

ACES ACADEMIES TRUST

Aspiration Creativity Excellence Success



Policy Statement

for

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY
(SENDA)

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Introduction

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Equality Act 2010. Our Trust adheres to the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice 2015, in relation to provision and processes that we use.

Defining Special Educational Needs

Within the code (pages 15 and 16), SEN is defined as the following:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions*

The DDA act defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a “substantial and long-term adverse effect on (the individual’s) ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. Special Educational Needs (SEN) refer to any circumstances resulting in an individual pupil requiring additional or different support to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to pupils of the same age. This would include pupils who are gifted and talented too. These needs are grouped into 4 broad areas and include:

- **Cognition and Learning** - This focuses on those children and young people who learn at a slower pace than their peers, as well as those with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), including dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Sensory and Physical** - This encompasses children with a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided – including those with visual or hearing impairments, multi-sensory impairments, and/or physical disabilities.
- **Social Emotional and Mental Health** - Those children who may have become withdrawn or isolated, as well as those displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. The code states these behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.
- **Communication and Interaction** - This incorporates those students with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) who have difficulty understanding and communicating with others. This may include children and young people with ASD, including Asperger Syndrome and Autism.

The acts themselves requires schools to examine all aspects of their provision of educational and associated services and to ensure that appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with disabilities or special needs. ACES Academies Trust is wholly guided by these principles in

planning and designing its educational provision and is committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to learning and to the curriculum.

Documents in support of this policy are (for each school in the Trust):

- Admissions policy
- SEND Policy
- SEND Accessibility Plan
- SEND Information Report
- ACES and School(s) Development Plans for SEND

Admissions and Special Needs

- a. The aim of the policy is to promote equality of opportunity for all and to ensure that no-one is discriminated against because of their gender, race, ethnic or national origins, nationality, colour, background, political or religious beliefs, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, or disabilities.
- b. At ACES Academies Trust we welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of our Schools.
- c. Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our SEND Department(s) can provide them with the support that they require.
- d. The school(s) must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at schools within ACES Academies Trust.
- e. We advise parents/carers of children with special educational needs to discuss their child's requirements with the school(s) at the time of application and before they visit so that we can make adequate provision for them.

This policy also applies to our Preschool, Early Years Foundation Stage provisions and After School care within our ACES Trust.

Provision

- a. Each child with a special educational need requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate, adjustments will need to be put in place. We will discuss thoroughly with parents/carers (and their medical or educational advisers) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child once they have accepted the offer of a place and before the child becomes a pupil within ACES Trust.
- b. Our SEND Department(s) provides support to children with learning difficulties in the four areas explained above - Communication and Interaction, Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Cognition and Learning and Sensory and Physical.

Suitability of the structure of each school buildings and their limitations for each pupil should be considered in this context. This is carried out in consultation with each pupil, with parents/carers and with any appropriately qualified person.

c. In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, all children and young people in ACES Academies Trust are entitled to an appropriate education and “every school is required to identify and address the SEN of the pupils that they support”. To achieve this, our school will :

- ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision – the SENDco-ordinator, or SENDCo
- Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child
- Expect teachers and support staff to, where possible, adapt teaching so that pupils can access high quality learning and activities like their peers
- Prepare an SEN information report and detail their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children, and their accessibility plan that illustrates how they plan to improve access progressively over time
- SEN children should also be identified on a SEN Register and provision mapping will show what is in place
- Training is delivered to help staff identify and support children with SEND

Monitoring and Review

- a. Each School has a SEND register and a SEND Provision map. We can arrange for pupils with identified or suspected learning difficulties to be assessed by a specialist so that we can identify the areas that require support. The provision that is provided in each of our school as a result is outlined in their SEND Policy and is in line with the statutory requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (updated in 2020),
- b. Our SEND Department(s) will prepare a Pen Portrait (or equivalent documentation) for each child, which summarises their needs and suggests appropriate methods of support. They also may include setting achievable targets. These are reviewed regularly using the ‘Assess, Plan, Do Review’ process.
- c. Pupils with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) in place will have (at least) an annual review where statutory outcomes are reviewed and updated.

Physical Accessibility

- a. Each School has an Accessibility plan which lasts for 3 years and are reviewed annually.
- b. The School(s) Accessibility plan covers the three strands of the planning duty identified in SEND:
 - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
 - Improve the physical environment of the School(s) to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
 - Improve the accessibility of written information that is provided to pupils SEND.

The school(s) will ensure ongoing awareness of definitions of disability. This will be done with pupils, as part of the core curriculum, by individual departments and may form part of curriculum, form time or PSHE lessons. Staff will be given regular on-going disability awareness training through INSET, twilight training or information dissemination as appropriate.

Awareness training regarding these disabilities will not only focus on pupils on the SEND register but also on those who may have a medical condition such as diabetes, severe asthma, epilepsy, chronic fatigue syndrome or a mental health condition.

Participation

At ACES Academies Trust we strive to ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the curriculum by continual review and identification of our areas of strength and any barriers to inclusive provision. Some areas of the curriculum present challenges: PE, for example, can require adjustment for pupils with a physical impairment or pupils with a visual impairment may require access arrangements for science and technology.

The school has a duty under SENDA to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

- Curriculum
- Teaching and Learning
- Timetabling, classroom and school organisation and setting
- Homework
- Serving of school meals
- Interaction with peers, extra-curricular clubs and activities
- Assessment and exam arrangements
- School discipline
- Exclusion / Suspension procedures
- Preparation of pupils for their next phase of education

All of these are bound by the limits of “*reasonable adjustment*” as detailed in the DDA, 2005.

The ACES Academies Trust’s SEND provision for teaching and learning support, assessment and examination arrangements is the responsibility of the SENDCOs/Inclusion Leads and the Senior Leadership Team in each school. Further details for each school in our Trust can be found in their SEND Policy.

We aim to ensure that all subjects are available to each pupil but sometimes allow a modified curriculum (such as the omission of a foreign language) in response to the needs of an individual's learning profile.

We also monitor the school databases and information to include pupils with disabilities and SEND.

Other adjustments

We can arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes. This depends on their needs and we follow advice and recommendations of an Educational/Occupational Psychologist or appropriately qualified assessor. Children may have an adapted curriculum and ways of working. These will be discussed with the parents and carers and other SEND professionals.

Staff Teaching Support

Our Teaching Staff receive support with the learning needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities when appropriate. Staff receive appropriate CPD to meet individual needs. Staff are expected to adapt activities so that pupils can, where possible, access high quality learning in line with that of their peers.

Review

ACES Academies Trust is committed to annual review of admission procedures/policies and issues of access to ensure that a *continuous responsibility* is exercised. Other areas of policy and provision will also be reviewed with SEND in mind.

Claims of unlawful discrimination

Any claim of unlawful discrimination under SENDA must come from the parent/carer not the child. In the first instance, the complaint should be made to the school and follow the school's Complaints Procedure. However, parents/carers have the right to refer a complaint to a Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal which would be heard by Health, Education and Social Care (HESC) Chamber in a First-Tier Tribunal. This must be within six months of the date that they believe unlawful discrimination has taken place.