



Willow Tree Academy



Policy on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Ratified: April 2019

To be reviewed: April 2020

Policy on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy was reviewed and updated in April 2019 in line with the Code of Practice.

1.2 Willow Tree Academy provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special educational needs and require particular action by the school.

1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional or highly differentiated support within Quality First Teaching and Learning experiences.

1.4 Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their time in school. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment of children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

1.5 The Disability Discrimination Act identifies the fact that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act. We will assess each child as required, and make the appropriate provision, based on their identified needs.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To create an environment that meets the needs of each child in school;
- To outline how children's additional needs (learning or SEMH) are identified and subsequently targeted;
- To ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- To make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- To identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs;
- To enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- To ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- To ensure that our children have a voice in their own learning.

3. Educational Inclusion

3.1. Within Willow Tree Academy, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of many different groups of learners, including:

- Minority and ethnic faith groups
- Learners who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)

- Learners with special educational needs (SEN)
- Learners who are disabled
- Those who are gifted and talented
- Those who are looked after by local authority
- Others such as those who are sick, bereaved or whose parents are divorced or separated

3.2 Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- Providing highly differentiated support for children who need help with communication, language, literacy and numeracy
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences;
- Planning for children's full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities;
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and social understanding and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

3.3 Attendance is a big contributing factor to ensuring that children can make progress. If children do not attend school regularly, then gaps in learning will begin to appear and this can impact on their attainment. As a school and within the academy, we place a high value on attainment and instil this value within our children, celebrating positive attendance regularly. Our Learning Mentors and Attendance Officers contact parents and families regularly to ensure that attendance is a priority. Attendance is a priority across the academy and children and staff are involved in monitoring and tracking attendance in their classroom, using charts and graphs to celebrate attendance.

4. Special educational needs

4.1 Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their:

- behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends
- reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels, for example because they have ADHD
- physical ability

Children are considered to have a Special Educational Need or Disability if:

- They have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for other children of the same age.

4.2 Many of the children who join us have already been in early education. In many cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

Since Spring 2017, we have introduced a new 'EIF' - Early Identification Form, which class teachers will use to carefully assess the current levels of children and monitor additional in class support used for individuals. These are used across our academy (Willow Tree Academy) to identify emerging needs which children might present leading them to need special educational provision and can be accessed on our school website.

4.3 If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty or have significant gaps in their learning, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This is referred to as SEN Support and refers to any additional support that children receive outside of the usual Quality First Teaching within the classroom.

Since the 2015 Code of Practice - this term has replaced previous terminology of 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus'

SEN Support may occur when:

- There has been little or no progress made with existing interventions
- Additional support is required to develop literacy or numeracy skills
- Additional support is required for emotional, behavioural or social development
- Additional support is required for sensory or physical impairments
- Additional support is required for communication or interaction needs

Where needs are similar, it is appropriate to support these children within a group focusing on the common needs. However there is scope within the SEN Support for each child to have individual targets. Provision will be in a small group as well as some individualised support for their more unique needs. Provision will run concurrently with differentiated curriculum support. The group may be taught by the class teacher and also supported by a TA. The responsibility for planning for these children remains with the class teacher, in consultation with the SENCO. An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is written for each child on the SEN register and outlines specific targets which are generated to ensure that children's learning is personalised and allows them to celebrate their successes at a level which suits their needs.

IDP books were implemented in the Summer Term of 2018, which allows a range of evidence to be gathered to show that children are accessing targeted provision to meet their Individual Development Plan targets. When targets are set, this book is used as an evidence portfolio to show progression towards these targets and the daily impact. Interventions for these children with SEND are frequent and evidenced appropriately - allowing parents, teachers and the children to see their own progress and understand their targets and how they can achieve these.

A child receiving SEN Support will be reviewed each term (Autumn/Spring/Summer). Parents/Carers and the child will be invited to contribute and will be consulted about any further actions and targets which will be set. As part of the review process, the SENCO and children's class teachers, in consultation with the parents/carers, may conclude that despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support for a considerable period, the child continues to have significant needs which are not being met by current interventions, therefore further support is required.

4.4 Further to this, for those children whom we consider to have more severe or complex needs, we would seek advice from other professional services. This support may include; Learning Support Service, Educational Psychologist, Autism Communication Team etc. A variety of support can be offered by these services, such as advice to the school about targets and strategies, specialised assessment or some direct work with the child. The specialist services will always be invited to contribute to the planning, monitoring

and reviewing of the child's progress. Provision will run concurrently with differentiated curriculum support and whenever possible, be implemented within the child's normal classroom setting.

4.5 Each individual receiving SEN Support will have an Individual Development Plan which will be reviewed termly alongside parents and the child to ensure that they are central to their learning and progress.

4.6 The highest level of support offered for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities are the implementation of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, which is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support programmes.

EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. Reports and assessment procedures are carried out in the process of applying for an EHC plan and the involvement of many services contribute to creating a portfolio of information about a child to ensure that they are receiving the highest level of care.

The SENCO in each individual school, manages the day-to-day operation of the policy and she;

- Coordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
- Supports and advise colleagues;
- Oversees the records of all children with special educational needs;
- Acts as the link with parents;
- Acts as the link with external agencies and other support agencies
- Monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision, and reports to the governing body
- Manages a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs;
- Provides staff training and support across the academy;
- Contributes to the professional development of all staff.

5. The role of the governing body

5.1 The governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.

5.2 The governing body does its best to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. They consult the LA and other schools, when appropriate, and report annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs. The governing body ensures that parents are notified of any decision made by the school about provision for their child.

5.3 The governing body has identified a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special education needs. Our SEN governor is Reverend Skidmore. Ensuring that this policy is adhered to and meets the requirements set out in the Code of Practice (2015), our Executive Head Teacher, Mrs Jane Fearnley, oversees SEND policy and practise at all 4 schools within Willow Tree Academy. The head teacher ensures that all those who teach a pupil with an Education and Health Care plan are aware of the nature of the plan and has responsibility for the annual review of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan.

5.4 The SEN governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEN provision including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

6. Allocation of resources

6.1 The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with Education and Health Care Plans.

6.2 The head teacher informs the governing body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed.

6.3 The Head Teacher and the SENCO meet annually to agree on how to use delegated funds to support inclusion and SEN. They review provision ensuring that all children receive their entitlement whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background.

7. Assessment

7.1 Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation. Parents are required to sign a form to say that they give school permission to place the child on the SEND register before any additional advice is requested from outside agencies. Class teachers are required to complete a EIF - Early identification form at this stage. They will begin to gather evidence around that child and include the support that the child has received from **high quality first teaching** that show the child has made little or no progress.

7.2 The class teacher and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.

7.3 The SENCO works closely with parents, teachers and outside agencies where necessary, to plan an appropriate programme of support.

7.4 The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

7.5 The LA (Local Authority) seeks advice from a range of agencies before making a formal decision as to whether the child will need an Educational Health Care plan. The needs of the child are considered to be paramount in this.

7.6 For some children, there are barriers to learning which stem from Social, Emotional or Mental Health needs (SEMH). For these children, it is paramount that school employs a safe and stimulating environment for children. Our Academy Pastoral Manager, Mrs Jane Forshaw, works directly with these children and alongside the SENCOs, we ensure that these children develop confident relationships in schools and are able to identify and discuss their needs and make choices. For some children, whose behaviour can affect their ability to access their curriculum learning, IBPs (Individual Behaviour Plans) are put in place to set targets and give children ownership of identifying consequences and how to make positive steps. This is overseen by the SENCOs and our Learning Mentors, who will meet with parents and children to assess and

review these targets regularly. Positive friendship and social skills groups are run weekly to improve children's relationships and close gaps in social and emotional understanding.

8. Access to the curriculum

8.1 All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable them to:

- Understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- Experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

8.2 Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

8.3 Targets are set on a plan entitled 'My Individual Development Plan' and this allows a small-steps approach to ensuring that children are able to achieve their best with relevant and purposeful targets. By breaking down targets into manageable steps that the children can achieve, we ensure that children experience success. All children with SEND support have individual education targets. Where appropriate we will use PIVATS and P levels to set targets for those children working below the age expected standard. Our Academy Pastoral Manager, Mrs Jane Forshaw, supports children with barriers to learning, as well as their families. She liaises with outside agencies to ensure children are supported in their learning as well as in their Social, Emotional and Mental Health (**SEMH**). She also works with the Head Teachers and SENCOs to ensure that target children are effectively safeguarded. (See our Child Protection Policy).

8.4 We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom and encourage in-class interventions where possible. There are times, though, when to maximise learning or reduce anxiety, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom e.g. Learning Support Service (LSS), Educational Psychologist assessments or speech and language programs.

9. Partnership with parents

9.1 The school works closely with parents in the support of those children with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.

9.2 The school prospectus contains details of our policy for special educational needs, and the arrangements made for these children in our school. The governors' Annual Report to Parents contains an evaluation of the policy in action. A named governor takes a particular interest in special needs and is always willing to talk to parents.

9.3 We have regular meetings to share the progress of special needs children with their parents. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

10. Pupil participation

10.1 In our school, we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. The work in our school recognised the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills. It is imperative that we allow children to thrive in areas where they are successful and enjoy all learning opportunities. We are passionate about creating a climate for learning which premises on social innovation and encouraging children to be aware of what is available to them in the outside world.

10.2 Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets on their steps to success and attend review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their targets and identify areas where they would like more support.. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1 The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in school. The SENCO provides staff and governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.

11.2 The SENCO is involved in supporting teachers involved in creating IDPs for children. The SENCO and the head teacher hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in this area. The SENCO and the governing body also hold termly meetings.

11.3 The governing body reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The SENCO reports the outcome of the review to the full governing body.