Policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including the SEND Information Report

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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to: -

- Set out how the academies within our Trust will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEN.

2. Vision and values

In the Ad Meliora Academy Trust, we believe in participation for all pupils: -

- In the academies within our Trust, we will provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.
- We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied.
- We are responsive to the diversity of children's backgrounds, interests, experience, knowledge and skills.
- We value high quality teaching for all learners – our learning environment which is flexible enough to meet the needs of all the children in the academies in our Trust, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- We are committed to working together with all members of our academy communities - pupils, parents/carers, staff, Academy Committee members and Directors.
- We welcome feedback and are always looking at ways we can further improve our provision for pupils with SEND.

3. Legislation and guidance

This is based on the statutory guidance Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education and working together to improve school attendance.

This policy is also based on 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 the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's 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 having a disability) and those who don't share it.
- The governance guide for maintained schools/academy trusts which sets out governors'/trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs.

The Trust also follows guidance from: -

- Use the Norfolk INDES document to determine the level of need and support required for SEN Support pupils.
  https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/pupil-needs/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/identification-of-need-and-inclusive-provision/identification-of-needs-descriptors-educational-settings
- Use of the NIPF (Norfolk Inclusive Practice Framework) document to support the graduated approach and our SEN support pupils.
  https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/article/79254/Norfolk-Inclusive-Practice-Framework

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

The academies within our Trust 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 academy environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of academy life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires 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/academies.

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/academies.

5.2 Disability

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

Academies within the Trust will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

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

AREA OF NEED	OVERVIEW OF THE NEED
Communication and 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 and 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.

AREA OF NEED	OVERVIEW OF THE NEED
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.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO

The SENCOs at our academies are: -

Mrs C Bunton	Mrs C Bunton	Mrs L Lee	Mrs L Lee

They will: -

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made.
- Work with the headteacher and SEN Academy Committee member to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academies.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have Education Health Care (EHC) plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils.
- Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned.
- When a pupil moves to a different school, academy or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school, academy or institution in a timely manner.
- Work with the headteacher and Academy Committee members to make sure the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

- Make sure the academies keep records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate.
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the academy's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the academy offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the academy's SEN information report and any updates to this policy.
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the identification of SEN, both within the academy and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

6.2 The Board of Directors and Academy Committees

The Board of Directors is responsible for making sure the duties listed below are carried out. The Board of Directors has delegated the duties to the Academy Committees: -

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer.
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need.
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the academy alongside pupils who don't have SEND.
- Inform parents when the academy is making special educational provision for their child.
- Make sure that the academy has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions.
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND.
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress.
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND.
- Publish information on the academy website about how leaders are implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report.
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the Trust's accessibility plans.
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the academy and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out.
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND.

6.3 The SEND link Academy Committee member

The SEND link Academy Committee members are: -

Richard Curtis	Ben Griffin	Stephen McGahren	Stephen McGahren

The SEND Academy Committee member will: -

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the academy and update the governing board on this.
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy.

6.4 The headteacher

The headteacher will: -

- Work with the SENCO and SEND link Academy Committee member to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the academy.
- Work with the SENCO and Academy Committee members to make sure the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress.
- Have responsibility for monitoring the notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils.
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties.
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register.
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review.
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the academy's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the academy offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the academy's identification of SEN, both within the academy and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

6.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for: -

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach.
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report.
- Communicating with parents regularly to: -
    - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them.
    - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes.
    - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the academy.
    - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil.

6.6 Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the academy 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 the academy and any changes in the pupil's needs.
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil.
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress.

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

6.7 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.

7. SEN Information Report

Academies in the Trust publish a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the academies.

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

8. Our approach to SEND support

8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

We 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. We will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the academy may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any 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. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO 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 an external specialist.

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, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.
If a pupil is joining the academy, 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).

The academy will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at the academy, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

Academies in the Trust 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 if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

8.3 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 academy 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, and will be made accessible to staff in an Assess Plan Do Review plan. 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 teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress. Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class 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 SENCO 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.
4. 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.

8.4 Levels of support

Academy-based SEN provision

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

The provision for these pupils is funded through the academy's notional SEND budget. On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the academy-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 academy'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.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

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

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

9. Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil. However, they may need additional support.

Our approach to supporting pupils who are absent from school due to their SEND is set out in our attendance policy.

10. Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers, and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group.

For more details of the pastoral support we offer pupils with SEND, and the support we provide to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face, see our safeguarding/child protection policy.

11. Expertise and training of staff

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

12. Links with external professional agencies

Academies within the Trust recognise that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary the academy 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 pediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

13. Admission and accessibility arrangements

13.1 Admission arrangements

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name an academy within the Trust, will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the academy is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the academy receives more applications than the number of places it has available, the highest priority will be given to children with an Education Health Care Plan naming a trust academy.

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked-after children, previously looked-after children and children with EHC plans listing the academies within the Trust.

13.2 Accessibility arrangements

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by: -

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of the academy to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

14. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents/carers have concerns about our SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents/carers are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our Trust should be made to the headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the Trust's Policy for Complaints.

If the parent/ carer is not satisfied with the academy's response, they can escalate the complaint. 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 by clicking the following link: - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40688/Mediation-and-tribunals#:~:text=In%20Norfolk%2C%20the%20mediation%20service,senmediation%40kids.org.uk

You can request mediation by contacting: -
KIDS SEN Mediation Service
03330 062 835
senmediation@kids.org.uk

15. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

15.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the 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:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term.
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND.
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND.
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the academy community.
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents.

15.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the SENDCo **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year. It will be approved by the Academy Committees.

16. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents: -

- SEN Information Reports (Blenheim Park Academy, Greenpark Academy, Reffley Academy)
- The Local Offer
- Accessibility plans (Blenheim Park Academy, Greenpark Academy, Reffley Academy)
- Inclusion and Behaviour policies
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Trust Complaints policy