



Policy Information Sheet

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1. RATIONALE

Hartlepool Free School provides education for learners with a range of Special Education Needs and Disabilities, whose primary need is normally SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health). As an academy we aim to provide high quality education that meets the needs of every learner. Our focus on personalised learning means that all activities in all lessons can be tailored to meet the needs of individual learners. We recognise that our learners have a range of need.

Almost all children and young people come to us with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in place, while others may have received additional support in schools without this formal acknowledgement and may be in need of assessment. Due to our intensive way of working, we often discover additional underlying learning needs which have not previously been recognised or issues related to how behaviour manifests which could be due to further unidentified SEND.

2. POLICY AIMS

- To ensure all our learners understand and work towards overcoming their personal challenges, leaving equipped to make positive choices throughout their lives.
- To enable all learners of whatever ability, age, sex or background to enjoy their time in the school and achieve their full potential.
- To support staff to offer appropriate learning programmes with planned interventions in line with every student's needs.
- To ensure that students' progress to appropriate next steps on transition.

3. INTRODUCTION

The Trust follows Government guidance on SEND. Key documents include:

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- The Equality Act 2010.
- SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time (March 2022)

4. THE IDENTIFICATION OF SEND

The needs of individual learners are identified in a variety of ways:

- Referring schools complete an admission form which includes details of any SEND or other learning or behaviour issues we may need to be aware of.
- Further contact is made with Rick Kitson, Academy SENCO to establish any additional details.
- Parents/carers attend meet and greet sessions and are given the opportunity to talk about any issues or concerns, including SEND and medical information.
- Initial assessment lasts for a period of 4 weeks, during which a number of assessments are completed.

- Any concerns during assessment would result in the SENCO being consulted and possibly carrying out further assessments.
- An educational psychologist is available to see learners.
- Staff are highly trained and have experience of working with children and young people with a range of additional needs.
- Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and use this as a driver for change.
- All relevant information is recorded on Arbor. A password is used for more sensitive information and confidential information is held in files stored with the Principal.
- Care plans and learning needs are identified/updated at the end of assessment. Further assessment is used as needed, e.g. if a child or young person's needs appear to have changed.

5. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO SEN SUPPORT

Learners with SEND have varying individual needs and will therefore require a variety of support: The nature of our provision caters for all learners with SEND and/or additional need(s).

- Those learners who access a curriculum that is additional to the school's universal offer or different are identified as having bespoke curriculum intervention and are monitored by the intervention panel.
- All staff focus on individual learning programmes to meet the needs of every student.
- All learners access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Some specialist staff are available for additional support.
- The Principal and SENCO work together to ensure that all staff are well supported and feel confident they can help learners with SEND to meet their potential.
- An educational psychologist is available to see learners and produces a comprehensive report on each individual referred including suggestions for strategies to use in the classroom.
- Support for learners is the role of every staff member, both in the classroom and in social or leisure areas.
- It is the responsibility of the tutor team to ensure that all staff are aware of any additional needs and the effective strategies to employ for each member of their group. This information is shared through the management information system Arbor, on risk assessments, learners intervention plans and verbally.
- All resources including e-learning are made accessible for all learners, as appropriate.
- The quality of teaching and learning and the progress made by individual learners is monitored by the Senior Management Team.
- The school participates in reviews for those learners with identified SEND. Where necessary the school will discuss with parents/carers the need to initiate an assessment for an EHCP, following Local Authority processes. Learners and their parents or carers will be able to access impartial information, advice and guidance about their options for transition.
- Progression and transition plans are most effective when discussed and made with learners, their parents or carers and relevant professionals. The Academy will share

relevant information on SEND, with other learning providers, once the student moves on from this provision.

6. EHC PLANS

- The school will fully cooperate with the Local Authority (LA), providing the LA with any information or evidence needed. All relevant teachers and staff members will be involved in contributing information to the LA.
- Where the LA provides a learner with an EHC plan, the school will involve the parents and the learner in discussions surrounding how the school can best implement the plan's provisions to help the learner thrive in their education and will set appropriate targets.
- The school will meet its duty to provide views on a draft EHC plan within 15 days. If the decision is taken not to issue an EHC plan, the school will consider and implement the recommendations of feedback from the LA regarding how the learner's outcomes can be met through the school's existing provision.
- The school will admit any learner that is named by the LA in an EHC plan. The school will ensure that all those teaching or working with a learner named in an EHC plan are aware of the learner's needs and that arrangements are in place to meet them.
- All reasonable provisions will be taken by the school to provide a high standard of education.
- The school will review each learner's EHC plan to ensure that it includes the statutory sections outlined in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', labelled separately from one another. If a learner's needs significantly change, the school will request an interim review of an EHC plan at least six months after an initial assessment. Thereafter, the Principal will request the LA to conduct an interim review of a learner whenever they feel it is necessary. Following the interim review, a final EHC plan will be issued.
- The school will ensure that any EHC plan is kept confidential and disclosed on a need-to-know basis. Information regarding a learner's EHC plan will only be shared with other educational settings if the learner is transferring there, for the setting to develop an individual learning plan. The school will take steps to ensure that learners and parents are actively supported in developing and reviewing EHC plans.
- Where necessary, the school will provide support to ensure the learner's views are heard and acknowledged.
- The school will ensure that parents are consistently kept involved throughout the implementation of an EHC plan.

