Windsor Academy Trust

Newcastle Academy

Special Educational Needs Policy	
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1. Aims and objectives

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

- support and make provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities;
- provide students with SEND access to all aspects of school life;
- help students with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best;
- help students with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives;
- help students with SEND make a successful transition into the next phase of learning or adulthood;
- communicate with students with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the student.

2. Vision and values

At Windsor Academy Trust (WAT), our motto is ‘Essential for Some; Useful for All’. We are committed to creating an inclusive, supportive, and empowering environment where all students, regardless of their individual needs, are encouraged to reach their full potential. Our SEND provision aims to foster self-confidence, independence, and a love of learning, ensuring that every child feels valued and included within our academy’s community.

Our vision is underpinned by our six core criteria:

- **Specialist:** Utilising expert knowledge from both inside and outside the organisation to best support our students;
- **Inclusivity for all:** Our decision making should strive to ensure that all children feel they belong and that barriers are removed;
- **Whole System Approach** Our systems and approaches enable all stakeholders to collaborate to ensure the best outcomes for our students. Additionally, this includes striving to align with wider sector thinking, providing support and challenge where necessary;
- **Transition:** We ensure that, as students transition, they are as prepared as possible for this process. This includes Wave Transition, where many children transition en masse, for example, from Year 6 to Year 7, as well as individual transitions to support a student with a unique change they are experiencing;
- **Compliance:** Ensuring that we act within the legal frameworks referred to in this document and follow our internal processes and procedures;
- **Responsiveness:** In an ever changing world, we must ensure that we are mindful of changes and respond accordingly, preparing for these changes as necessary.

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 students with SEND;
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, 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 schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities;
- the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' 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 those with a disability) and those who don't share it;
- the Academy Trust Governance Guide which sets out governors'/directors' responsibilities for students with SEND;
- the School Admissions Code, which sets out schools' obligation to admit all students whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

In our Trust we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all students, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all students the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making ordinarily available provision and reasonable adjustments to teaching (for example our work on the engagement strategies), the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that students with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A student has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for 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.

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.

5.2 Disability

Students are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities as stated in the Equality Act 2010

All schools in WAT will make reasonable adjustments for students 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 students with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Students can have needs that are across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

We adopt a 'Teaching Plus' approach (typically known as interventions) that will be selected that are appropriate for the student's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

Area of Need:

Communication and Interaction	Students 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 not understand or use the social rules of communication. Students who have autism often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where students are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties and a physical disability or sensory impairment. 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. Students with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties. Students 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 student becoming withdrawn or isolated. Some students will experience anxiety as a short term response and this may be determined differently to and SEND need.

Sensory and/or physical	Students with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Students may have: ● A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment ● A physical impairment These students 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 SENCO of each school will:

- inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the student's needs and any provision made;
- work with the Headteacher and WAT SEND Lead to ensure there is a clear strategic development for SEND policy and implementation in the academy;
- have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEN, including those who have EHC plans;
- provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that students with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching;
- advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and adapted teaching methods appropriate for individual students;
- advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively;
- be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to make sure that appropriate provision is provided;
- liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the student and their parents/carers are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned;
- when a student moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a student's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution, in a timely manner;
- work with the Headteacher, WAT Strategic Lead for SEND and the link SEND director to make sure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- make sure the school keeps its records of all students 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 academies 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 academies SEN information report and any updates to this policy;
- with the Headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the academies 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 Board of Directors

The board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- 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 student with SEND gets the support they need;
- make sure that students with SEND engage in the activities of the academies alongside students who don't have SEND;
- inform parents/carers when their child's academy is making special educational provision for the child;
- make sure that arrangements are in place in our academies to support any students 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/carers on their child's progress;
- record accurately and keep up to date records of the provision made for students with SEND;
- publish information on each school's website about how the schools are implementing their SEND policy, an 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 our schools' accessibility plans;
- make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for each 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 students with SEND;
- make sure that all students, especially those from year 8 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice.

6.3 The SEND Director

The Trust's SEND director is Gemma Treanor.

The SEND director will:

- help to raise awareness of SEND issues at board meetings;
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within each academy and update the board on this;
- work with the WAT SEND Lead to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in each academy.

6.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- work with the SENDCO and SEND Director to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- work with the SENCO and Director to make sure the school 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 students with SEND in the academies, and their progress;
- have responsibility for monitoring the academies notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual students;
- make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties;

- have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of students on the SEND register;
- advise the LA when a student 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 school's plan for continuous professional development;
- with the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school 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 school's identification of SEN, both within the school 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 adapted to meet student needs through a graduated approach;
- the progress and development of every student in their class;
- working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and 'teaching plus', and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching;
- working with the SENCO to review each student'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/carers 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 student and the school
  - Listen to the parents'/carers' concerns and agree their aspirations for the student.

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 student on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the student'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 student's needs
  - Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with academy staff, agree their aspirations for the student
  - Given an annual report on the student's progress
- The academy will take into account the views of the parents or carers in any decisions made about the student.

6.7 The student

Students 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 student:

- explaining what their strengths and difficulties are;

- contributing to setting targets or outcomes;
- attending review meetings;
- giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions;
- the student's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

6.8 Additional adults such as Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants support teachers in their role to deliver the plan and meet the needs of individual students or groups of students. Their role can be diverse in order to meet the specific plans for the student. This plan will be created in collaboration with the class teacher and SENDCo.

7. SEN information report

Every academy in Windsor Academy Trust publishes a SEN Information Report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school. The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

8. Our approach to SEND support

8.1 Identifying students with SEND and assessing their needs

When a student first joins Windsor Academy Trust, our academies use information from a range of sources to help identify SEND and other needs.

These include:

- information from parents/carers and the student;
- information from previous settings attended;
- attainment data such as end of Key Stage assessments; baseline testing; literacy and numeracy tests;
- discussion with current teachers; specialist colleagues and external agencies.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress for all students and identify those 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 student is making slow progress, they will target the student's area of weakness with scaffolded 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 student's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a student 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 students whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the student needs special educational provision, school staff will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the student and their parents/carers. They will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether the school can provide it by adapting its core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a student 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).

Then the academy will work in a multi-agency way to make sure it gets relevant information before the student starts at the academy, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

8.2 Consulting and involving students and parents/carers

Our academies will put the student and their parents/carers at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a student needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the student and their parents/carers. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulty;
- we take into account any concerns the parents/carers have;
- everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child;
- everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

We will formally notify parents/carers when it is decided that a student will receive special educational provision.

8.3 The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a student 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 student's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs. The views of the student and their parents/carers 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 student's needs. For many students, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe how they respond to an intervention.

2. Plan

In consultation with the parents/carers and the student, the class teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions (known as Teaching Plus) and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the student will be made aware of the student'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, Arbor, and will be made accessible to staff in a student Plan known as Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Parents/carers will be fully aware of the planned support and teaching plus offer,and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The student's class teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class, they still retain responsibility for the student. 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 student'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 student'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/carers and students;
- the level of progress the student has made towards their outcomes;
- the views of teaching staff who work with the student.

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the student's progress and development, and in consultation with the student and their parents/carers.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEN support

Students receiving SEN support will be placed on the SEND register. These students have needs that can be met by the academy through the graduated approach. Where the student'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 students is funded through the school's notional SEND budget. On the census these students will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan students who need more support than is available through the academy's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the student, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these students 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 students will be marked with the code E.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEN by:

- tracking students' progress, including by using provision maps;
- carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support;
- using student questionnaires;
- monitoring by the SENCO;
- holding annual reviews for students with EHC plans;
- getting feedback from the student and their parents/carers;
- completing SEND Learning Tours through WAT.

9. Attendance

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

Our approach to supporting students who are absent from school is set out in our attendance policy. We will aim to understand and make reasonable mitigations to support SEND students in order for all students to attend school.

10. Safeguarding

We recognise that students 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 students with SEND, and the support we provide to help students 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 Headteachers and the SENCOs will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their academy who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

12. Links with external professional agencies

WAT recognises that we won't be able to meet all the needs of every student. Whenever necessary, our academies 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 paediatricians;
- school nurses;
- child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS);
- education welfare officers;
- social services.

13. Admission and accessibility arrangements

13.1 Admission arrangements

Our school admissions arrangements are held in our admissions policy

Students with an EHCP that name the academy will be admitted before other places are allocated. Our admissions policy will work in alignment with key legislation and we do not discriminate against students with a special need or disability

13.2 Accessibility arrangements

We have taken a range of proactive steps to ensure that disabled students are not treated less favourably than their peers. This includes the implementation of reasonable adjustments, tailored support, and staff training to promote an inclusive environment where all students are respected and valued.

Our academies provide a variety of facilities to help disabled students access the curriculum and the wider academy environment. These include physical adaptations to the building, such as ramps and accessible toilets, as well as the provision of auxiliary aids and services such as assistive technology, specialist equipment, and additional support staff. Our accessibility plans include detail on the actions taken in each academy. These plans are available on request and will be regularly reviewed to ensure continued progress in enhancing accessibility for all students.

14. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents/carers have concerns about the SEND provision at an academy in WAT, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher and SENDCo. 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 any of our schools should be handled in line with the Trust complaints policy Microsoft Word - WAT Complaints Policy_Dec2022

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the academy's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the student themselves. To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

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 operate a number of assurance activities that support executive leaders and the Trust board to evaluate the effectiveness of our students with SEND.

All WAT academies complete:

- a SEND data dashboard termly;
- a SEND self evaluation form annually;
- participate in a SEND peer learning tour.

The results from these are shared with their Senior Leadership Team, WAT SEND Strategic Lead and the SEND director. A summary of SEND progress is also shared at Education, Performance and Standards committees.

Alongside this the academies have robust approaches to quality assurance and evaluation as part of their internal processes. Staffordshire Connects | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Local Offer

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- all staff's awareness of students with SEND at the start of the autumn term;
- how early students are identified as having SEND;
- students' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND;
- whether students with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community;
- comments and feedback from students and their parents/carers.

15.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Education, Performance and Standards committee annually. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or procedural changes occur during the year.

It will be approved by the board of directors.

16. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting students with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy