

SEND policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy outlines the commitment and approach of the Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust to meet the educational needs of pupils/students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across our academies.

1.2 Legal Framework

This policy complies with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- the Children and Families Act 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>
- the SEND Code of Practice 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2024
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/535/made>
- the Equality Act 2010 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
- Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (Sept 2014).
- Further education: guide to the 0 to 25 SEND code of practice Advice for further education colleges, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, and independent specialist colleges approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348883/Further_education_guide_to_the_0_to_25_SEND_code_of_practice.pdf
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting students at school with medical conditions (Dec 2015) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

2 Aims & Objectives

- 2.1** The Heart of Mercia Multi Academy Trust recognises the achievements and abilities of all our pupils/students. We value the contributions that every child and young person can make to the educational and cultural life of our academies. We are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

All HoM staff will actively seek to raise achievement, remove barriers to learning and increase physical and curricular access for all. All pupils/students with SEND are valued, respected and equal members of our community.

- 2.2** This policy works in conjunction with HoM academy SEND policies and other relevant policies which safeguard the interests and welfare of children.

Policies are reviewed annually or updated if national guidance requires, in-year. These include:

- Accessibility Plan (HoM and Local)
- Anti-bullying Policy (Local)
- Safeguarding Policy (HoM and Local)
- Behaviour and Conduct Policy (Local)
- SEND Information Report (Local)

Relevant policies can be found on the HoM and Academy websites (below).

Academy	Website
The Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust	Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust
John Kyrle High School	John Kyrle High School - Home (jkhs.org.uk)
The Chantry School	Chantry School – Excellence in all, Excellence for all
Hereford Sixth Form College	Welcome to Hereford Sixth form college
King Edward VI College Stourbridge	King Edward VI College, Stourbridge (kedst.ac.uk)
Worcester Sixth Form College	Home Page - Worcester Sixth Form College (wsfc.ac.uk)

- 2.3** We believe in raising the aspirations and expectations of the children/young people in our academies. In relation to pupils/students with SEND, we focus on the outcomes for each individual child or young person and how to help them to overcome any barriers to learning and success that they experience. All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress.

We believe that, wherever possible, local children and young people should attend local schools and colleges. We are fully inclusive and welcome children from all vulnerable groups, including, but not limited to SEND, CLA, Pupil Premium, Service Pupil Premium, children on the Child Protection Register or with a Children in Need Plan.

- 2.4** Our overarching aim is to create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect for achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all children and young people can thrive by paying attention to these specific areas:

- work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, Jan 2015.
- identify and provide for pupils/students who have special educational needs and additional needs.
- monitor the progress of all pupils/students, to identify needs as they arise and to provide intervention and support as early as possible.
- provide full access to the curriculum through quality first teaching and differentiated planning.
- involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's additional needs.
- involve the child or young person themselves in planning and in any decision making that affects them.

3 Definitions and Types

3.1 Definitions

The list below includes the key terms used in academies of the Trust. This list is not intended to be either exhaustive or linguistically prescriptive.

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) - SEN refers to a child or young person's learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision beyond what is generally available.
- Disabilities - Disabilities encompass a wide range of conditions that may impact a child or young person's ability to access education. This includes physical disabilities, sensory impairments, and medical conditions.
- Child/Children/Pupil/Student includes every individual enrolled at an academy of the Trust.

In England, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2023).

- Principal/Head – the person with overall accountability for the Academy to the Chief Executive and the Trust.
- Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Academy / Trust. They may be full time, or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

- Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting/carer role, for example stepparents, foster carers, kinship carers, and adoptive parents.

All mothers and most fathers have legal rights and responsibilities as a parent - known as 'parental responsibility'. The most important roles are to:

- provide a home for the child
- protect and maintain the child

Further details regarding parental responsibility can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities>

- SENCo - Each academy of the Trust will have an appointed person with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision.

Schools

All maintained nurseries and schools (including academies and free schools) are legally required to have a teacher who holds Qualified Teacher Status designated as the Special Educational Needs coordinator (SENCo). For further details, please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-qualification-for-sencos>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/648afa77b32b9e0012a9685f/nasc-learning-outcomes-final.pdf>

Sixth Form Colleges

Colleges are required to ensure that there is a named person in the college with oversight of SEND provision and responsibility for promoting the educational achievement, support, and well-being of SEND students.

The management, co-ordination, and delivery of support for SEND students will be undertaken by an individual similar to the role of the SEN Coordinator in schools.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348883/Further_education_guide_to_the_0_to_25_SEND_code_of_practice.pdf

- Individual support documentation - Academies will produce documentation that includes practical strategies and guidance for teaching staff to best support individual SEND pupils/students within lessons. They are seen as a working document which can be constantly refined and amended when used. These are sometimes referred to as a Pupil Learning Profile (PLP) or an Individual Learning Reports (ILRs).

- Personalised support plan - This refers to the documentation an academy uses to request a statutory assessment from the local authority. It forms the basis for the subsequent EHCP (if determined as appropriate) and should remain in place, even if the decision is to not proceed to a statutory assessment.
- Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) - An EHCP is a legally binding document which sets out the child or young person's needs, the provision they require and the educational placement they should attend. The EHCP should be detailed and contain specific information about the support that should be delivered.
- SEND Register – This is the document within the academy that lists all pupils/students with SEND requirements and is updated by the SENCo on a regular basis.

3.2 Types of SEND

SEND is divided into four types, although it should be recognised that some conditions cut across the typology below:

- Communication and Interaction - this includes children or young people with speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia, hearing impairment, and those who demonstrate features within the autistic spectrum.
- Cognition and Learning - this includes children or young people who demonstrate features of moderate, severe, or profound learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, or dyspraxia.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health - this includes children or young people who may be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive, or disturbing, hyperactive or lack concentration.
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs - this includes children or young people with sensory, multi- sensory and physical difficulties.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring SEND policies and procedures are in place and adhered to across the Trust.

- It ensures that the Trust creates a culture of inclusion, valuing the contributions that every child or young person can make to the educational and cultural life of our academies. It ensures that Academies offer an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

- The Board of Trustees, through the Scheme of Delegation, delegates the day-to-day management and implementation of SEND to the academies of the Trust and Principals/Heads of each Academy within the Trust.

4.2 The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will ensure that procedures are in place to monitor that SEND policies and procedures are in place and adhered to across the Trust.

4.3 Academy Principal/Head

- Creates a culture where the inclusion of all pupils/students is paramount, and staff feel confident to challenge over any concerns.
- Ensures that the SEND policies and related procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support, and resources, including cover arrangements, when necessary, to enable the SENCo to carry out their role effectively.
- Works closely with the SENCo and ensures job descriptions reflect the role.
- Ensures induction and training of all staff.
- Works closely with the Central Trust team and Chief Executive as required.
- Monitors and reports to the academy LGB and Chief Executive as appropriate about the implementation of the SEND policy and related procedures and outcomes.
- The Principal/Head may delegate this role to a designated member of the academy Senior Leadership Team.

4.4 Academy SENCo

- The Academy has appointed a member of staff with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision.
- This member of staff will take lead responsibility for SEND arrangements. This is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- This person will have the appropriate status and authority within the Academy to perform the duties of the post.
- They will be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on SEND arrangements, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children or young people.

Their responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school/college SEND policy.
- Co-ordinating the provision for children or young people with special educational needs.
- Ensuring that an agreed, consistent approach is adopted.
- Liaising with and advising other school/college staff.
- Helping staff to identify children or young people with special educational needs.
- Conducting assessments and observations of children or young people with specific learning problems.

- Supporting teachers in devising strategies, drawing up support plans/SEN guides.
- Setting targets appropriate to the needs of the child or young person and advising on appropriate resources and materials for use with children and young people with special educational needs and on the effective use of materials and personnel in the classroom.
- Liaising closely with parents of pupils/students with SEND alongside teachers, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process.
- Liaising with outside agencies, arranging meetings, and providing a link between these agencies, teachers, and parents.
- Maintaining the academy's SEND register and records.
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils/students with SEND through the use of existing school assessment information.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Liaising with the SENCos in receiving schools or colleges to help provide a smooth transition from one to the other.

4.5 All HoM Staff

Staff are responsible for following the guidance in this policy and as provided by the SENCo to support the learning and development of pupils/students within the Academy.

5 Key Principles

- **Inclusivity**
We are committed to an inclusive education system where every child or young person, regardless of their SEND, is supported to achieve their full potential.
- **Person-Centred Approach**
Our approach is child/young person-centred, valuing the unique needs, strengths, and preferences of each pupil/student with SEND.
- **Collaboration**
We promote collaboration between parents/carers, staff, external agencies, and the Local Authority to ensure the best possible support for pupils/students with SEND.
- **High Expectations**
We maintain high expectations for all pupils/students, including those with SEND, and work to remove barriers to their achievement.

6 Identification and Assessment

- **Early Identification**
HoM academies have processes in place to identify and assess pupils/students with SEND as early as possible, ensuring timely and appropriate interventions.

- **Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR)**

HoM academies follow the APDR cycle to develop and review Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and support strategies for pupils/students with SEND.

The following alone do not constitute SEND:

- Attendance and Punctuality.
- Health and Welfare.
- Being subject to a Child Protection or Child in need Plan.
- English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- Being in receipt of Student Premium Grant.
- Being a Looked After Child (CLA).
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman.

HoM and its staff observe two key duties:

- We must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass, or victimise Disabled children and young people.
- We must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that Disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

This duty is anticipatory - it requires thought to be given in advance to what Disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.

6 Provision and Support

- **Provision of Support**

HoM academies provide a range of support, including differentiated teaching, access to specialist resources, and external agency involvement, as needed.

- **SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)**

Each academy of the Trust has a designated individual responsible for overseeing SEND provision at the academy and liaising with external agencies (See also Points 3.1 and 4.4).

7 Involvement of Parents/Carers

HoM academies actively involve parents/carers in the assessment and planning process and encourage open communication to ensure the best outcomes for pupils/students with SEND.

8 Staff Training and Development

HoM and its academies provide regular training and professional development opportunities for staff to improve their capacity to support pupils/students with SEND effectively.

9 Transition Planning

HoM Academies ensure effective transition planning for pupils/students with SEND, whether transitioning within academies or to other educational settings.

10 Review and Monitoring

10.1 Annual Review

This SEND policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.

10.2 Monitoring

The Trust and its academies will monitor the progress of students with SEND and the effectiveness of SEND policies through regular assessments and data analysis.

11 Complaints and Concerns

HoM and its academies have procedures in place for handling complaints and concerns related to SEND provision. Parents/carers and pupils/students are encouraged to raise any issues promptly.

12 Equality Impact

The Trust's responsibilities towards promoting equality, diversity and inclusion have been considered when drafting this policy.

Date authored	Date agreed	LGBs	MAT Board	Review date	Comments
May 2024	June 2024	Autumn 2024	July 2024	June 2026	