education, health and social care, as well as those provided by the private, voluntary and community sectors.

Definitions of special educational needs (SEN) taken from section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or*
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.*

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

1. Aims and objectives 'Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEN'.

Aims:

- Provide every child with access to a broad and balanced education. This includes the National Curriculum in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.
- Promote independence, equality and consideration for others.
- Ensure that we celebrate the wide range of our students' achievement.
- Support all students to excel by offering multiple appropriate pathways for progression.
- Equip students with the skills and attributes necessary for adult life.
- Create a welcoming atmosphere for parents and carers.

Objectives:

- Staff members seek to identify the needs of pupils with SEN as early as possible. This is most effectively done by gathering information from parents, education, health and care services (and feeder schools) prior to the child's entry into the Academy. Where needs have not been previously identified staff have an obligation to report observations to the SENCo.
- Monitor the progress of all pupils in order to aid the identification of pupils with SEN. Continuous monitoring of those pupils with SEN by their teachers will help to ensure that they are able to reach their full potential.
- Make appropriate provision to overcome all barriers to learning and ensure pupils with SEN have full access to the National Curriculum. This will be co-ordinated by the SENCo and will be carefully monitored and regularly reviewed in order to ensure that individual targets are being met and all pupils' needs are catered for.
- Work with parents/carers to gain a better understanding of their child, and involve them in all stages of their child's education. This includes supporting them in terms of understanding SEN procedures and practices and providing regular feedback on their child's progress.
- Work with and in support of outside agencies when the pupils' needs cannot be met by the school alone. ACE Academy receives further support from Sandwells Inclusion Support Service, Education Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Create a school environment where pupils can contribute to their own learning by offering all students the opportunity to voice their own opinions. This is achieved by encouraging positive relationships with adults in the Academy and carefully monitoring the progress of all pupils at regular intervals. Pupil participation is promoted across the Academy within the security of each tutor and year group. The tutor community helps to build a sense of belonging, respect and value. A sense of comradeship and team spirit is also encouraged through wider opportunities for participation in school life (e.g. membership of the School Council, affiliation with sports teams and other clubs).

2. Responsibility for the coordination of SEN provision

- The people co-ordinating the day to day provision of education for pupils with SEN are: Ms Jessica Gibson (SENCo) and Ms Katie Hitchinson (Deputy SENCo).

3. Arrangements for coordinating SEN provision

The SENCo will hold details of all SEN Support records such as the SEN Register, provision maps, improvement plans and review records and minutes for individual pupils.

All staff can access the following documents on the Academy website or the staff shared network area:

- The ACE Academy SEN Policy.
- A copy of the full SEN Register.
- Guidance on identification of SEN in the Code of Practice (in the SEN Information Report)
- Information on individual pupils' special educational needs including pupil profiles and strategy sheets where applicable.
- Practical advice, teaching resources, and information about types of special educational needs and disabilities.
- Information available through The Sandwell SEND Local Offer (link on the Academy website)

By accessing the above every staff member will have complete and up-to-date information about all pupils with special needs and their requirements; enabling them to provide for the individual needs of all pupils.

This policy is made accessible to all staff and parents in order to aid the effective coordination of the school's SEN provision.

4. Admission arrangements

Please refer to the information contained in our school prospectus and our Admissions Policy.

The admission arrangements for all pupils are in accordance with national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. This includes children with any level of SEN; those with Education, Health and Care Plans and those without. Please refer to the information contained in our school prospectus.

Where appropriate upon transition; children with identified needs will be supported through liaison meetings with parents, key staff from both settings and support agencies. An individual plan of action to aid transition will be offered.

5. Specialist SEN provision

ACE Academy is an inclusive learning environment. For more information on our provision for inclusion including our involvement in specialist programmes to aid inclusion please see Section 10.

In our Academy we support children with a wide range of needs. We are committed to whole school inclusion and will seek support and training from SEND services where appropriate.

6. Facilities for pupils with SEN

ACE Academy building has recently benefitted from a new building being added to its site. The site building regulations comply with all relevant accessibility requirements. Gary Hill (Headteacher) and Interserve oversees the maintenance of the site.

The building provides wheelchair access, disabled toilets and lifts. A suite of classrooms are allocated to form The Hub; a specialist area for students with SEN to access.

7. Allocation of resources for pupils with SEN

All pupils with SEN will have access to support provided by SEN funding within the school budget. Some pupils with SEN may access additional funding. For those with the most complex needs, additional funding (HLN or High Level Needs) is retained by the local authority and accessed via an application for an Education Health and Care Plan. The SENCO will refer individual applications to a multi-agency panel, which is administered by the Local Authority, who will determine whether the level and complexity of need meets the threshold for this funding.

It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team, SENCo and governors to agree how the allocation of resources is used.

A number of SEN pupils may also receive intervention funded by Pupil Premium allocation depending on the nature of the programme(s) offered.

8. Identification of pupils needs

Identification:

See definition of Special Educational Needs at start of policy.

A graduated approach: 'Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEN'.

Quality First Teaching: 'The baseline of learning for all pupils'.

1. Any pupil who is falling significantly outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators and grade boundaries will be monitored.
2. Once a pupil has been identified as possibly having SEN they will be closely monitored by staff in order to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties.
3. The subject teacher will take steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities that will aid the pupil's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied.
4. The SENCo will be consulted as needed for support and advice and may wish to observe the pupil in class.
5. Through the above actions it can be determined which level of provision the pupil will need.
6. If a pupil has recently been removed from the SEN register they may also fall into this category as continued monitoring will be necessary.
7. Parents will be informed fully of every stage of their child's development and the circumstances under which they are being monitored. Parents are encouraged to share information and queries with the Academy.
8. The Pupil is monitored if concern is raised by parent or teacher but this does not automatically place the pupil on the Academy's SEN register. Concerns are discussed with parents/carers. It is recorded by the Academy as an aid to further progression and for future reference.
9. Pupil progress meetings, academic tutorials and parent evenings are used to monitor and assess the progress being made by all students. The frequency of these meetings is dependent on individual progress.

SEN Support:

Where it is determined that a pupil does have SEN, parents will be formally advised of this before inclusion of the individual on the Academy SEN Register. The aim of formally identifying a pupil with SEN is to help us ensure that effective provision is put in place and so remove barriers to learning. The support provided consists of a four part process indicated below:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do

- Review

This is an ongoing cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of an individual grows. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions which are the most effective in supporting the pupil to achieve good progress and outcomes.

Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEN support the subject teacher, working with the SENCo should carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw on subject assessments, teacher observations, details of previous progress and attainment, comparisons with peers and national data, as well as the views and experience of parents. The opinion and feelings of the individual and advice from external support services will also be considered. Any parental concerns will be recorded and compared with the Academy's information and assessment data on how the pupil is progressing.

This analysis will require regular review to ensure that support and intervention is matched to need; barriers to learning are clearly identified and being challenged and that the interventions being used are developing and evolving as required. Where external support staff are already involved their work will help inform the assessment of need. Where they are not involved they may be contacted, if this is felt to be appropriate, following discussion and agreement from parents.

Plan

When it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, parents will be informed in writing. Planning will involve consultation between the teachers, Heads of Lower, Middle and Upper school, Year Managers, SENCo and parents to agree the adjustments, interventions and support that are required; the impact on progress, development and or behaviour that is expected and a clear date for review. Parental involvement may be sought, where appropriate, to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

All those working with the pupil, including support staff, will be informed of their individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies/approaches that are being employed and the outcomes that are being sought.

Do

The tutor, Year Managers, Heads of Lower, Middle and Upper school and subject teachers remain responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis. They will retain responsibility even where the interventions may involve group or 1:1 teaching away from the mainstream classes. They will work closely with teaching assistants and relevant specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and links with classroom teaching. Support with further assessment of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses, problem solving and advising of the implementation of effective support will be provided by the SENCo.

Review

Reviewing pupil progress will be made at termly academic data checks. The review process will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. The SENCo will revise the support and in light of pupil progress and development; making any necessary amendments going forward, in consultation with parents and subject teachers.

Referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan:

If a pupil has lifelong or significant difficulties they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process for an Education Health and Care Plan which is usually requested by the Academy but can be requested by a parent. This will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the pupil are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning provision and identifying resources, is required.

The decision to make a referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan will be taken at a progress review involving parents, SENCo and Head of Year if applicable.

The application for an Education, Health and Care Plan will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents
- Teachers
- SENCo
- Social Care
- Health professionals

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision and a summary of any action points taken; the preliminary outcomes of the targets set form the basis of the profile. A decision will be made by a group of people from education, health and social care about whether the pupil is eligible for an EHC Plan. Parents have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plan)

1. Following Statutory Assessment, an EHC Plan will be provided by Sandwell Council, if it is decided that the needs of an individual are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available. Both staff in the Academy and parents will be involved developing and producing the plan.
2. Parents have the right to appeal against the content of the EHC Plan. They may also appeal against the school named in the Plan if it differs from their preferred choice.
3. Once the EHC Plan has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the pupil's formal record and reviewed at least annually by staff, parents and the pupil. The Annual Personal Review enables provision for the pupil to be evaluated and, where appropriate, for changes to be put in place.

An online link to the Sandwell SEND Local Offer can be found on the Academy website homepage.

For further information please contact the SENCo at ACE.

9. Access to the curriculum, information and associated services

Pupils with SEN will be given access to the curriculum through the specialist SEN provision provided by the Academy as is necessary, as far as possible, taking into account with the wishes of parents and the needs of the individual.

Every effort will be made to educate pupils with SEN alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENCo will consult with parents for other flexible arrangements to be made.

Regular training and learning opportunities for staff on the subject of SEN and SEN teaching are provided both in the Academy. Staff members are encouraged to attend voluntary sessions and Inset training to further develop skills and knowledge.

Ensuring Access to the Curriculum for Pupils with SEN:

The SENCo, SEN staff and Senior Leaders are responsible for:

- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs of any pupils including sharing progress reports, medical reports and teacher feedback.
- Providing regular training and learning opportunities for staff in all departments on the subject of SEN and SEN teaching. Ensuring staff members are kept up to date with teaching methods which will aid the progress of all pupils including those with SEN.
- In-class provision and support are deployed effectively to ensure that the curriculum is differentiated where necessary.
- Individual or small group tuition is available where it is felt that pupils would benefit from this provision.
- Setting appropriate individual targets that motivate pupils to do their best, and celebrating achievements at all levels.

10. Inclusion of pupils with SEN

The Headteacher, Mr G Hill, oversees the relevant Academy policies for all aspects of Inclusion and is responsible for ensuring that it is implemented effectively throughout the Academy.

The Academy curriculum is regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that it promotes the inclusion of all pupils. This includes learning outside the classroom and offsite provision.

The Academy will seek advice where appropriate around individual pupils, from external support services through the regular review meetings. Where a behavioural incident warrants exclusion the relevant Heads of Lower, Middle and Upper school, Year Manager and member(s) of SLT will consider the incident in line with the Academy Exclusion Policy, taking into account the pupils special educational need.

11. Evaluating the success of provision

In order to make consistent continuous progress in relation to SEN provision the Academy encourages feedback from staff, parents and pupils during the academic year. Parents, staff and students are given an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of provision by means of a questionnaire.

Pupil progress will be monitored on a termly basis in line with the SEN Code of Practice. Further feedback from parents can be given at any time through email, telephone or face to face contact.

12. Complaints procedure

Please refer to the general Complaints Procedure.

If a parent or carer has any concerns or complaints regarding the care or welfare of their child, an appointment can be made by them to speak to the SENCo, and designated Senior Leadership Line Manager who will be able to offer advice on formal procedures for complaint if necessary.

13. Staff Training (CPD)

We aim to keep all Academy staff up to date with relevant training and developments in teaching practice in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN.

The Academy seeks the support of the Local Educational Psychology Service when a need for specialist training is identified. The Pupil Support Department and Senior Leadership Team consider the relevance of specific training carefully and aim to meet the needs of staff dealing with specific SEN issues.

The SENCo attends relevant SEN courses and facilitates/signposts relevant SEN focused external training opportunities for all staff. All Teaching Assistants are offered training opportunities through a range of local agencies working with specific students at the academy.

We recognise the need to train all our staff on SEN issues and we have funding available to support this professional development. The SENCo, with the Senior Leadership Team, ensures that training opportunities are matched to school development priorities and those identified through the use of provision management.

14. Links to support services

The Academy continues to build strong working relationships and links with external support services in order to fully support our SEN pupils and aid Academy inclusion.

Sharing knowledge and information with our support services is key to the effective and successful SEN provision within our Academy. Any one of the support services may raise concerns about a pupil. This will then be brought to the attention of the SENCo who will then inform the child's parents.

15. Working in partnerships with parents

- Early and accurate identification and assessment of SEN leading to the correct intervention and provision.
- Continuing social and academic progress of children with SEN to enable personal success.
- Parental views are considered and valued.

In cases where more frequent regular contact with parents is necessary, this will be arranged based on the individual pupil's needs. The SENCO may also signpost parents of pupils with SEN to the local authority Parent Partnership service where specific advice, guidance and support may be required.

If an assessment or referral indicates that a pupil has additional learning needs the parents and the pupil will always be consulted with regards to future provision. Parents are invited to attend meetings with external agencies regarding their child, and are kept up to date and consulted on any points of action drawn up in regards to the provision for their child. The school's SEN link governor may be contacted at any time in relation to SEN matters.

16. Links with other schools

The Academy is a member of EC MAT Academy Trust. This enables the partnership to build a bank of joint resources and to share advice, training and development activities and expertise

Transition

Where a student has a current statement or EHC plan there is a legal requirement to provide an annual review at the point of Year 9 and Year 11 transition. This review may take the form of a Person Centred Review or Formal Review. This is decided upon by the SENCo in consultation with external agencies. Transition Plans are drawn up in accordance to parental, pupil and staff views follow the actions of a Review Meeting. Pupils with funding (AFN/HLN) where appropriate will also receive an annual review.

17. Links with other agencies and voluntary organisations

ACE Academy invites and seeks advice and support from external agencies in the identification, assessment and provision of SEN. The SENCo and designated Senior Leadership Line Manager are the designated persons responsible for liaising with the following:

- Sandwell Education Psychology Service
- Inclusion Support Service
- Social Services
- Speech and Language Service
- Language and Learning Support Service
- Specialist Outreach Services

Representatives from voluntary organisations and other external agencies are invited to meetings throughout the year to discuss SEN provision and progress and keep staff up to date with legislation.

In cases where a child is under observation or a cause for concern, focused meetings will be arranged with the appropriate agency. Parents will normally be invited to and informed about any meetings held concerning their child unless there are over-riding safeguarding issues.