

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy including Inclusion and Looked After Children.

2024-2025

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact
office@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk or 01543 472245

Last review date:		September 2024		
Next Review date:		September 2025		
Review Cycle:		Annually		
Statutory Policy:		Yes		
Publication:		Website. G/Policies		
Owner		SENCO		
Date	Version	Reason for change	Overview of changes made	Source
01/08/22	0.1	Scheduled Review	Amalgamated all four schools into one policy. Combined with the LAC and Inclusion policy.	
30.09.22	1.0	Scheduled Review	Ratified by Board	
21.9.23	1.1	Scheduled Review - Internal Lead	Edited to reflect G.Duffy being SENCO across the trust. A pictorial graduated response now implemented.	
19.09.23	1.2	Scheduled Review - Board Lead	No changes.	
29.09.23	2.0	Scheduled Review - Board	Ratified	
18.09.24	2.1	Scheduled Review - Internal Lead	LAC designated teacher name change from E.Bowring to G.Duffy Edited changes for current national links and updated Staffordshire LA information	
9.10.24	2.2	Scheduled Review - Board Lead	No changes.	

18.10.24	3	Scheduled Review - Board	Ratified by Board	
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Our Philosophy

At The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust (TSSMAT), we aim to teach children how to grow into confident, independent learners who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential as a unique child of God. Staffordshire schools have been advised by the Local Authority to produce their school local offer with relation to the new SEN code of practice from September 2015. This policy ensures TSSMATs compliance with legislation and includes the school's **SEN Information Report**. This report is required to be issued to parents annually and also published on the school website.

Guidance

This guidance therefore complies with the statutory duty described in **Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations (Clause 64)** and takes account of:

- This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:
- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- [Equality Act](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN coordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report
- Advice provided to Staffordshire schools on producing their [school's local/core offer](#)

Aims of this SEND Policy

The aims of our special educational need and disability policy and practice in this school are:

- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability by ensuring increased access to the curriculum, the environment and to printed information for all
- To ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN
- To reduce barriers to progress by embedding the principles in the National Curriculum Inclusion statement
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>
- To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for pupils for whom this is required, that is "additional to and different from" that provided within the adaptive curriculum to better respond to the four areas of need:
 1. Communication and interaction

2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health
4. Sensory/physical

To request, monitor and respond to parent/carers' and pupils' views in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership

- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil needs, through well targeted continuing professional development.
 - To support pupils with medical conditions full inclusion in all school activities by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals
 - To work in cooperative and productive partnership with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
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What are Special Educational Needs?

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age. Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England. Health care provision or social care provision which educates or trains a child or young person is to be treated as special educational provision.

Code of Practice, 2014

High quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised should be available for all pupils. At the heart of the work of every school is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing which takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children. The majority of children will learn and progress within these arrangements. Those children whose overall attainments or attainment in specific subjects fall significantly outside the expected range may have a special educational need

Roles and Responsibilities

The SENCO Responsibilities

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator across The Staffordshire Multi Academy Trust is Mrs Duffy. The SENCO can be contacted by the school office or via the following email: SENCO@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk

The SENCO's will:

- Work with the headteacher and SEN governor/director to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEN policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans

- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Work with the CEO, Headteachers and board of directors to ensure that the Academy and individual schools meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date
- Delegate school specific tasks to the individual School SEN champion member of staff.

The SENCO Director and Governor Responsibilities

The SEN director Mrs M Havelock-Crozier and Anson's SEN governor Mrs Emily Harris:

- Help to raise awareness of SEN issues at governor meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update governors at meetings.
- Work with the headteachers and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the schools

The Headteacher Responsibilities

The individual MAT school headteachers will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEN director to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability within their school

The Class Teacher Responsibilities

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
 - Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
 - Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
 - Ensuring they follow this SEN policy
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Identifying Special Educational Needs

Many pupils experience delay in their learning and are not making expected progress for a variety of reasons. Many will have adapted work prepared for them by their teacher in conjunction with the support staff which will be additional to and different from the curriculum available for the majority of children of their age. The Code of Practice describes four broad categories of need:

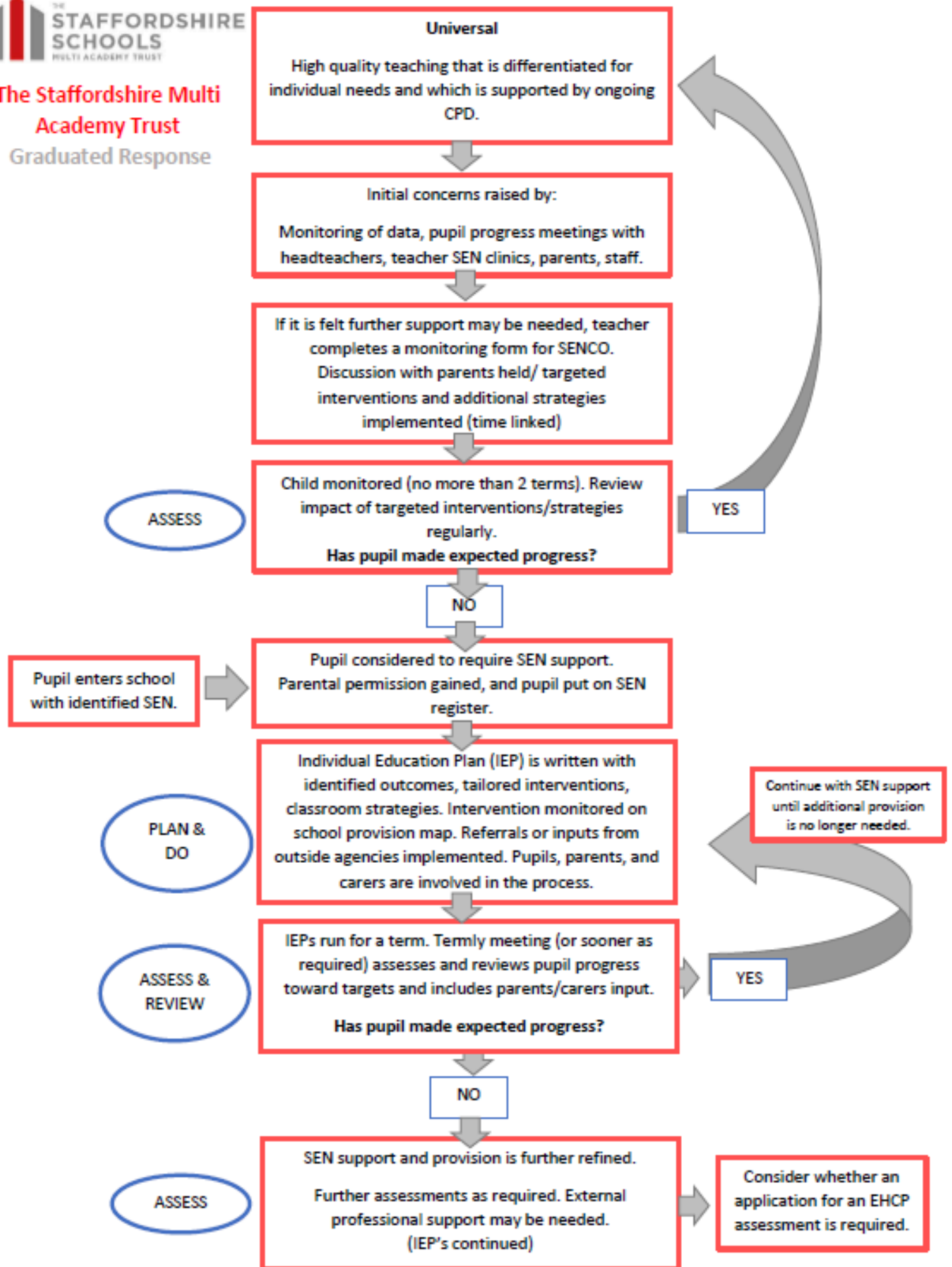
1. Communication and Interaction, for example, autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties
2. Cognition and Learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia,
3. Social, emotional and mental health, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD),
4. Sensory and /or physical, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy

How we know if a pupil needs extra help:

- Concerns are raised by parents/ carers, teachers or the pupil's previous school
 - Tracking of a pupil's attainment indicates a lack of progress
 - Pupil observation indicates they have additional needs in one of the four areas stated above.
-

TSSMAT's Graduated Response to SEN Support

At the Multi Academy Trust we use the graduated approach described in the [Code of Practice 2014](#).



At each school, we have a central register of all children with SEND. This is to ensure that all children receive the appropriate provision and this is closely monitored by the SENDCo. A child is registered for SEND when they have been raised as a concern after they have been through the graduated approach as outlined in the flowchart above.. Parents, carers and the child are fully involved at every stage.

Children are placed on the SEND register with parent/ carers consent. Children will have an Education Plan that will have specific targets to address their area/areas of need. These targets will be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Related) and written by the class teacher and teaching assistants. Individual education plans will be reviewed by teachers and the SENDCo termly and more targets will be decided upon if necessary. The class teacher will review the education plans with parents/carers **every** term. The parents and children's views are recorded on the IEP. At any stage the SENDCo, and may ask for support from external agencies with parental permission:

These external agencies may include:

- Special Educational Inclusion Service (SENIS)
- Behaviour Support Service
- Autism Outreach Team
- Hearing Impairment team
- Visual Impairment team
- Autism and Sensory Support in Staffordshire
- Educational Psychologist Service
- Educational Welfare Workers
- Physical and disability support service
- Social Services
- School Nurse
- CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- LST – Local Support Team
- SALT – Speech and Language Therapy Service
- OT – Occupational Therapy
- PT – Physiotherapy Service
- Sickle Cell-Family Support
- Special School Outreach Programs

Educational Health Care Plans

For a very small percentage of pupils, whose needs are significant and complex and the special educational provision required to meet their needs cannot reasonably be provided from within the school's own resources, a request will be made to the Local Authority to conduct an assessment of education, health and care needs. This may result in an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan being provided.

Baseline and review assessments

Initial baseline assessments to support extra intervention and Personal Support Plans for children on the SEN register will be carried out by the SENCO and/or specialist trained SEN Support staff and reviewed regularly.

Combined with the usual school assessment scores, the baseline assessment standardised scores will be analysed and, alongside teacher judgement and parental agreement, children who have standardised scores in 2 or more areas falling below 89 will be placed on the school SEN register..

Standardised Score (Range)	Descriptive level	School Action
131 or More	Well above average	
116-130	Above average	
111-115	High Average	
90-110	Mid average	Intervention
85-89	Low average	Intervention – Take off SEN register
70-84	Below average	Intervention + put on SEN register
69 or less	Well below average	EHCP application

Criteria for exiting the SEN register

Pupil progress is reviewed termly. Should it be considered that a child has made progress and no longer meets the criteria outlined in the policy, a meeting will be arranged with all stakeholders to discuss the matter and this will result in a child not needing to be on the register any more.

Emotional and Social Development

What does the TSSMAT offer in regards to emotional and social development?

The MAT offers:

- An extensive PSHE curriculum which covers a wide range of social and emotional awareness opportunities
 - 1:1 sessions with the SENCO can be used to develop and explore more complex areas of SEMH and behavioural needs.
 - Nurture groups
 - Forest School
 - School Councils
 - Emotional Literacy Support (St Mary's based)
 - Assembly themes based on core values, such as friendship, self-wellbeing, being happy, what to do when you have worries etc
-

Dyslexia

What is Dyslexia?

According to the Dyslexia institute, dyslexia can be defined as: '... a combination of abilities and difficulties which affect the learning process in reading, writing, spelling and sometimes numeracy.'

Children with dyslexia frequently have weaknesses in short term memory, sequencing and processing information – skills everyone needs to learn effectively in a busy classroom. What may start as a learning difference quickly becomes a learning difficulty if dyslexia goes unrecognised and the teaching is inappropriate.

However, if those with milder forms of dyslexia are identified early and given the opportunity to learn the way they learn best, they may cease to have special educational needs. The skills and strategies which dyslexic children need in order to learn can be taught, and what is good for the dyslexic learner is good for everyone.

Are the TSSMAT schools dyslexia friendly?

In every school there are a significant number of pupils with dyslexic tendencies who need not only literacy programmes to improve their skills, but also a dyslexia friendly environment in which to gain confidence and develop their abilities. The skills and strategies which dyslexic children/children with dyslexic tendencies need in order to learn can be taught. Strategies that are good for dyslexic learners are good for everyone.

A whole school approach underpins success for pupils with dyslexia.

We make provision for dyslexic pupils on the SEN register and provide programmes of support where necessary. Many strategies which are already in place, precision teaching, effective learning, formative assessment, cursive handwriting are ways in which we are helping to develop dyslexic learners and make our schools dyslexia friendly.

The aim of the school is to continue this good practice and, as part of a continuing programme of staff development, offer further advice about how to achieve a dyslexia friendly learning environment.

Across The Small Schools Multi Academy Trust we hold Full Dyslexia Friendly Status.

Dyslexia friendly statement:

Being an effective school and being dyslexia friendly are two sides of the same coin. Effective schools enjoy strong leadership, value staff development and pay close attention to the quality of teaching and learning. These are schools in which all pupils are important, regardless of ability or difficulty. Crucially, more children are successful when taught using dyslexia friendly teaching methods – and while dyslexia friendly techniques can be successfully applied to children who are not dyslexic, this does not work the other way round. (Taken from Achieving Dyslexia Friendly Schools Publication).

In order to meet the needs of all our pupils within our Multi Academy Trust (MAT), we are actively working to retain our 'Dyslexia Friendly School Status' for all schools within the Trust, first gained for all schools in 2016. We believe that this will not only continue to benefit our pupils with dyslexia, but also have a significant impact upon other pupils whose Literacy skills are not appropriate for their age.

How are children with dyslexia supported?

All teachers have responsibility for dyslexic children. Early identification of children's difficulties, whilst highlighting their strengths and enabling an appropriate intervention programme to be developed in consultation with SENCo, is paramount to the progression of children within the Academy. However, by making having Dyslexia Friendly classroom and teaching styles the needs of more children, including those with and without SEN, are met. Early intervention is essential to offset a pattern of failure, low self esteem and declining motivation.

All staff have access to the following resources specific to identifying and supporting children on the Dyslexia spectrum

- Dyslexia Indicator checklists:
- Quick dyslexia checklist
- Dyslexia Indicator for Parents
- Dyslexia indicator for teachers

Are classrooms Dyslexia Friendly?

Throughout the Small Schools Multi Academy Trust, we recognise the importance of the working environment for children with Dyslexia. They may already be having difficulties with listening, hearing, looking, sitting still, concentrating, writing and finding things they will need. If their classroom environment works against them, no matter how hard they try, they will not succeed. Therefore classrooms:

- Are arranged so that the dyslexic child can sit near the front and have eye contact with the teacher.
- Have, where possible, children with dyslexia sitting alongside well motivated children or a study buddy.
- Are organised so that distractions are kept to a minimum,
- Are equipped with clearly marked and neatly arranged resources
- Have Interactive whiteboards which are set to an off white coloured background with a text colour which doesn't contrast too greatly.
- Allow all children to access support materials to promote self-help skills, e.g. key word mats, place value mats, HFW lists, punctuation pyramids.
- Have resources available for pupils with dyslexia to record their ideas without endless writing e.g. ipad voice recording, cameras, laptops for typing.

What teaching strategies are used to teach children with dyslexia?

Everyone has an individual learning style. Dyslexic children seem to process information differently. Understanding how they learn best, and being flexible enough to adapt

teaching approaches are vital factors in enabling dyslexic children to learn effectively in the classroom. Therefore within the MAT, we employ the following teaching strategies supportive of dyslexic children:

- Make expectations high for intellectual stimulation, but reasonable for written responses
- Be prepared to explain things many times in a variety of ways, individually if necessary
- When looking at a child's work, we try to understand the reason for their mistakes and give them a chance to explain their difficulties. Target marking is personalised and specific to the child's individual needs.
- Ensure that written materials are accessible
- Ensure that work is scaffolded and adapted to allow all children a sense of achievement.
- Be slow, and deliberate when giving instructions, allowing time for the meaning of the words to be absorbed and questions asked by the children.
- Where possible, we use multisensory methods of learning, including over learning – intervention methods are used to support classroom learning.
- Use visual prompts and mnemonics
- Enable dyslexic children to show their interest, knowledge and skills, despite their difficulties with writing
- Give guidance about how to tackle tasks systematically – flow charts, mind maps, grids, bullet points, paragraph starts, writing frames
- Watch out for signs of tiredness and fatigue
- Watch out for signs of falling confidence and self-esteem

Additionally, we employ the following dyslexia friendly methods to help dyslexic children with reading and writing:

- Presenting new words in small batches
 - Cursive handwriting starting from the line
 - Use of ICT when appropriate
 - Check that children are keeping up, and not just sitting passively during shared reading and writing activities
 - Provide alternative forms of recording
 - Use a structured phonic programme – initially Jolly Phonics sounds and actions then letters and sounds scheme of work.
-

Information for Parents

How does our school know if children need extra help?

We know when pupils need help if:

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, teachers, or the pupil's previous school
- Tracking of attainment outcomes indicate a lack of progress
- Pupil observation indicates that they have additional needs in one of the four areas:
 1. Communication and interaction
 2. Cognition and learning
 3. Social, mental and emotional health
 4. Sensory/physical
- A pupil asks for help

What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

- If you have concerns then please firstly discuss these with your child's teacher/. This then may result in a referral to the school SENCo who is Mrs Duffy who can be contacted on the following email: senco@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk .
- All parents will be listened to. Their views and their aspirations for their child will be central to the assessment and provision that is provided by the school.

How will I know how the school supports my child?

All pupils will be provided with high quality teaching that is adapted to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Pupils with a disability will be provided with "reasonable adjustments" in order to increase their access to the taught curriculum.

The quality of teaching is monitored through a number of processes that includes:

1. Classroom observation by the senior leadership team, the SENCo and external verifiers
2. Ongoing assessment of progress made by pupil in specific intervention groups
3. Work sampling on a termly basis.
4. Scrutiny of planning.
5. Teacher meetings with the SENCo Anson
6. Pupil and parent feedback when reviewing target attainment
7. Whole school pupil progress tracking
8. Attendance and behaviour records

Information on the quality of teaching is collated in a report to governors and shared with parents in the SEN Information Report

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

- Teachers plan using pupils' achievement levels, and adaptive teaching strategies which provides opportunities for pupils to experience success, by adapting lessons, whilst maintaining high standards for all, so that all pupils have the opportunity to meet expectations. In addition they will be provided with additional support that may include specialised equipment or resources, ICT and/or additional adult help.

How will I know how my child is doing?

- Attainments towards the identified outcomes will be shared with parents termly through the school reporting system and Parents Evenings. Parents may also find the home-school diary a useful tool to use to communicate with school staff.
- If your child is on the SEN register, then your child will have an Education Plan that will be reviewed termly. You will be asked to attend this termly meeting to discuss your child's progress towards their targets.

How do you evaluate the effectiveness of provision?

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

- Reviewing pupils' Personal Support Plan progress each term with parents and pupils.
- Reviewing the impact of interventions against their baseline.
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring of provision for children with SEN by the SENCO e.g access to learning in lessons, quality of intervention.
- Using our assessment criteria to measure progress
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs).

How will you help me to support my child's learning?

- Please look at the school website. It can be found at www.tssmat.staffs.sch.uk. The school website includes links to websites and resources that we have found useful in supporting parents to help their child learn at home. In addition, the parent noticeboard in the school entrance provides information about the parent partnership service.
- The class teacher or SENCO may also suggest additional ways of supporting your child's learning.
- The school organises a number of parent workshops during the year. These are advertised in the school newsletter and on our website and aim to provide useful opportunities for parents to learn more about the curriculum that is being offered to their child.

What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

The school offers a wide variety of pastoral support for pupils. These include:

- An evaluated Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum that aims to provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to enhance their emotional and social knowledge and well-being. Please visit our website to see further information regarding the curriculum.

- Pupil and Parent voice mechanisms are in place and are monitored for effectiveness by the Governor Body
- Small group evidence-led interventions to support pupil's wellbeing are delivered to targeted pupils and groups. These are identified on our provision maps and aim to support improved interaction skills, emotional resilience and wellbeing.
- Pupils who find outside class times difficult are provided with alternative small group opportunities within the school.
- The school has gained Healthy School status which evidences the work undertaken within the school to support pupils' wellbeing and mental health.
- The school has completed the Anti-bullying Pledge and is audited annually for its provision in regard to ensuring pupils safety by external agencies.

Pupils with medical needs

Pupils with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Individual Health Care Plan, compiled by school with parents and if appropriate, the pupil themselves.

What training do the staff supporting children and young people with SEND undertake?

In the last three years school staff have received a range of training both awareness and enhanced.

Awareness training has been provided to staff on:

- How to support pupils with a diagnosis of dyslexia.
- How to support pupils on the autistic spectrum
- How to support pupils with behavioural difficulties
- How to support pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties
- Termly teacher SEN clinic are held with the school SENCO.

Enhanced training has been provided to Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) and the SENCO on:

- Talking Partners
- Attendance at the termly SENCO Update
-
- The school has access to the Educational Psychologist Services.
- The NHS Speech Language Therapist visits regularly to assess and plan support for targeted pupils. This is then delivered by a trained member of staff.

How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

All of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before and after-school clubs. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable all children to participate in all school activities.

All pupils are encouraged to go on our residential trip(s) e.g Whitmore Lakes and Standon Bowers

All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day/school plays/special workshops etc. No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability.

Please see the following policies for more information:

- TSSMAT Equality Policy
- Admissions Policy
- TSSMAT Inclusion Policy

How accessible is the school environment?

Our Accessibility Plan that describes the actions the school has taken to increase access to the environment and the next steps necessary.

How will the school prepare and support my child when joining or transferring to a new school?

A number of strategies are in place to enable effective pupil's transition. These include:

On entry:-

- A planned programme of visits are provided in the summer term for pupils starting in September.
- Parents/carers are invited to a meeting at the school and are provided with a range of information to support them in enabling their child to settle into the school routine.
- At parent/SENCO request, meetings will be offered with new parents of pupils who are known to have SEND to allow concerns to be raised and solutions to any perceived challenges to be located prior to entry.
- If pupils are transferring from another school, the previous school records will be requested immediately and if needed, a meeting will be set up with parents to identify and reduce any concerns.

Transition to the next school

- The transition programme in place for pupils in Y6 provides a number of opportunities for pupils and parents to meet staff in the new school. These opportunities are further enhanced for pupils with SEN.
- The annual review in Y5 for pupils with a statement of educational need or an Education, Health and Care plan begins the process where parents are supported to make decisions regarding secondary school choice.
- Parents will be encouraged to consider options for the next phase of education and the school will involve outside agencies, as appropriate, to ensure information is comprehensive but accessible.
- Accompanied visits to other providers may be arranged as appropriate.
- For pupils transferring to local schools, the SENCOs of both schools will meet to discuss the needs of pupils with SEN in order to ensure a smooth transition.

How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

The school receives funding to respond to the needs of pupils with SEND from a number of sources: A proportion of the funds allocated per pupil to the school to provide for their education; The National SEND budget: The Pupil Premium funding for pupils who meet certain criteria. In addition, for those pupils with the most complex needs, the school may be allocated Additional Educational Needs funding. This funding is then used to provide the equipment and facilities to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities through:

- In-class support from teaching assistants
- Small group support from teaching assistants e.g. nurture groups, literacy and numeracy support
- Specialist support from teachers e.g. 1:1 tuition
- Bought in support from external agencies e.g. access arrangement assessment, speech and language support.
- Parent workshops
- Provision of specialist resources e.g. assessment software
- CPD relating to SEND for staff

How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

For pupils with SEN but without an Education Health and Care plan, the decision regarding the support required will be taken at joint meetings with the headteacher, SENCo, class teacher and parent. For pupils with a Educational, Health # Care plan, this decision will be reached when the plan is being produced and reviewed regularly at annual reviews.

How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

This may be through:

- discussions with the class teacher, SENCO or senior leadership team member
- parent SEN clinics are held termly by the SENCO (appointments can be made).
- during parents evenings

Who can I contact for further information or if I have any concerns?

If you have concerns, then please discuss these with your child's teacher. This then may result in a referral to the school SENDCo Mrs Duffy.

All parents will be listened to and their views and aspirations for their child will be central to the assessment and provision that is provided by the school.

Parents are encouraged to look at the Staffordshire Local Offer which links with other agencies to support the family and pupil. This can be found at

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/home.page>

Our school admission arrangements can be found on our school website.

Transition between key stages is carefully planned. Parents are encouraged to meet with professionals to discuss provision and raise any concerns or queries.

Support services for parents of pupils with SEN include:

The local authority local offer and a directory of support services can be found on the Staffordshire Connects website.

www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/home.page

Staffordshire SEND Family Partnership (Information, Advice and Support) Service, (formerly Parent Partnership Service) <https://www.staffs-iass.org/home.aspx>

If you have a general enquiry, or would like to speak to one of the Staffordshire SEND Family Partnership team or you are a parent wanting to request information and support please telephone 01785 356921 during office hours. Alternatively email on spps@staffordshire.gov.uk

Monitoring arrangements

This policy and information report will be reviewed by Mrs Gethin (CEO), the Headteachers and Mrs Duffy (SENCO) every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the Board of Directors.

Links with other policies and documents

Other policies and documents linked to areas of SEN not already stated in the report can be found on the [policy pages](#) of our school website and include:

- Admissions Policies
 - Attendance Policies
 - Behaviour Policies
 - Safeguarding Policies
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Inclusion

This part of the policy must be read in conjunction with other related Trust policies:

Bullying;
Behaviour;
Equal opportunities;
Racial equality;
Special Educational Needs.

Aims and Objectives

The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust is seeking to achieve the expectation that they are 'educationally inclusive' in relation to the needs of those pupils at risk of social inclusion. The focus is on raising educational attainment for those pupils who are demonstrating disaffection or failing to participate fully in the school experience through challenging behaviour or poor attendance. This policy is relevant to all vulnerable children including:

Minority ethnic and faith groups;
Travellers;
Asylum seekers and refugees;
Children in care;
Young carers;
Children with mental health needs;
Victims of abuse domestic violence;
Children with special needs.
Gender fluid or non binary children

The Trust is committed to

Meeting the needs of all their pupils including those who may be missing out, difficult to engage or feeling in some way apart from what the Trust seeks to provide;
Early intervention especially the identification of pupils at risk of disaffection;
Ensuring social inclusion is the responsibility of every member of staff, teaching and non-teaching;
Children and their parents are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect to important educational decisions which affect their lives concerning:

- Admission;
- Attendance;
- Exclusion;
- Assessment for special needs.

- Procedures will be applied in accordance with DfE, Ofsted and LA guidelines.

Admissions

The Trust operates its admission procedures in accordance with the policy laid down by the Directors and Governors.

This policy will not discriminate on grounds of race, religion or ethnic origin. The Trust will not automatically refuse entry to pupils on the grounds that they have special, social, educational or behavioural needs or because they have a history of disruption.

The Trust is willing to consider offering new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced difficulties previously where it is reasonable to do so. Parents and pupils may be asked to make agreements as to future conduct and attendance but such an agreement will not be used as a condition of entry.

Attendance

The Trust operates its attendance procedures in accordance with the policy laid down by the Directors and Governors.

Pupils are expected to attend school full time, on time, unless the reason for their absence is unavoidable. Maximising attendance at the schools within the Trust is a priority. Parents are expected to work closely with Trust staff in resolving any difficulties at an early stage.

Behaviour

The Trust sets high standards of behaviour for its pupils and is working towards being communities which value and respect each individual, both staff and pupils. Racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination are not acceptable. The Trust aims to prepare pupils for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society.

Incidents of racial or homophobic harassment

These are categorised as:

Racist or homophobic name-calling/abuse;
Racist or homophobic remarks/language/comments;
Physical assault;
Inappropriate language;
Falling out;
Remarks/dislike of skin colour, gender or sexuality;
Unkind remarks;

Bullying;
Abuse of staff;
Comments to staff.

Racial harassment is when the person perceives it as a racist incident. Homophobic harassment is when the person perceives it as a homophobic incident. These incidents will be reported to parents and Directors. Where pupils infringe these standards, the Trust will seek to respond in a way which sees the behaviour as unacceptable but which still recognises the needs of the individual who carries it out.

Pupils having difficulty with their behaviour will be offered individual support, for example, through a revised timetable, a Pastoral Support Programme, or where appropriate, an Pupil Support Plan designed to meet their needs. Sanctions will be applied fairly in accordance with DfE guidance and exclusion used only as a last resort when no alternatives are available.

The Trust seeks to promote social inclusion by:

The use of appropriate Grants;
Support programming and curriculum developments;
Caring for all children at all times;
Training for staff;
Community developments;
Active involvement with District Inclusion Panels
Working with other agencies.

The Directors, Chief Executive Officer and staff are responsible for this policy and its implementation.

Looked After Children (LAC)

Designated teacher for LAC: Mrs Gemma Duffy
Director for LAC: Mrs Melanie Havelock-Crozier

Schools are key in helping to raise the educational standards and improving the life chances of looked after children, and in tackling the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring and evaluation. Schools can also provide a source of continuity and “normality” for children who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse, and disruption. School can be the place where children maintain friendships and a place where they feel safe and can be themselves.

Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of looked after children and schools play a pivotal role in this.

‘Looked After’ - Definition

The term “looked after” was introduced by the Children Act 1989. This refers to a child who is either accommodated (whereby the local authority provides for the child on an agreed basis with the person who has parental responsibility) or is subject to a care order (whereby a court order grants shared parental responsibility to the local authority in order to protect and promote a child’s welfare). Children in both instances could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, in a residential school, with relatives, or even with parents on a part or full time basis.

Furthermore, the term “looked after”, which is widely used in social services is synonymous with the term “in public care”, which has been adopted by the DfES in their publication, “The Education of Young People in Public Care”.

Legal Framework

Recent legislation and guidance from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Health (DH) requires schools to have effective policies for supporting and promoting the education of looked after children.

Schools must:

- Attend all PEP meetings
- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education to all looked after children
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of all looked after children
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and truancies for all looked after children
- Ensure there is a designated teacher to advocate for the rights of looked after children
- Develop systems of communications and protocols
- Promote the attendance of looked after children

Our Looked After Children Objectives:

We will:

- Work alongside social workers to ensure that each looked after child has a current Personal Education Plan in place.
- Provide a climate of acceptance and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Ensure all children who are looked after have the same opportunities to participate fully in the National Curriculum, extra curricular activities and enjoy the school experience fully in line with corporate parenting principles.
- Ensure discretion when addressing a child’s care status and ensure there is sensitivity to the background of children who are looked after, especially surrounding work on family.
- Ensure the designated teacher is provided with regular training, and that they cascade this training to staff as appropriate.

- Seek to review all policies regularly in the light of the LA's Social Inclusion guidance, Special Educational Needs Legislation, and joint Department for Education and Department of Health guidance on The Education of Children in Public Care.
- Ensure that a clear protocol for sharing of information will be followed both within school and with outside agencies.
- Endeavour to support all looked after children educated in our schools to achieve to their fullest possible academic potential.

Roles and Responsibilities

Many looked after children do not want staff to be aware of their care status because it makes them feel "different". Therefore, we will negotiate with the child to identify who should be aware of their care status. However we do acknowledge that in some cases, such as if the child has a severe learning difficulty, this may not be possible.

The named Director/Governor will work in co-operation with the Headteacher and Designated Teacher as the named staff responsible for ensuring that all looked after children have equal access to all learning opportunities in line with their peers. The Headteacher and Designated Teacher also have specific responsibilities for supporting the rest of the staff in their training and work with looked after children.

The named Director/Governor should be satisfied that :

- The Trust has a coherent policy for looked after children
- The Trust's policies and procedures are reviewed in the light of social inclusion guidance and advice from the Staffordshire Virtual School Service, and the DfE
- The designated teacher has received appropriate training
- Looked after children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- the Board of Directors/Governors receives an annual report

The CEO will:

- appoint the designated teacher
 - ensure that the designated teacher has received appropriate training
 - oversee the development of the policy on looked after children
 - be responsible for all systems to support looked after children
- support the designated teacher in the delivery of the annual Directors/Governors report

The Designated Teacher will:

- Serve as the contact point for social services and the education department and will maintain responsibility for several key areas to support looked after children within the school. This includes serving as an advocate for all looked after children in the Trust.
- Help to establish and maintain the ethos regarding looked after children of the Trust by:

- maintaining and respecting confidentiality of all looked after children and ensuring information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis
- ensuring that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements
- acting as an advocate for looked after children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances
- Report to the Board of Directors/Governors on an annual basis on the following:
 - the number of looked after pupils in the Trust
 - an analysis of test scores as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - the attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils
 - the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupils
 - the number of complaints

The designated teacher will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all looked after children. S/he will:

- have an overview and co-ordinating role for gathering and holding all information regarding children who are looked after
- maintain records regarding all looked after children, including legal status and information regarding who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child
- establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer
- monitor the educational progress of all looked after children and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern

The designated teacher will facilitate effective communication by:

- building positive home-school relationships between parents / carers with regular opportunities for dialogue
- being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's PEP
- playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of looked after children
- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in social services and education
- ensuring effective communication between all relevant parties
- inviting the responsible social worker to all meetings, and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

The designated teacher will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within school:

- by meeting with the looked after child to discuss who needs to know they are looked after and to ensure that the young person is informed of their role
- by ensuring each child has a Personal Education Plan
- by requesting support from the SENCO and/or outside agencies, including the Education of Children Looked After Service, if a looked after child requires additional academic or behavioural support
- by working closely with the SENCO to ensure all looked after children with special educational needs are being assessed and are getting appropriate resources to support their learning
- by having a strategy for key stage or new school transitions
- by ensuring all looked after children are made to feel a part of the school environment

Personal Education Plans

Each child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. However, the Trust's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this. Other staff will contribute in writing as appropriate.

The PEP will consider:

- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child
- It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Looked after children are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LA's published admission criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their class teacher. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our Trust. Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as soon as practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

School Trips and Special Activities

Given the delays that looked after children experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that looked after children enjoy the same extra curricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 'reasonable' time, then the schools official complaints procedure should be followed.

Contact details:

Richard Crosse Primary School

Kings Bromley
Burton on Trent
Staffordshire
DE13 7JE

01543 472245
office@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk

St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Bellamour Way
Colton
Rugeley
Staffordshire
WS15 3LN
01889224506
stmarysoffice@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk

Anson CE Primary School

Main Road
Great Haywood
Staffordshire
ST18 0SU

01889 881200
anson.office@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk

Howard Primary School

The Square
Elford
Tamworth
B79 9DB

01827 383292
howardoffice@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk

MAT SENCO - Gemma Duffy SENCO@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk