

# **Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust**



## **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy**

Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust Wide Policy

January 2025

### Document Control

Reviewed by:	Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust Board	Date: Jan 2024
Approved by:	Name: K Fielding Signed by: Chair of Board	Date: Jan 2024
Adopted by Academies:	Jan 2024	
Review:	Annually	
Next review due by:	Jan 2026	

### Document Information

	Information
Document Name	Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy
Document Author	E Williams, H Partington, S Mitchell
Document Approval	Board of Trustees
Document Status	Version 1.2
Publication Date	Jan 2025
Distribution	Website

### Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Amended By	Comments
1.0	Jan 2024	S Mitchell	New policy based on PHS policy
1.1	June 2024	S Mitchell	Updated legal framework and section 4: roles and responsibilities
1.2	Jan 2025	S Mullen, S Mitchell	Document review

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## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1.1.1. Local Government Act 1974
- 1.1.2. Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- 1.1.3. Children Act 1989
- 1.1.4. Education Act 1996
- 1.1.5. Education Act 2002
- 1.1.6. Mental Capacity Act 2005
- 1.1.7. Equality Act 2010
- 1.1.8. The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- 1.1.9. Children and Families Act 2014
- 1.1.10. The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- 1.1.11. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- 1.1.12. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- 1.1.13. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- 1.1.14. Data Protection Act 2018
- 1.1.15. Health and Care Act 2022
- 1.1.16. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2024

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1.2.1. DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- 1.2.2. DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- 1.2.3. DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'
- 1.2.4. DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- 1.2.5. DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- 1.2.6. DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- 1.2.7. Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2015) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- 1.3.1. Admissions Policy
- 1.3.2. Data Protection Policy
- 1.3.3. Records Management Policy
- 1.3.4. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- 1.3.5. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- 1.3.6. Careers Policy
- 1.3.7. Behaviour Policy
- 1.3.8. Complaints Procedures Policy
- 1.3.9. Accessibility Policy

## 2. Statement of intent

2.1. Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust values the abilities, achievements and differences of its pupils, and is committed to providing for each pupil the best

possible environment for learning. The trust is committed to ensuring that pupils, including those with specific and/or additional educational needs, make significant progress and remain healthy, safe and engaged. To achieve this, it is of paramount importance that the educational needs that pupils experience during their school career are identified swiftly and that appropriate provision is made to ensure that these needs can be met.

- 2.2. Aspirational Futures Multi Academy Trust believes that all pupils are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood.
- 2.3. This policy outlines the framework the trust will use in meeting its duties, obligations and principal equality values in providing an appropriate high-quality education for pupils with SEND.
- 2.4. Through successful implementation of this policy, the school aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.
- 2.5. The trust will work with the LA, or equivalent, in ensuring that the following principles underpin this policy:
  - 1.1.1. The involvement of pupils and their parents in decision-making.
  - 1.1.2. The early identification of pupils' needs and early intervention to support them.
  - 1.1.3. A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
  - 1.1.4. Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
  - 1.1.5. High-quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
  - 1.1.6. Preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.
  - 1.1.7. To ensure that as per the Code of Practice all teachers in the trust are teachers of pupils with SEND.

### **3. Objectives of the policy**

Every school is required to identify and address the SEND of the pupils that they support. Through the implementation of this policy, each school will do their best endeavours:

- 3.1. To provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who will work with the Special Educational Needs and Disability(SEND) Team
- 3.2. Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- 3.3. To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and/or additional needs.
- 3.4. To follow the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice and adhere to the regulations therein.
- 3.5. To operate a child-centred approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs.
- 3.6. To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils who have special educational needs.
- 3.7. Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child.
- 3.8. To develop and maintain partnerships with parents and carers.

- 3.9. To ensure effective partnership working with external agencies and professionals in order to meet the needs of staff and pupils.
- 3.10. To ensure that all pupils are included in all activities and lessons within the curriculum.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1. The **Board of Trustees** will be responsible for:
  - 4.1.1. Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently across the schools.
  - 4.1.2. Ensuring the schools meet their duties in relation to supporting pupils with SEND.
  - 4.1.3. Ensuring that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for each school.
- 4.2. In enacting this policy, the **headteacher** will:
  - 4.2.1. Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEND.
  - 4.2.2. Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
  - 4.2.3. Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and SEND of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
  - 4.2.4. Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice.
  - 4.2.5. Work with the governing board to ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.
  - 4.2.6. Ensure the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
  - 4.2.7. Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.
  - 4.2.8. Ensure the SENCO has or is completing either the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination or the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators.
  - 4.2.9. Regularly and carefully reviewing the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
  - 4.2.10. Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils with SEND.
- 4.3. **The SENCo:**
  - 4.3.1. The SENCo is responsible for determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in school.
  - 4.3.2. The SENCo should be aware of the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a supportive role to families to ensure pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.
  - 4.3.3. To provide professional guidance and support to colleagues.
  - 4.3.4. To advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget.

- 4.3.5. The day to day operation of the school's SEND policy and information sharing with teaching and pastoral staff.
- 4.3.6. To monitor and evaluate the impact of in-class support.
- 4.3.7. To work directly with pupils who have SEND.
- 4.3.8. To coordinate provision for children with SEND and to advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- 4.3.9. To liaise with parents and carers, external agencies, specialists, health professionals etc
- 4.3.10. To contribute to staff training and Provision Mapping in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (6.91)

**4.4. Teaching staff:**

- 4.4.1. Awareness of the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of and subsequent provision for pupils with SEND.
- 4.4.2. Differentiation of the curriculum where appropriate, taking into consideration the additional needs of the students.
- 4.4.3. Monitoring the progress of pupils with SEND.
- 4.4.4. Contributing to target setting and outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- 4.4.5. Liaising with those who provide in-class support so that lesson plans and outcomes are effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress.

**4.5. Learning Support Assistants**

- 4.5.1. Responsible for the design and delivery of specifically targeted and/or specialist interventions under the supervision of the SENCo and Curriculum Leader.
- 4.5.2. To liaise with external agencies, parents, carers and school staff.
- 4.5.3. To support pupils in the classroom setting, contributing to target setting, monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to agreed targets and outcomes. Pupils with an EHCP are allocated support in accordance with the prescription as set out in section F of the EHCP.
- 4.5.4. To provide structured and planned interventions under the guidance of the SENCo or specialist for individuals or small groups.

**5. Identifying special educational needs**

- 5.1. The trust recognises that early identification and effective provision improves long-term outcomes for pupils. As part of the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.
- 5.2. Pupils are mostly identified as having SEND through communication (prior to admission) with 'feeder' primary schools. Secondary school staff attend transitional review days as an initial step and then share information with the Learning Support Team and teaching staff. The SENCo will attend transitional review meetings on request to ensure effective transition planning for any students identified as having SEND.
- 5.3. Where a candidate has learning difficulties but does not have an EHCP, the SENCo and teachers must paint a picture of need, demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working. The SENCo will collate evidence and complete Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

- 5.4. With the support of the SLT, classroom teachers will conduct regular progress assessments for all pupils, with the aim of identifying pupils who are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.
- 5.5. 'Less than expected progress' will be characterised by progress which:
  - 5.5.1. Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
  - 5.5.2. Does not match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress.
  - 5.5.3. Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers.
  - 5.5.4. Widens the attainment gap.

## **6. Broad areas of need**

- 6.1. The school plans, manages and reviews SEND provision across the following four broad areas of need:
  - 6.1.1. Communication and interaction
  - 6.1.2. Cognition and learning
  - 6.1.3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
  - 6.1.4. Sensory and/or physical needs
- 6.2. The identification of 'behaviour' as a need is not an acceptable way of describing SEND. Any concerns relating to a child or young person's behaviour should be described as an underlying response to a need which should be recognised and identified by staff in school.

## **7. Criteria for inclusion on the SEND/Additional Needs register**

- 7.1. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot always compensate for a lack of high quality teaching.
- 7.2. Pupils are placed on the SEND register as per the school's criteria for provision and in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015. See section 7 below.
- 7.3. Assessments lead to formal planning of appropriate person-centred intervention in liaison with appropriate staff members.
- 7.4. Each school's SEND information is shared with all staff members. The information is disseminated through a separate register. Reasons to be at school support include;
  - 7.4.1. Those who have an identified Special Educational Need/Disability and/or have an Education, Health and Care Plan, or those who require individual planning and high levels of differentiation at 'School Support' level.
  - 7.4.2. Those who have an additional need and/or a disability and therefore may require a 'reasonable adjustment'.
  - 7.4.3. Students in KS4 who have approved Access Arrangements granted by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications).
  - 7.4.4. A disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age in mainstream settings.

## **8. SEND criteria**

Pupils must meet specific criteria to access levels of SEND support as outlined below:



- 8.1. EHCP. Pupils who have been subject to a statutory assessment undertaken by the Local Authority which has necessitated the issuing of an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan - code E). Schools are legally obliged to ensure that the support provided is compliant with this document.
- 8.2. SEND Support (K). Pupils supported at this level must have a specific barrier to learning which significantly necessitates their educational provision to be *different from or additional to* what is normally available to pupils of the same age. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, information is gathered from within the school about the pupil's overall progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress.
- 8.3. Standard scores of below 84. Standard scores are scores that are calculated in relation to the pupils exact age, so they are a fair way to ascertain where the pupil is in relation to their peers. A pupil who scores a standard score of 100 is deemed to be in line with their peers. 84 is within the low average range and it is therefore considered that this pupil will need additional support in regards to their cognition and learning.
- 8.4. Significantly below (more than 2 years) functional reading and/or spelling age.
- 8.5. Barrier to learning based on a specific circumstance. This includes high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools, well trained staff and early assessment materials.

**9. The ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW cycle including prior schools**

Where a pupil is identified as having a SEND, action should be taken to remove barriers to learning and SEND provision should be put in place. This support takes the form of a four part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. All pupils at school support and with an EHCP are continuously reviewed through each key stage. Pupils with an EHCP are also reviewed annually with all those who support them.

**10. Levels of SEND provision**

- 10.1. Specialist Provision. This is a long term, high level intervention from a SEND specialist practitioner. It involves personalised and intensive interventions. Pupils with an EHCP will receive this provision
- 10.2. Targeted Provision. This includes a short term intervention or could become a longer term low level intervention e.g. if a pupil requires small group support and intervention. Pupils who are receiving targeted provision can access provision during lesson time, social time and after school.
- 10.3. Universal Provision. This is high quality inclusive teaching and monitoring of progress.

**11. Provision available for pupils with SEND**

- 11.1. Provision and support offered should be personalised to meet pupils' individual needs. Areas of need include; (this is not an exhaustive list)

**11.1.1. Cognition and Learning, consisting of:**

- 11.1.1.1. Small group teaching
- 11.1.1.2. Phonics - 1:1 and group
- 11.1.1.3. Learn, Write Tuition
- 11.1.1.4. After school literacy support
- 11.1.1.5. GCSE support
- 11.1.1.6. Regular home school contact

**11.1.2. Communication and Interaction, consisting of:**

- 11.1.2.1. Visual resources
- 11.1.2.2. Emotional Literacy sessions
- 11.1.2.3. Access to a 'safe place' during unstructured times
- 11.1.2.4. The creation of a 'Sensory Diet'
- 11.1.2.5. LSA mentoring
- 11.1.2.6. Extracurricular clubs
- 11.1.2.7. After school intervention
- 11.1.2.8. Lego therapy
- 11.1.2.9. Regular home-school contact

**11.1.3. Physical and sensory difficulties, consisting of:**

- 11.1.3.1. Support and assistive technology for those students with physical and/or sensory difficulties is provided in consultation with specialist teaching staff.
- 11.1.3.2. Manual Handling training
- 11.1.3.3. Use of the sensory room / sensory diet
- 11.1.3.4. Regular home school contact

**11.1.4. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, consisting of:**

- 11.1.4.1. Specific programmes to address SEMH needs
- 11.1.4.2. Access to counselling
- 11.1.4.3. Access to therapy
- 11.1.4.4. Reduced timetables
- 11.1.4.5. Access to alternative provision
- 11.1.4.6. Regular home-school contact
- 11.1.4.7. EBSA Framework implemented

11.2. Pupils who are at school support will have a responsible person who liaises with staff, the pupil and their parents to produce their own version of a One Page Profile. The profile outlines specific, time constrained targets and strategies to support an individual's learning and overall progress. One Page Profiles are reviewed with the support of both parents and teachers alike. Teaching staff have access to all One Page Profiles and also a bank of generic strategies to aid their understanding of pupil difficulties and the various strategies to aid inclusion within the classroom.

11.3. If a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan this will be formally reviewed once a year. The views of the pupil, parents/carers, teaching staff and other professionals will be requested and form the basis for discussion of progress towards targets and the setting of new targets for the coming year. Reviews take place in accordance with the Local Authority's Transition model. Emergency/interim reviews may take place at any time during the school year if any party is concerned about the progress of a pupil with an EHCP.

## **12. Curriculum**

- 12.1. All pupils have full access to the National Curriculum. All interventions are targeted to address specific difficulties as necessary. It is the trust's policy that the majority of support for pupils with SEND should be provided in the classroom alongside their peers.
- 12.2. Care is taken to ensure that the ability of bilingual pupils is recognised and that these pupils are not regarded as having SEND on the basis of language acquisition.
- 12.3. Targeted and specialist interventions out of the classroom are sometimes appropriate to facilitate individual progress. Specialist teaching is often skills-based, particularly for reading, writing, spelling or numerical programmes of study.
- 12.4. Speech and Language materials are delivered where appropriate.
- 12.5. Counselling, social skills groups and 1:1 tutorial sessions may also be appropriate.
- 12.6. Where appropriate and if stated in the EHCP, a fully differentiated curriculum can be offered in extreme cases.

## **13. Exams**

- 13.1. Pupils with specific needs and who do not have an EHCP are assessed to ascertain if they require *access arrangements* for their GCSE exams.
- 13.2. Pupils with an EHCP are also considered for access arrangements, but these can only be approved if it is the pupil's normal way of working.
- 13.3. Pupils with identified needs: pupils who transition to secondary school with SEND will automatically be assessed for access arrangements.
- 13.4. Pupils with unidentified needs: as per the Code of Practice 2015, teachers employ a graduated response to all pupils when they start school. Should a teacher observe that a pupil has a specific difficulty/need, they will refer pupils to the learning support department for assessment of need. The SENCo will seek feedback on that particular pupil from all other teachers, on the pupil's normal way of working, and then decide if access arrangement tests need to be carried out. If a pupil does require access arrangement tests, then these are carried out.
- 13.5. All assessments should be ready for application by the first term of the academic year when the pupil is in year 10. There are some instances where late/adhoc referrals are made and the SENCo will assess as soon as possible.

## **14. Access to the full life of school**

- 14.1. The trust is inclusive. All pupils are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life.
- 14.2. To ensure that pupils have access to and make progress across the curriculum the trust provides:
  - 14.2.1. Access to Pupil Premium funding where the pupil has been eligible for Free School meals within the previous 6 years.
  - 14.2.2. A structured reading scheme for all year groups.
  - 14.2.3. Phonics delivered 1:1 and in groups.
  - 14.2.4. Literacy and numeracy strategies embedded across the curriculum.
  - 14.2.5. Lessons which are planned to meet individual needs.

- 14.2.6. Highly personalised and specific interventions based on need via specialists
- 14.2.7. Intervention (no more than 8 pupils) for pupils at school support.

## **15. Training and resources**

- 15.1. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from learning support assistants or specialist staff (SEND Code of Practice 2015 6.36).
- 15.2. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.
- 15.3. The SENCo will keep up-to-date regarding SEND issues through:
  - 15.3.1. Incorporating knowledge gained via the NASENCo Award (National Award for SEN Coordination).
  - 15.3.2. Regular attendance at local SEND/EP cluster meetings.
  - 15.3.3. Regular attendance through the LA SEND partnership groups.
  - 15.3.4. Access to specialist training.
- 15.4. Learning support assistants will develop their skills through attendance at specialist training, discussions with external specialists and any in-house training provided.
- 15.5. LSAs who support individual pupils with an EHCP will be required to have a wide range of curriculum and special educational needs knowledge. This will be regularly updated by attending training courses identified through the appraisal cycle.

## **16. Use of data and record keeping**

Information in relation to SEND is kept securely in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 [GDPR 2018]. The provision made for pupils with SEND is recorded accurately and kept up to date. Provision is recorded efficiently showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum.

## **17. Publishing information**

- 17.1. The trust must publish information about the implementation of this policy. This information should be updated annually. The information required is set out in the SEND Regulations 2015 and must include information about:
  - 17.1.1. The types of SEND that are provided for.
  - 17.1.2. Policies for identifying children and young people with SEND and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the SENCo.
  - 17.1.3. Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEND and involving them in their child's education.
  - 17.1.4. Arrangements for consulting young people with SEND and involving them in their education.
  - 17.1.5. Arrangements for assessing and reviewing young people's progress towards outcomes.
  - 17.1.6. Transition arrangements.

- 17.1.7. The overall approaches to teaching young people with SEND
- 17.1.8. The adaptations that are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of young people with SEND.

## **18. Safeguarding**

- 18.1. The trust recognises that evidence shows pupils with SEND are at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment, so will do its best endeavours to ensure that staff are aware that pupils with SEND:
  - 18.1.1. Have the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and / or being the bully.
  - 18.1.2. May face additional risks online, e.g. from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation.
  - 18.1.3. Are at greater risk of abuse, including child-on-child abuse, neglect, and sexual violence and harassment.
- 18.2. The trust recognises that there are additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of pupils. These barriers include, but are not limited to:
  - 18.2.1. Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's condition without further exploration.
  - 18.2.2. These pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
  - 18.2.3. The potential for pupils with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
  - 18.2.4. Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- 18.3. Each headteacher and the Board of Trustees will ensure that the trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that these additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse.
- 18.4. Care will be taken by all staff, particularly those who work closely with pupils with SEND, to notice any changes in behaviour or mood, or any injuries, and these indicators will be investigated by the DSL in collaboration with the SENCO.

## **19. Complaints**

Please refer to the trust's Complaints Procedure.