7. REVIEWING THE EHC PLAN

The school will:

- Cooperate with the relevant individuals to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the LA if requested.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given advance notice of the scheduled meeting.
- Contribute any relevant information and recommendations about the EHC plan to the LA, keeping parents/carers involved at all times.
- Ensure that sufficient arrangements are put in place at the school to host the annual review meeting.
- Cooperate with the LA during annual reviews.
- Lead the review of the EHC plan in order to create the greatest confidence amongst learners and their parents/carers.
- Seek advice and information about the learner prior to the annual review meeting from all parties invited, and send any information gathered to all those invited, prior
- to the meeting.
- Prepare and send a report of the meeting to everyone invited, setting out any recommendations and amendments to the EHC plan.
- Provide the LA and parents/carers with any evidence to support the proposed changes and giving those involved an opportunity to comment and make representations.
- Clarify to the parents/carers and learner that they have the right to appeal the decisions made in regard to the EHC plan.

8. HOW THE SCHOOL WILL SUPPORT LEARNERS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

8.1 Where a medical need is identified, a number of steps may be taken:

- Medical needs and the requirements for the administration of medicines will be established at the initial meeting or through ongoing contact with parents, carers and other professionals. This is in line with the Trust policy on administering medication.
- Staff will be made aware of any medical issues or risks attached to individual learners through Arbor and verbal instruction.
- Qualified first aiders are available at all times.
- Where a medical practitioner recommends it, a student may access a reduced timetable for an agreed period, subject to review. Changes to programmes will be informed by the views of medical practitioners.
- If a medical emergency occurs, parents or carers are informed immediately. For dual rolled students, the initial home Academy agreement gives permission for emergency treatment
- where there is a delay in contacting the family. In the case of Free School only students, this permission is given by the Principal. In this case the emergency services would be called.

Learners with medical conditions are still expected to achieve in line with their potential.

9. PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- The school will ensure that there is a focus on promoting learners' resilience, kindness, growth mindset and personal responsibility to build confidence and ability to learn in subjects across the curriculum.
- Positive classroom management and working in small groups will be implemented to promote positive behaviour, social development and high self-esteem. Specialist services will be available where a learner requires such services. Where appropriate, the school will support parents/carers in the development of their child.
- Mentoring will be used to encourage and support learners suffering with SEMH difficulties. Mentors will act as a confidant with the aim of easing the worries of the learner. When in-school intervention is not appropriate, support from outside agencies will be sought.
- For learners with more complex problems, additional in-school support will be provided by the school's intervention team, identified at Intervention Panel.

10. TRAINING AND RESOURCES

All staff can access a comprehensive CPD programme which can include:

- Training to include activities related to working with learners with SEND.
- Staff can self-refer for further training from the Principal and SENCO.
- The Educational Psychologist is available to discuss individual cases.
- Staff have access to a library of specialist resources and further information is available in the staff shared area.
- Specialist equipment and resources for individual learners can be requested.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Principal is responsible for monitoring the progress of learners with SEND and measuring the impact of any funding associated with SEND.
- Progress is monitored and reported termly. All staff are responsible for ensuring that learners make progress in line with academy expectations.
- Tutor teams have responsibility for understanding the needs of every student in their group and ensuring that other members of staff are aware of relevant information.
- Referrals to the Educational Psychologist or to CAMHS can be made through the Principal or the SENCO via the inclusion panel. Decisions to initiate statutory assessments will be made by the SENCO team in consultation with parents, carers, partner agencies and the tutor team.

12. ACCESSIBILITY

Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to make sure disabled learners are not discriminated against. The buildings are compliant with legislations and additional support is provided to learners. This support includes access to specialist equipment and services. Learners with disabilities are able to access all provision and services offered to other learners.

13. BULLYING

The school policy on behaviour states that there is a zero tolerance to bullying in any form. The school promotes a climate of zero tolerance and encourages all staff and learners to demonstrate this through their behaviour.