

**Special Educational Needs
And Disability (SEND) Policy:
Mercia Primary Academy Trust**



Date Completed: June 2020

Review Date:

At Mercia Primary Academy Trust, we are passionate about being an inclusive group of schools that values each child's individual needs. We believe that building good relationships with our young people and their families is essential and that by working together, we can achieve the best outcomes possible for our children.

Special Educational Needs Information Reports for each of the schools in the trust can be found on the individual school's websites. These documents provide information about how each school liaises with their SEN pupils and their families to ensure the best possible outcomes. Paper copies of the Special Educational Needs report are available from the school offices.

<http://flaxhill.staffs.sch.uk/parents/send/>

<http://www.larkhallinfants.co.uk/parents/send/>

<https://www.lakeside.staffs.sch.uk/additional-support/sen>

This SEND policy is written to comply with the 2014 Children and Families Act and the SEN 2014 Code of Practice together with the Equality Act 2010.

Contact

Any inquiries regarding a child's progress or provision should be directed to the class teacher in the first instance as they are the person that sees that child most regularly during the school day. If a parent or carer should require further assistance, appointments with the SENCo can be made by contacting the school office.

Flax Hill: 01827 215333 option 1

Lark Hall: 01827 215333 option 2

Lakeside: 01827 213990

What do we mean by SEN?

'A person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. At compulsory school age this means he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age or, has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.'

-Taken from 2014 Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

At Mercia Primary Academy Trust, we value all of our children equally. Our SEN children are fully integrated into all areas of school life and their different needs are recognized and met through varied and flexible provision

Key information from the 2014 Code of Practice

- No more statements will be issued by the Local Authority. Statements have been replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) which can be used to support children from birth – 25 years.
- School Action and School Action Plus have been replaced by one school based category of need known as ‘Special Education Needs Support’. All children are closely monitored, and their progress tracked each term. Those at SENS are additionally tracked by the SENCo.
- There are four broad categories of SEN:
 - Communication and interaction (E.g Autism, speech and language difficulties)
 - Cognition and learning (Eg. dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, moderate learning difficulties)
 - Social, emotional and mental health (Eg. ADHD, ADD, attachment disorders, emotional difficulties, mental health difficulties)
 - Physical and sensory (Eg. Hearing impairment, visual impairment, sensory processing disorder)

SEN at Mercia Primary Academy Trust

We have children throughout our trust that represent all four of the categories of SEN. However, every child is unique and their individual needs are catered for to ensure they achieve their best possible outcomes. To ensure this we:

- Work closely with our children and their families. Each child is a part of their own target setting and review process. Their wishes, feelings and aspirations are incredibly important to us. Parents/carers are invited to attend all planning and review meetings.
- Practice ‘Quality First Teaching’. Teachers assess, plan and teach all children at the level which allows them to make progress with their learning. In addition, we implement some focused interventions to target particular skills.
- We have high expectations of all our children.

We aim to:

- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability by ensuring increased access to the curriculum, the environment and to printed information for all.

- To identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, barriers to learning and participation for pupils with SEND.
- To ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and achieves to the highest possible standard.
- To enable all children to participate in lessons fully and effectively.
- To value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the school.
- To work in partnership with parents.
- To work with the Governing body to enable them to fulfill their statutory monitoring role with regard to the Policy Statement for SEND.
- To work closely with external support agencies, where appropriate, to support the need of individual pupils.
- To ensure that all staff have access to training and advice to support quality teaching and learning of all pupils. All teachers expect to have children with SEND in their classes.

Identifying children at SENS (SEN Support)

Children may be identified as SENS in the following ways:

- The progress of every child is monitored at termly pupil progress meetings. Where children are identified as not making progress in spite of quality First Teaching, they are discussed with the SENCo. A SEN Concern Form is then implemented and recommendations to support the child are made.
- Class teachers are continually aware of children's learning. If they observe that a child, as recommended by the 2014 Code of Practice, is making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances, they will seek to identify a cause. This can be characterized by progress which:
 - Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
 - Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
 - Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Parents sometimes ask us to look more closely at their child's learning. We take parental requests seriously and investigate them. Frequently, the concern can be addressed by Quality First Teaching or some parental support.

The SENCo or a member of an outside agency may undertake a range of standardised tests with children. These can then be used to inform the planning of targeted interventions for each individual child.

Although the schools in the trust can identify special educational needs, and make provision to meet those needs, we do not offer diagnoses. Parents/carers are advised to contact their

GP if they feel their child requires a diagnosis. The school may be able to support this process by writing a letter or report for parents/carers to share with the GP.

Working with Parents and Children

We aim to have good and informative relationships with all of our parents/carers via our open door policy.

Once a child has been identified as having SEN, the class teacher will invite the parents to a meeting to:

- Formally to let them know that their child is being placed on the SEN Register.
- Discuss assessments that have been completed
- Agree a plan and provision for the next term

This is part of the graduated approach cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' required in the code of Practice 2014.

Depending on their age, and their interest, the child may be invited to attend all or part of the meeting. A Personalised Learning Plan will be initiated and targets set, with teacher, parent, pupil and SENCo contributions. Thereafter, parents and children are invited to a meeting at least each term to review progress made, set targets and agree provision for the next term.

Paperwork for children at SENS (SEN support)

Once a child has been identified as needing SENS the following paperwork is completed:

- Annually, a school report is completed recording the child's strengths, effort, and next steps in their learning.
- Termly, at progress meetings, the child's ILP (Individual Learning Plan) will be discussed. Either new targets or agreed next steps towards targets will be set.
- Half-termly the SENCo and teacher will discuss each child's ILP. If there are any concerns or issues raised these will be recorded and acted upon.
- Staff will meet with parents, at least three times across the year, to review targets.

Moving to an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)

If a child fails to make progress, in spite of high quality targeted support, an EHC plan may be considered.

We may apply for an EHC Plan if:

- The child has a disability which is life long and which means that they will always need significant support to learn effectively.
- The child's achievements are so far below their peers that we think it likely that the child may at some point benefit from special school provision.
- Two terms worth of evidence supporting the plan, do, assess, review process are available and demonstrate the child requires further intensive support.

Views of the parent/carer and child will be collected as part of the evidence gathering and application process. Any other agencies involved with the child will also be invited to give a report detailing the child's needs and the agencies current intervention level.

Having a diagnosis (eg. of ASD, ADHD or dyslexia) does not mean that a child needs an EHC plan.

If the application for an EHC Plan is successful, a member of the Local Authority will call a meeting for parents, the child and the school together with any health or social care professionals who are involved with the family. The meeting will record the child's strengths, dreams and aspirations as well as the barriers they face. Following the meeting, the LA will produce the EHC Plan which will record the decisions made at the meeting. The statutory maximum time scale for the whole process to be completed by is 20 weeks. By this time, a DRAFT plan will be shared with all stakeholders including the named school on the plan. Information on parents/young person's right to appeal shall also be included.

Teaching and Learning

We believe that children learn best with the rest of their class. Children with SEN and disabilities are entitled to be taught by their teacher at a level which is accessible to them. Teachers aim to spend time each day working with all children with SEN, individually or as part of a group. TA's may also support the SEN pupils for some of the lesson.

Adaptations to curriculum teaching and learning environment

Adaptions to the physical environment will be made as appropriate in all three of the trust schools.

All of our classrooms are inclusion-friendly: we aim to teach in a way that will support children with tendencies towards dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD etc. This is good practice to support all children but is vital for those who particularly need it. All of our children access the full National Curriculum, and we recognise and celebrate achievement and expertise in all curricular areas. As part of normal class differentiation, curriculum content and ideas can be simplified and made more accessible by using visual, tactile and concrete resources.

Class trips are part of the curriculum and we aim for all children to benefit from them. No child is excluded from a trip because of SEN, disability or medical needs.

Staff Expertise

The SENCo in each school will have completed the National Award for SEN qualification within the required timeframe. All of our staff are trained to work with children with SEN. Regular up to date training about the four areas of SEN is provided for all staff. Where children require specialized individual support (such as those with hearing, visual impairment or medical needs) the whole staff of that school receive training from outside agencies that is specifically linked to the individual child's needs. The SEN Link Governor will have completed the SEN Governor training.

Advice will also be sought from external agencies regarding strategies to best meet specific needs of a pupil. This will only be undertaken after parent permission has been obtained and may include referral to:

- Special Educational Needs Support Service
- Behaviour Support Service
- Dyslexia Support
- Autism Outreach Team
- Children and Young person's Autism Service
- Hearing Impairment team
- Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)
- Educational Psychologist Service
- Educational Welfare Officers
- Social Services
- CAMHS (Child Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Malachi
- School Nurse

Children with social, emotional and mental health needs

If a child shows consistent concerning behaviours, the class teacher will assess the child's needs, taking into account family circumstances and the child's known history of experiences. If the child's behaviour is felt to be a response to trauma or to home-based experiences (eg. bereavement, parental separation) we complete a CAF with the family and support the child through the process. Angela Doxford is the named family support worker for Mercia Primary Academy Trust and would be involved in this process.

If parents and school are concerned that the child may have mental health needs, school will make a referral to CAMHS, Malachi or engage the support of the School Nurse,

If the child is felt to have long-term social, emotional or mental health needs – for example with anger management – the school will offer a more long-term programme of support. This may look different in each school.

All children's behaviour is responded to consistently, in line with their school's Behaviour Policy, although reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, especially towards children with SEND and disabilities. We will actively investigate all allegations and, if there is cause, work with both the bully and the victim to improve their social skills.

Transition Arrangements between classes

We understand how difficult it is for children and parents as they move into a new class or a new school and will do what we can, according to the individual needs of the child, to make transitions between classes as smooth as possible. This may include, for example:

- Additional meetings for the parents and child with the new teacher
- Additional visits to the classroom environment in order to identify where the toilets are, where the pegs are etc.
- Opportunities to take photographs of key people and places in order to make a transition booklet.
- Experience playtime/lunchtime on a different playground, when moving from KS1 to KS2.

Enhanced transition arrangements are tailored to meet individual needs.

Transition to a new school

The new school's SENCO, together with any agencies already involved, are invited to attend any meetings linked to individual children during the transition window. Additional transition support such as extra visits, transition projects etc will be discussed and a transition timetable will be drawn up in conjunction with parents and outside agencies to ensure the child feels safe and supported throughout their transition to a new educational setting.

Governors

It is the statutory duty of the governors to ensure that the schools in the trust follow their responsibilities to meet the needs of children with SEND following in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice 2014.

Each school in the trust has named SEN link governor. The name of each governor can be found in the individual school's SEN information report (Links to the relevant websites can be found on page 1 of this document or paper copies can be requested from the individual school offices).

Complaints

The trust works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs.

All complaints are taken seriously and are heard through the individual school's complaints policy and procedure.

Staffordshire's Local Offer

The purpose of the local offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. It includes provision from birth to 25, across education, health and social care. Staffordshire's Local Offer is available from the website www.staffordshiremarketplace.co.uk

Equal Opportunities

The Trust is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability in all aspects of school. We promote self and mutual respect and a caring and non-judgmental attitude throughout the school.

Review Framework

The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance).

Signed:

Date: 02.06.2020

Date:

Review Date: