

## **Special Educational Needs Policy**

*This policy is available in alternative formats upon request.*

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy seeks to develop a passion for learning and an enterprising spirit amongst its students and staff, and amongst members of the local community. In addition, it seeks to create, develop and maintain an education that focuses emphatically on providing opportunities for success for all, recognising and celebrating the achievements of everyone in all aspects of life at the Academy.

The Academy is a Centre of Excellence for entrepreneurial education. It is an inclusive school that provides for the students and citizens of Darwen continuous opportunities, and a world-class, high quality environment for lifelong learning. The Academy's students are committed, successful learners, who are proud, creative and self-confident, showing respect for themselves, the community and for others.

At the Academy every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person including those with Special Educational Needs.

### **Legislative Compliance**

This policy complies with the guidance given in *Statutory Instrument: Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations (Clause 64)*. It has been written as guidance for staff, parents or carers and children with reference to the following guidance and documents:

*SEN Code of Practice 0-25* (which takes account of the SEN provisions of the SEN and Disability Act 2001) September 2014

*Ofsted Section 5 Inspection Framework* January 2014

*Ofsted SEN Review 2010* "A Statement is not enough"

*Equality Act 2010*

*Education Bill 2011*

*Children and Families Act 2014*

### **Contact Details**

Miss Jade Tumelty – Director of Learning Support. (National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-Ordination commenced September 2014.)

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## Special Educational Needs Coordinator/Director of Learning Support

In line with the recommendations in the SEND Code of Practice 2014, the SENCO will be responsible for the following:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEND
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEND
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the Principal and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.

### Aim

- Darwen Aldridge Community Academy aims to raise the aspirations of and expectations for all pupils with SEND.
- We endeavour to achieve maximum inclusion of all children (including vulnerable learners) whilst meeting their individual needs.
- Teachers provide differentiated learning opportunities for all the children within the school and provide materials appropriate to children's needs. This ensures that all children have a full access to the school curriculum.
- We aim to close and remove the gap in attainment between students with special educational needs and other groups of learners to ensure that all students realise their full potential.
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not considered a Special Education Need. Differentiated work and individual learning opportunities are provided for children who are EAL as part of our provision for vulnerable learners.
- We strive to make a clear distinction between "underachievement" and special educational needs.
  - Some pupils in our school may be underachieving but will not necessarily have a special educational need. It is our responsibility to spot this quickly and ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to help these pupils catch up.
  - Other pupils will have special educational needs and this **may** lead to lower-attainment. It is our responsibility to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have the maximum opportunity to attain and achieve in line with their peers. Accurate assessment of need and carefully planned programmes, which address the root causes of any learning difficulty, are essential for the success of these pupils.

These will be provided, initially, through additional support funded from the devolved schools budget.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of our SEND policy and practice in this Academy are:

- To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs.
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
- To operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs.
- To provide a SENCO who will work with the SEND Inclusion Policy.
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with special educational needs pupils.
- To develop and maintain partnership and high levels of engagement with parents.
- To ensure access to the curriculum for all pupils.

## **Identifying Special Educational Needs**

Children will have needs and requirements which may fall into at least one of four areas, many children will have inter-related needs. The areas of need are:-

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional or mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical

Whilst these four categories of need broadly identify aspects of primary areas of need for children and young people, at the Academy we identify the needs of pupils by considering the needs of the whole child, which will include not just the special educational needs of the child or young person.

The Academy places a high importance on early identification, assessment and provision for any child who may have special educational needs. The earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be to ensure that they can fulfil their potential. Any of the following may trigger a concern:

- Parents/carers
- Child
- Class teachers
- Learning Support Assistants
- Records transferred from other schools.
- Support services

In identifying children who may have special educational needs the Academy draws upon a range of assessment tools including:

- Baseline assessments on entry to the Academy
- Their performance monitored by the teacher as part of ongoing observation and assessment
- Standardised screening or assessment tools
- Assessment from outside agencies.

This is not an exhaustive list as identification and assessments are linked to the needs and requirements of the individual pupil. Both the child and their parents are fully involved in the identification and assessment process.

The Academy also carefully considers areas of need which are not categorised as SEND but may impact on progress and attainment including disability, attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, English as an additional language, being in receipt of pupil premium or being a looked after child. The Academy strives to ensure that the first teaching of the highest quality is applied in all of these circumstances where all pupils have access to an outstanding, personalised education which is differentiated to their needs and requirements in order that there is no gap between these students and their peers. The Academy also adopts the 'reasonable adjustment' duty under current disability and equality legislation as outlined in the Code of Practice 2014.

In accordance with the Code of Practice 2014 the Academy will not identify behaviour as a Special Educational Need. Any concerns relating to a child or young person's behaviour will be described as an underlying response to a need which we will be able to recognise and identify clearly, for instance a social or emotional difficulty.

### **A graduated approach to SEND**

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy adopts a graduated approach to SEND where a number of steps are taken before students are added to the SEND register and Inclusion booklet. As previously stated the Academy ensures that the highest quality-first teaching is a key element to all lessons. We recognise that it is the role of the subject specialist teacher to provide for every pupil's individual needs and steps to ensure that pupils have appropriate adjustments and good quality personalised teaching should always be undertaken before pupils are considering as having SEND.

We comply with the Code of Practice 2014 and students are only identified as having SEND if they do not make adequate progress once they have had all the interventions, adjustments and good quality personalised teaching put into place. The Academy has a student referral process for all staff to use, which outlines the steps that should be taken before students are considered as having SEND, which ensures consistency in the pupil's experiences.

If students do not make adequate progress as a result of quality-first teaching then students are assessed to identify their individual needs as the first stage in the 'assess-plan-do-review' cycle. Assessments which can be carried out were mentioned in the previous section and are linked to the pupils presenting difficulties to ensure a complete picture is achieved. Parents/carers and the child are fully informed and communicated with through this assessment process.

Once an accurate assessment is completed, a decision is made whether to add the pupil to the SEND register and inclusion booklet at School Support level. Where the decision is made not to add the pupil, the SENCO will send suggested strategies and adjustments to all staff and provide support for the parent/carers and child. Where the decision is made to add the pupil to the SEND register and inclusion booklet, parents/carers and the child are invited in to meet with the SENCO and create a plan for support based on the child's individual needs.

The Academy adopts a pupil-centred planning approach and the child is fully involved in the decision making regarding their support. As a result of this meeting the pupil will have a Pupil Passport (written

by themselves with the help of a learning support assistant) and an action plan which identify long and short term outcomes for the pupil as well as the support in place to ensure they meet them. This is then communicated to all staff working with the pupil to ensure consistency of approach. Support is then put in place and a review date set.

Parents/carers and the child are invited to the review process and pupils are re-assessed to see if they have made progress towards their outcomes. The action plan will then be reviewed and new outcomes identified if students have been successful. Where students have not made progress then an increased level of support will be put in place as part of the graduated approach. This process then continues throughout the year.

The levels of support a student receives as part of the graduated approach are as follows:

1. High quality-first teaching.
2. Students added at School Support, issued with a pupil passport and action plan. Support could include: LSA in-class support; withdrawal sessions or specific interventions. This is not an exhaustive list as support is decided on an individual basis.
3. Students receive support from outside agencies and their suggestions are adopted and communicated to all staff and the parents/carers.
4. A request could be made for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) and support is received through high needs funding.

### **Education, Health and Care Plans**

If a child has lifelong or significant complex difficulties, they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process which is usually requested by the school, but can be requested by the family. These assessments take place where the complexity of need or the lack of clarity around the needs of the child are such that a multi-agency approach is needed.

Information from a variety of sources, including parents/carers, teachers, SENCOs, social care and health care professionals is combined to form an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan assessment. If it is decided that the child's needs are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available, an EHC plan is provided. Parents have the right to appeal against the content of an EHC plan. Once the plan has been agreed it will be reviewed annually.

Parents/carers and the child are fully involved in every step of this graduated approach and the Academy meets with parents/carers three times a year to discuss progress in addition to the annual review where a child has an EHC plan. Parents/carers are also encouraged to contact the SENCO at any time during the year where they have questions or concerns.

### **Admissions and Fair Access panel**

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy is a non-selective school. Data and additional information is transferred from primary school to ensure that a student's needs can be met. Parent views are also taken into consideration. Transition work is completed from the summer term and the SENCO and Transition team visit students in the primary setting to ensure a smooth move from year 6 to year 7.

In year admissions will be subject to SEND screening tests as part of their induction to Darwen Aldridge Community Academy. This helps to provide additional information for staff and to allow a smooth transition into the year group.

For further information about admissions please see the Admissions Policy which can be found on the school website.

We strive to meet the needs of all pupils.

### **Managing pupil's needs on the SEND register**

Where students are added to the SEND register they will be added at SEND Support level. The Academy

provides two levels of intervention within this single category – Level 1 and Level 2. In the majority of circumstances the pupil will join the SEND register at Level 1 unless the assessment concludes that more specialist provision from outside agencies is required. If a pupil's need requires more support than is available at these two levels then a request for an Education, Health and Care

Plan can be made. The support pupils can access at each level is personalised to the individual needs of the child and could include but is not limited to:

**Level 1:**

- Pupil added to the SEND register and Inclusion Booklet.
- Pupil Passport and Action Plan written.
- LSA support in lessons.
- LSA withdrawal sessions.
- Equipment related to need provided – e.g. coloured overlays, laptops, handwriting pens etc.
- Intervention sessions – e.g. literacy catch up, numeracy catch up, Mastering memory etc.
- Termly review meetings with parents/carers and pupil.

**Level 2:**

- Access to all support at Level 1.
- Access to an alternative curriculum - e.g. Foundation Group, Personalised Learning Cohort.
- Referrals to and support from outside agencies.
- More regular meetings with parents/carers and pupil on a needs basis.

Where both these levels do not provide appropriate support then pupils may be referred and after assessment, be allocated with an Education, Health and Care Plan as outlined in the previous section.

To manage the graduated approach of support, the system the Academy uses for assessing, planning, delivering and reviewing provision is Pupil Passports and Action Plans. Each student on the SEND register (regardless of the stage) has a plan written which is a living record setting out exactly what needs have been identified from assessments, how to remove key barriers to learning and clear outcomes to be achieved within an agreed timeframe. The plan is pupil centred and is written in collaboration with the parent/carer in addition. Each pupil is assigned an LSA who is responsible for maintaining and updating the plan as well as leading review meetings with the parent/carer and pupil. There is a core expectation that the LSA has responsibility for evidencing progress according to the outcomes described in the plan. LSAs are accountable to the SENCO and all plans should also be agreed by the SENCO before they are put into practice.

The Academy also adopts the use of provision mapping as an overview of the support pupils are accessing, how funding has been allocated and how successful the support has been. Again this is a living record and is maintained and updated by the Co-ordinator of Learning Support post holder(s) who is/are also accountable to the SENCO.

This plan is reviewed termly where parents/carers are invited in to the Academy to discuss progress made. This provides the basis for the meeting and allows both the pupil and the parents/carers to air concerns and provide suggestions for future outcomes and support. Where it is highlighted that the pupil is underachieving or needs to access a higher level of support before the review date, additional meetings can be arranged to adapt the plan and do not have to wait until the review date set.

The level of provision outlined in the plan is decided after assessments have taken place. Provision is linked to areas of need and outcomes we aim to achieve. Parents/carers and the pupil are fully involved in these discussions. The Academy contributes to the local offer which outlines all available

provision and the requirements for this provision to be allocated. A link to this can be found on the Academy website [www.daca.uk.com](http://www.daca.uk.com).

Where the Academy cannot meet the needs of the pupil through its own provision arrangements (level 1) we will engage additional support and specialist services. This is identified through the Academy's provision mapping which shows the levels of support pupils are accessing and the progress pupils have made. Further assessments may be necessary to identify which specialist service is required and then the local authority referral paperwork is completed where pupils have not made progress at level 1. This continues to be monitored and costed through the provision map and is overseen by the finance manager. It is the Academy's aim that parents/carers and pupils are fully involved in all stages of this referral process.

Where the Academy identifies that additional funding and support is needed from the local authority high needs block due to insufficient progress at Level 2, a review meeting will be arranged with parents/carers, the pupil and all relevant outside agencies to inform and advise on initiating statutory assessment. The Academy, in consultation with all relevant parties will then request and Education, Health and Care Plan assessment to be undertaken.

The Academy will then follow the Blackburn with Darwen guidance for this process of assessment including the referral documentation required (single agency referral, common assessment framework.) This information can be found via:

<https://www.bwd-localoffer.org.uk/kb5/blackburn/directory/service.page?id=HG8sFecxUDY>

Where pupils are identified as no longer needing to be on the SEND register, a meeting is initially called with parents/carers and the pupil where concerns can be aired and solutions provided. It is the Academy's aim that the SENCO will then provide strategies to all staff regarding differentiation for them in lesson to ease this transition. The LSA who was responsible for the pupil should arrange a review date to monitor the pupil's progress in the initial stages.

### **Provision**

The Academy follows the National Curriculum however there are a number of specialist provisions available for students who need additional support to access mainstream education. The Academy uses information from Primary Schools alongside our own baseline assessments carried out on entry to identify students with additional needs. Students may access support from a number of internal and external services. These include:

- Intervention withdrawal, this is mainly focused on improving literacy and numeracy skills and is led by a trained HLTA. Progress is reviewed termly.
- Students can also access provision at a local Alternative Provision School, 'The Heights' which provides vocational courses at Key Stage 4.

- STEPS. This is a provision which provides targeted intervention for vulnerable students who may require support for a range of personal issues including anger management, healthy eating/living or social skills development.
- Counsellors. The Academy has two full time counsellors who offer support for students and their families.
- Student Services Team. This includes pastoral managers, attendance welfare officers and general support for students and their families on a daily basis.
- Learning Support Faculty. This includes specialist teachers, higher level teaching assistants and learning support assistants who work across the academy ensuring that identified students achieve appropriate outcomes in Key Stage 3, 4 and 5.
- Visual Impairment Team. This consists of two dedicated and specialist staff who work closely with the local authority and are trained to provide support and suitable differentiation for students with visual impairments.
- Literacy Intervention. The Learning Support Faculty works closely with the English Faculty to provide a number of interventions to ensure high levels of progress including Read, Write, Inc., Indirect Dyslexia Learning, Accelerated Reader, Toe by Toe, Catch Up reading and Dockside reading programme.
- Numeracy Intervention. The Learning Support Faculty works closely with the Maths Faculty to provide a number of interventions to ensure high levels of progress including Every Child Counts, Catch Up numeracy, Power of 2 and functional numeracy by specialist teachers.
- Speech and Language Intervention. The Academy works closely with the local authority to provide bespoke training and packages for individuals and small groups. This year this will include whole school training for all staff to improve outcomes for students with language difficulties.
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder Support. The Academy has a number of teaching and support staff specially trained to work with students on the autistic spectrum. Provision includes small group work to develop social language, work on the acquisition of life skills and delivery of training for mainstream staff.
- Behaviour Support. The Academy has a Quiet Room provision which is an alternative to fixed term exclusion. It also works on a partnership basis with other schools in the authority. There are a number of specialist staff who provide support and training, including students mentoring, anger management and mediation.
- Intervention Leader. The Academy has its own intervention leader who provides tailored withdrawal sessions including motor skills, Mastering Memory, handwriting and Talkabout.

As well as a wide range of internal provision, the Academy has links with a number of outside agencies including:

- Advisory Teachers for Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Behavioural, Social and Emotional Needs, Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Speech and Language.
- Educational Psychology Service
- Specialist Providers such as: St Thomas' Centre PRU, Crosshill and Newfield Special Schools and The Heights
- Engage for students at risk of sexual exploitation
- Youth Offending Team

- Lifeline which is a free and confidential advice service for young people relating to alcohol and drug abuse.
- Brook which is a sexual advice service for under 25s
- The Wish Centre which provides support and advice for people experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse.
- Family Wise
- East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Services (ELCAS)
- Health Care Professionals
- Social Care Professionals

This is not an exhaustive list as students will be referred as a need arises.

### **Accessibility**

The Academy is committed to providing accessibility for all stakeholders which evolves with the communities changing needs.

There is lift access to all areas and ramps are available to aid movement around the Academy. In the event of an evacuation staff are trained to support the buildings users to leave safely. To ensure the Academy users have full access, we have used translators, sign language and Braille for meetings to meet the needs of the community. Signs are printed in Braille and there are high visibility strips on individual steps. The Blackburn with Darwen Visual Impairment mobility team were involved in ensuring that the Academy is accessible for students and other users with a visual impairment.

### **Training and Resources**

- SEND provisions are funded through Block Funding, Pupil Premium and High Needs Funding.
- Training needs of staff and the school are identified through the School Development Plan, Performance Management Reviews and Individual Pupil Needs for example, a Teaching Assistant trained to Braille.
- All teachers and support staff will undertake induction on taking up a post so that they understand the structures, systems and practice within the school.
- All staff attend regular training on Tuesday after school covering a range of areas including SEND.
- The Academy has a SEND representative in each faculty who is responsible for the training and the delivering of information to their faculty members.
- The SENCO will access CPD as necessary and attend Network Meetings.
- The SENCO has full NASEN membership.
- The school has links with many agencies as highlighted in the previous section.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

## **Governors**

The governing body:

- Fulfils its statutory requirements to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having Special Educational Needs in accordance with the Code of Practice 2014.
- Ensures that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children.
- Are involved in developing and monitoring the School's SEND policy, information report and contribution to the local offer.

## **Learning Support Assistants**

- Some LSAs are trained to deliver specific interventions and are monitored by the SENCO.
- All LSAs are expected to deliver quality provision, under the guidance of the SENCO
- Training to meet the needs of LSAs is arranged according to whole school and individual pupil needs.
- LSAs are encouraged to discuss issues relating to SEND with the SENCO. Where individual and group training needs are identified of support staff the SENCO or Principal will facilitate training. LSAs are fully included in whole school training sessions.
- The contribution by support staff in the day-to-day implementation of the SEND Policy is highly valued and forms a crucial part of the success of the Policy.
- In line with the SEND Code of Practice, the class teacher is the first port of call for the LSAs to discuss issues relating to pupils with SEND. The SENCO may be involved where further advice or discussion is needed.
- Monitoring suggests that where strong liaison between class teacher, LSA and the SENCO exists, the needs of the pupil are met more effectively.
- LSAs are responsible for updating the pupil passports and action plans for their keystudents on a termly basis.
- All LSAs are line managed by the SENCO.

The member of staff responsible for child protection, pupil premium and looked after children is Mrs Rachel Lewis. Contact details are included on page 1.

## **SEND students and vulnerabilities**

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy recognises that SEND students are more vulnerable to all types of abuse, including CSE and CCE. Our policy will include the offer of support provided to all children with SEND to reduce this vulnerability including the offer of pastoral support

## **Storing and Managing Information - confidentiality**

Information collected about a pupil's SEND is confidential and will only be communicated to involved persons with the knowledge and agreement of the pupil's parents, the Principal or the SENCo, unless the school has Safeguarding concerns.

Confidential information regarding a pupil's SEND is kept in the pupil's SEND file in locked filing

cabinets. If information on a pupil is required from the file, the information on that pupil will be removed and returned promptly.

The SEND File will contain copies of the original documents; pupil passports; action plans; minutes from meetings; assessment information; Education and Health Care Plans; Medical Care Plans. The SENCo keeps this file.

The LSAs keep a file for their key students including pupil passports; action plans; equipment and resources; differentiated work. This is not shared with the students.

The SEND register, Inclusion booklet and assessment data is held electronically on the Academy's network which cannot be accessed by the students.

When information needs to be disposed of (e.g. removal from the SEN register, changes to circumstances), the Academy confidentially disposes of such data on request. Further information can be found via the Academy's Fair Processing Notice:

<http://www.daca.uk.com/policies>

### **Dealing with complaints**

The Principal, SENCO and all staff are committed to providing the very best education for all children. However, there may be occasions when a parent is not satisfied with their child's provision. They should first request a meeting with the SENCO or class teacher to outline the area of concern. Should this not resolve the matter, the next step is to arrange a meeting with the Vice Principal and SENCO when the issues can be discussed and addressed. Should this not resolve the matter, the penultimate step is to arrange a meeting with the Principal. If there is still cause for complaint it will be forwarded to the Chairman of Governors and the correct procedures will take place in accordance with the Academy complaints procedure, the complaint being managed by the Principal.

### **Reviewing the Policy**

The SEND policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body, school leaders and the SENCO. The views of pupils and parents/carers are fully considered during the creation of policies. This involvement aims to further improve levels of engagement with parents, carers and families.