



Mercia Primary Academy Trust

Special Needs Policy

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FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Policy and practice at Mercia Primary Academy Trust reflects the principles outlined in the Code of Practice (2001) and pays due regard to Section 316A of the Education Act (1996), "Inclusive Schooling -Children with Special Educational Needs and Part 2 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001). The Governors and Staff endorse the general principles outlined in the Code of Practice (2001) that: -

- ◆ A child with special educational needs should have their needs met
- ◆ The special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings
- ◆ The views of the child should be sought and taken into account
- ◆ Parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education
- ◆ Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum.

WHAT IS A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED?

A child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- b) has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority
- c) is under five and falls within the definition at a) or b) above or would do if special educational provision was not made for the child

Nationally, research has shown that at one time or another during their schooling, 20% of children will have a special educational need. It is our objective to give every child an equal opportunity and curriculum entitlement, wherever possible, within our school. For children with special needs, we should aim for them to follow the National Curriculum, as far as possible, at their own level and at their own pace. In some cases, it may be necessary for such children to receive extra help within the classroom or to be withdrawn.

Children may have a specific learning difficulty in one or more area or their needs may be more generalised. Their inability to learn at the 'normal' rate may also involve problems in the following categories:

- 1) Speech, Language, Communication
- 2) Learning, Cognition
- 3) Social, Behavioural, Emotional
- 4) Physical, Sensory

There may be a variety of reasons for a child's inability to progress, some of which we may need help from other professional agencies to deal with; it is our job as teachers to cope with the problems which present themselves to us in the classroom. Knowledge of a child's background is always useful to us and we must always take this into account.

AIMS

- 1) To ensure that every child has an equal opportunity
- 2) To ensure that a child with special educational needs should have his/her needs met
- 3) To foster self-esteem and an enjoyment of learning, by recognising and praising success, whilst offering support in areas of weakness.
- 4) To work closely with parents, children and other agencies about the needs of pupils with special educational needs and maintain a multi-disciplinary approach to the resolution of issues
- 5) To ensure the views of the child should be sought and taken into account.

OBJECTIVES

The school will endeavour to:

- 1) provide a framework of appropriate screening and assessment resources that will enable staff to identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, all children with special educational needs
- 2) use consistent criteria to measure children's performance, identifying strengths and weaknesses, so that their rate of progress, over time, may be assessed
- 3) provide and deliver individual programmes of special needs support through the preparation of Individual Education Plans (IEP) and/or Individual Behaviour Plans (IBP) designed to meet each child's identified needs within the context of the whole curriculum
- 4) employ clear procedures, which will enable staff to monitor progress, and use agreed proformas for recording work with children with special educational needs
- 5) ensure staff recognise that there is a continuum of special needs support and to provide a structure by means of which outside agencies can be involved at the appropriate stage
- 6) establish procedures which enable staff to liaise with parents on a formal and informal basis

CO-ORDINATING EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Role of Governors:

The Governing Body has appointed Nicola Taylor who has responsibility for Special Educational Needs. She liaises with the SENCO and monitors the school's work on behalf of children with special educational needs.

The Governing Body must

- do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs
- ensure that, where the 'responsible person' – the Headteacher or appropriate Governor – has been informed by the LEA that a pupil has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach him or her
- ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those pupils who have special educational needs
- consult the LEA, as appropriate, and the governing bodies of other school, when it seems necessary or desirable in the interests of co-ordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole
- ensure that a pupil with special educational needs joins in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, so far as it is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision their learning needs call for and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated and the efficient use of resources
- report annually to parents on the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs
- have regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out their duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.

Role of Senco

The role involves –

- the day to day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy
- liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- managing teaching assistants
- co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- maintaining the Special Educational Needs register and overseeing the records on all pupils with special educational needs
- liaising with parents of children with special educational needs
- consulting with children and encourage participation in their progress
- contributing to the in-service training of staff
- liaising with external agencies including the educational psychology service and other support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary bodies
- keeping the governing body informed

Records

- record keeping and updating
- keeping an up-to-date list of all children identified with special educational needs
- keeping a file on information and completed paperwork on all special educational needs children in the Foundation Stage, and Key Stages 1 and 2
- keeping a note of all meeting with parents, class teachers, educational psychologists and other agencies appertaining to individual children
- keeping a check on review dates for the various stages
- ensuring that the annual review for Statemented children are carried out at the appropriate times
- ensuring that the annual review for CAFs (Common Assessment Framework) are carried out at the appropriate times

Identification

- helping staff identify children with special educational needs and offering advice or testing where appropriate, stressing the need for importance of early identification

Staff Support

- meeting with every member of staff, with special educational needs children, on a termly basis, or more frequently if necessary
- helping to write and update IEPs and provision mapping
- advising on appropriate classroom techniques
- providing resources
- help with producing, monitoring and completing procedures and paperwork
- advising welfare assistants working with statemented pupils
- helping to timetable ancillary help

Resources

- providing and updating resources for pupils and staff
- disseminating information on current practice and expertise in the field of special educational needs

Liaison with

- teachers
- parents
- outside agencies
- SENCOs in the Cluster
- Governor with responsibility for special educational needs

Role of Class Teacher:

- provision for children with special educational needs which match the nature of their needs
- careful, regular recording of the nature of a child's special educational needs, the action taken and the outcomes
- understanding of the idea of 'Graduated Response'
- making full use of available classroom and school resources before calling upon outside resources and agencies
- awareness and adherence to the 'Model of Action and Intervention' (see following page)

MODEL OF ACTION AND INTERVENTION

- Monitoring children in the lower average range, and/or children demonstrating mild behaviour problems, and ensuring support is given to enable them to make progress.
- Ensuring planning is FLEXIBLE in order to recognise children as individuals and to ensure progression, relevance and differentiation for all children.
- Careful monitoring and production of IEPs and IBPs with the involvement of children, parents and the SENCO.
- Working with other agencies who become involved in the process of supporting the needs of the individual.

This involves:

- gathering information about the child and making an initial assessment of the child's special educational needs
- consulting the child and the child's parents/guardians
- providing special help within the normal curriculum framework, exploring ways in which increased differentiation of classroom work might better meet the needs of the individual child
- managing teaching assistants to enhance the child's learning
- monitoring and reviewing the child's progress
- notifying the SENCO regarding the above

IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN

Children are assessed in a general way from the moment they enter school, whether in the nursery, reception classes or other entry point. They should be given a suitable time to settle into the school routine and become familiar with methods of teaching. However, class teachers should share concerns about a child's rate of learning or ability to integrate, as soon as possible to the SENCO. EYFS profile assessments should also be used to identify any problem areas in the reception year.

The sooner a child is identified as having a learning difficulty the better, particularly where there is a problem serious enough to require intervention from an outside agency.

Some children with special educational needs are known to the school prior to school entry and their problems will be discussed with the Headteacher before they begin so that they can be catered for appropriately.

The class teacher should employ a variety of methods to assess a child's progress including:

- a) Observations - where a child is gauged against the general progress of the class - usually in terms of Literacy and Numeracy but he/she can also be observed in other subject areas. Observations can compare how a child behaves/performs in relation to his peers as a member of the class, within a group or as an individual. They can be made within the classroom situation or elsewhere around the school including during PE, in the dining hall or in the playground.
- b) Questioning and discussion – in a 1-1 or classroom situation
- c) Marking written assignments against the class average and National average bench marks
- d) Assessments made prior to setting targets, e.g. in Reading, Writing, Number, Shape, Space and Measures, and at the end of units of work (formative and summative)
- e) Standardised testing including SATs
- f) Ongoing discussions with:
 - g) parents/guardians – about any problems occurring at home which may have a bearing on schooling and provide valuable insight to members of staff
 - previous schools/placements - reports/comments/test results and concerns
- h) medical practitioners – regarding any medical problems which may affect learning

**** Teachers should always remember to check on a child's hearing and sight, if problems arise, as the child may be experiencing difficulties which have not previously been picked up. It should be noted that such problems can develop at any time****

When Special Needs are identified, teachers will refer to Mrs Booth or Mrs Meah and ensure that parents are advised of any concerns at the outset. Children will be assessed by teachers and other agencies including Special Educational Needs Support Service teachers if appropriate. The school will be responsible for maintaining the provision and review procedures.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

Children with an IEP are reviewed at termly intervals. Those involved could include the class teacher, SENCO, parents, child, ancillary help, Educational Psychologist, Speech Therapist, etc

STATEMENTS

After review, if a child has been assessed as not having made any progress, they will be referred to the SEN Co-ordinator who will decide, based on agreed criteria, whether the child will be assessed by the Educational Psychologist for statementing. This assessment will require a great deal of evidence.

If a formal request for a statutory assessment is refused by the L.E.A. parents have the right of appeal to the SEN Tribunal. The LEA has a duty to ensure that parents are informed of their rights to appeal and also of the time limits involved if lodging an appeal.

PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSION

The principle of inclusion is to ensure that measures are in place for the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. It involves:

- 1) Setting suitable learning challenges
- 2) Responding to pupil's diverse learning needs
- 3) Overcoming potential barriers to learning
- 4) Assessment of individuals and groups

Measures to ensure integration within the school as a whole include encouraging and supporting pupils to:

- participate in extra curricular/ social activities
- undertake roles and positions of responsibility
- promote the school community identity

Children with special educational needs are taught within mixed ability classes and grouped as deemed appropriate by the class teacher. Those with a Statement of Educational Needs might have a teaching assistant assigned to them. They are thus integrated in every way, in all subjects, with differentiated work where appropriate, and closely monitored in order to chart their progress efficiently.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- The aim of the school is for staff to work in partnership with parents in order to help a child overcome difficulties
- Parents are kept informed about progress informally and formally; informally when they deliver and collect their children, etc and formally at parents evenings, by letter, by specific invitation into the school
- they are kept informed by the Headteacher, class teacher, SENCO, SENSS, Educational Psychologist and other external agencies
- parents are encouraged and informed how to help their children at home in conjunction with work being done at school
- in some instances, help is initiated by parents from an external agency and the school co-operates in any way appropriate with such an agency
- parents are kept informed at every juncture in the Stages of Special Educational Need, up to and beyond Statementing

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Any complaint is dealt with sensitively and promptly:

- 1) The initial point of contact is the child's class teacher

- 2) Appointments may also be made with the SENCO.
- 3) The Executive Headteacher can also be contacted.
- 4) If any person feels that their complaint has not been dealt with adequately by the school staff, they are able to contact the Governor who covers the Special Educational Needs framework, who will then report their concerns to the Governing Body.
- 5) In addition the Local Education Authority provides a disagreement resolution service, telephone number on display in the entrance hall.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Children with special educational needs, like other children, are admitted to Mercia Primary Academy Trust after consultation between parents, setting leader/manager and the key worker.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

The school works in close partnership with the Local Education Authority, health and social services and local and national voluntary organisations as appropriate. The school recognises the important role to be made by outside agencies in helping schools to identify, assess and make provision for pupils with special educational

APPENDIX

The 'Stages' explained

Children are monitored, evaluated and assessed in accordance with the normal school procedures. At this point all children are deemed to be progressing at levels within acceptable parameters of the group

SCHOOL ACTION

If a child is exhibiting signs that he or she is not developing within the acceptable parameters; academically, behaviourally, emotionally, physically, or with communication, then that child may have a special educational need.

At this stage the parents should be informed that the school has concerns about the child

Work will be differentiated for the child or group of children who are of a similar level. This differentiation is over and above what normally happens as part of the normal day to day classroom planning

An IEP will be written for the child, or group, giving narrow, specific targets for development

SCHOOL ACTION PLUS

A child moves to School Action Plus when any outside agencies are called in to assess the child in any way

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Adopted for and on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed

Director, Mercia Primary Academy Trust

Date: March 2020

Review Date: March 2023

Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Changes	Reasons for Alterations
V1	July 2018	Updated staff roles	Change of structure
2	March 2020	Staff names removed	Staff names removed as trust policy