



Policy Overview

Written by	The Principals Review Committee
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Approving Body	The Strategic Development Committee
Signed Chair of Trustees	S. Trentini

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Striving to forge improvements in communities and become the highest performing MAT in the country.



Aims

Ensure the schools in our trust fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND

Set out how our trust will, across all of our academies:

- Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life, so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
- Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- Have high expectations of all pupils
- Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into the next stage of their education and adulthood
- Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil

Staff will endeavour to achieve the best outcomes by:

- Having high expectations for all pupils
- Using assessment effectively including AFL to shape provision and refocus teaching as needed.
- Engaging with CPD to maintain up to date knowledge of best practice
- Routinely plan to overcome barriers to learning that the pupils they teach may face
- Provide supportive resources and scaffolding to the extent that they enable access, ownership and independence.
- Asking how might this child be included or supported as a starting point for conversations regarding SEND.
- Provide scaffolding and resources to support pupils with access for all areas of SEND as required (Including for pupils with SEMH not just for Cognition and Learning).
- Engage with SEND Pupils and Parents/ carers as partners
- Adopt an individualised view of success and celebrate achievements
- Collaborate with outside agencies where appropriate to facilitate inclusion



Role of the SENDCO

Key responsibilities: Ensure the Trust meets the requirements of the Code of Practice (Specific reference to Chapter 6)

- Ensure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff
- Provide support and challenge to staff
- Advocate for SEND pupils with staff and leadership
- Provide access to training as required.
- Plan for and maintain an overview of provision. Ensure this is evidence based and responsive to changing circumstances and need.
- Monitor the effectiveness of provision and quality of teaching and learning for SEND pupils (across the school day, not just support and intervention).
- Work with and liaise with outside agencies at an early stage
- Ensure ECHP plans are in place where required as well as access to appropriate funding support.
- Ensure AP is fit for purpose where this is considered or in place

Vision & Values

Our Mission

We aim to develop learning communities that support every child to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to lead a happy and fulfilling life.

Our vision of "Forging Learning Communities" relates to all levels of the trust, whether within the classroom, the key stage, across year groups or between clusters of academies. It is our ambition to create communities that seek continuous improvement in teaching, learning and curriculum-development to enable all children to flourish and discover their own unique potential.

We aim to ensure that children experience kindness, understanding and a sense of belonging throughout the school day to ensure they are able to engage fully with the learning process.



All partner schools pledge to achieve the Trust's mission through following our nine guiding principles:

- Academies as safe emotional spaces
- Invest time in relationships (every child known, appreciated and understood)
- Active engaged learners with the skills to work and get along with others
- Honest, open communication
- Evidence-based approaches
- Do what matters
- Get it right early
- Empower staff to build capacity
- Collaborate and share to develop and build best practice

Legislation & Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes those with a disability) and those who don't share it
- The Governance Handbook, which sets out trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out schools' obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs



Inclusion & Equal Opportunities

In our Trust we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment that are different from and/ or additional too those received by other pupils to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

Definitions

Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

All SENDCOs hold the National Award for Special Educational Needs or are pursuing the SEN NPQ.

Disability

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

All schools in our trust will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.



The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

Communication & interaction

Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.

Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.

Cognition and learning

Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.

A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:

- Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia
- Moderate learning difficulties
- Severe learning difficulties
- Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment

Social, emotional & mental health

These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:

- Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder
- Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder
- Suffered adverse childhood experiences

These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.

Sensory and/or physical

Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.

Pupils may have:

- A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment
- A physical impairment

These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.



Roles & Responsibilities

The SENDCo plays a crucial role in the academy's SEND provision. This involves working with the Principal, Trust SENDCo, Trustees and ESLT to determine the strategic development of the policy.

The SENDCo's responsibilities include:

- Day to day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision for children with SEND, including those who have a current EHCP.
- Support teaching and learning of children with SEND.
- Provide professional guidance to staff and parent/carers to ensure that children with SEND receive support and high-quality teaching.
- Maintain SEND records.
- Contribute to staff CPD.
- Advise on the graduated approach/response.
- Liaise with potential providers of education and parent/carers to ensure smooth transitions are planned between education settings and each year.
- Advise on deployment of staff and budgets.
- Making referrals to external agencies.
- Work with and report to Trust SENDCO

Role of the Principal

- Support the vision, mission statement and guiding principles of the trust in relation to SEND and the aims of this policy.
- Oversight for the implementation of this policy
- Work closely with the SENDCo.
- The day-to-day management of all aspects of the academy including SEND provision.
- Ensuring that the academy has clear and flexible strategies for working with students and parent/carers, and that these strategies encourage involvement in their child's education.

Role of the Trustees

- Ensuring a high standard is made for children with SEND.
- Ensuring children with SEND are included in extra-curricular activities.
- Having high regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out these responsibilities.
- Being involved in reviewing the SEND policy.
- Support the vision, mission statement and guiding principles of the trust in relation to SEND and the aims of this policy.



Role of Teachers

'Every teacher is a teacher of SEND' (Code of Practice and Teachers' Standard 5)

- Include and provide quality teaching and learning for all children including children with SEND.
- Make reasonable adjustments for children with SEND (Equality Act 2010)
- Being aware of the Trust's SEND Policy and procedures for identification
- Liaising with support staff
- Support the vision, mission statement and guiding principles of the trust in relation to SEND and the aims of this policy.

Role Support Staff

- Being aware of the Trust's SEND Policy and procedures for identification
- Liaising with teachers about children's response to learning tasks planned by the teacher.
- To take an active role with the teacher, planning next steps of the children's learning
- Support the vision, mission statement and guiding principles of the trust in relation to SEND and the aims of this policy.

Role of the Trust SENDCo

- Support the vision, mission statement and guiding principles of the trust in relation to SEND and the aims of this policy and advocate for these at trust and academy level as well as via networks.
- Collate data from across the trust and report to ESLT and Trust SENDCo termly- This includes sharing of what is working well and next steps.
- Carry out audits and ensure that all statutory documentation is up to date and available on academy websites
- Provide support to SENDCOs and signpost training
- Provide advice and support to the ESLT

The SEND Trustee

The trust's SEND trustee is Lorraine Pannell. The SEN Trustee will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within academies through dashboard information, published reports and data, via ESLT and the Trust SENDCO and link visits to academies.
- Work with the ESLT and the Trust SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision across the trust.
- Ensure specific training needs regarding SEN are being addressed
- Ensure ESLT and the Trust SENDCO regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access
- With the ESLT and Trust SENDCO identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching



Parents or Carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given termly report on the pupil's progress

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

The Pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

SEN Information Report

Every school in the trust publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.



Our Approach to SEND Support

Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

Staff will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the academy. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. They will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated high-quality teaching while seeking to build on strengths. If progress does not improve the teacher will raise the issue with the SENDCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting outside agencies or other external specialist(s).

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, school staff will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. They will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether the school can provide it by adapting its core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.



If a pupil is at the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP),

Then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure it gets relevant information before the pupil starts at the school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

Consulting and involving pupils and parents

Our academies will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

The Graduated Approach to SEN Support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The pupil's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.



2. Plan

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our management information system (TES and BSquared where necessary) and will be made accessible to staff in a pupil passport on TES Provision Tool

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENDCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

3. Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.



Levels of Support

School-based SEN support

Pupils receiving SEN support will be placed on the SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving outside agencies/ external specialists as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the SEN Provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Monitoring and QA including learning walks, observations, work and planning scrutinies and pupil voice.
- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Using questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents



Expertise & Training of Staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The principal and the SENDCOs will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their school who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

Links with External Professional Agencies

The trust recognises that we won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary our schools will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Schools and family specialist services (SFSS)
- Local Behaviour partnership
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

Admission & Accessibility Arrangements

Admission Arrangements

- In relation to Pupils with a disability and prospective pupils with SEN the usual admission arrangements will be followed with suitable transition arrangements put in place.
- Pupils whose EHC plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated



Accessibility Arrangements

- The academy's accessibility plan is available on the academy websites or a paper copy on request from the academy office.

Complaints about SEND Provision

Where parents have concerns about an academy's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the academy SENDCo and then the Principal. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our academies should be made to the Principal. They will be handled in line with the trust's Complaints Policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint to the Trust – see policy. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

To find out about disagreement resolution and mediation services in our local area. You can request mediation by contacting governanceforgetrust@theforgetrust.co.uk

Monitoring & Evaluating Arrangements

Evaluating the Effectiveness of this Policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- Monitoring classroom provision and additional provision including intervention
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents



Monitoring the Policy

This policy will be reviewed by The Forge Trust trustees every 2 years. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the board of trustees.

Links with Other Policies & Documents

This policy links to the following documents

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy

