



Information Report

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Unity Academy

Welcome to Unity Academy's SEND Information Report. We hope this gives parents and carers an insight into what the academy offers for our students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This document should fulfill and be fully compliant with;

Schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Regulations 2014 and paragraphs 6.79-6.81 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Please let us know if you have a question that we have not addressed. Our staff are happy to answer any queries and discuss your child's needs.

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1 Who is the SENDCO?

The SENDCO is Mr R. Bold

Contact telephone number:

01253 355493

Email: admin@unity.fcat.org.uk

2 Who works in the SEND department at Unity Academy?

Assistant Headteacher - School Improvement (SENDCO) – Mr R. Bold

Deputy SENDCO – Mrs Z Marshall

SEND Manager – Karen Taylor

Assistant SEND Manager – Hannah Kelly

In addition to the permanent staffing (above), there are additional support staff who are employed to support students with high needs funding and general teaching assistance in classrooms throughout all years. We also have a teaching assistant specifically for Speech, Language and Communication intervention under the supervision of an external qualified Sp & L professional.

The Unity Academy SEND Policy can be found on the main policies page of our website [HERE](#).

11.4 [Section 6 Schools](#)

11.2 [Equality Act 2010](#)

11.1 [Section 69 \(2\) The Children and Families Act 2014](#)

3 What provision is offered to students with a special educational needs or disabilities?

- Our special educational needs provision is based on the understanding that no two students' profiles are the same. An individualised approach is needed,
- Teaching and support staff are made aware of any special educational needs or disability a student has and suggested strategies or external guidance is shared through provision maps.
- All academy teachers are responsible for making their lessons accessible to all. This involves delivering high-quality teaching scaffolded for individual needs.
- Where appropriate, classroom based support and intervention takes place in one to one, small group or whole class settings.
- Intervention lessons are also taught by subject teachers and these can take place before, during or after the school day. These are often in smaller groups.
- English and Mathematics intervention is available for identified students through timetabled lessons and activities, and is designed to promote independent learning and curriculum access.
- We buy in weekly specialist support from Communicate Speech and Language

Service to deliver, assess and review communication, speech and language therapy and to work with staff to improve communication and planning as part of the quality first teaching offer. Following weekly meeting our own specialist teaching assistant coordinates and delivers any interventions required to individual students.

- The academy works within the examination board and STA guidelines to put into place access arrangements that are appropriate and meet the needs of the individual student.
- The academy has a range of resources matched to different learning needs. For example, there are laptops available to enhance the independence and learning of identified students with handwriting, recording, or specific learning difficulties. We also have 'reading pens' to support reluctant and independent readers in all years.
- Specialist equipment is provided when the need is identified and resources are allocated to allow easier accessibility for all.
- The academy will consult staff from a variety of external agencies to advise and support our provision across the range of special educational needs and disabilities.

4 How will the academy know if a student has a special educational need or disability? (Identification of additional needs)

- Students with a special educational need or disability are usually identified in the continuous transition periods and as part of the provision at our all-through school.
- All students are assessed using Cognitive Ability Tests shortly after entry. These tests assess the four principle areas of reasoning – verbal, nonverbal and quantitative – as well as an element of spatial ability.
- We have a comprehensive reading, spelling and numeracy assessment to help identify any concerns requiring additional support or intervention.

- All academy teachers are responsible for liaising with the SEND team to raise any concerns about the additional needs of a student not already identified as requiring special educational needs support.
- We encourage all parents and carers to contact us and raise any concerns they may have about the learning needs of their child. Parents may contact a child's Form Tutor, Class Teacher, the Student Support team, Head of Year or the SENDCO directly if they feel this is more appropriate. The SENDCO and Assistant SENDCO attends all the Parents Evenings to be available for any concerns raised.
- The academy will refer to external agencies for further assessment or diagnosis as appropriate following consultation with parents/carers.
- We will inform parents and carers if a child requires special educational needs support, this will be communicated through a meeting, phone call or letter outlining the areas of concern.
- All new students joining the academy during the school year will have a meeting where the student and families will be asked about any existing special educational needs.
- The arrangements for admission of disabled students are similar to that of any SEND student. Additional provision for the student will be discussed and where changes are required, the academy will endeavor to make them. Ramps and lifts are already in place in all years to access all areas of the academy and we work closely with local experts to review our accessibility and support for all the students.
- TA's will be made available to supervise the movement around the academy and a disabled toilet is available if required.
- All students, including disabled students, are encouraged to join in all aspects of school life and, if necessary, adjustments will be made.
- Lifts, wide corridors and ground floor based Physical Education, canteen and meeting areas are easily accessed across the whole academy.

- The majority of information for students is delivered via form time, class teacher, assemblies or television screens in the corridors. Specialist information is sent to the students' home address via post. Texts and emails can also be arranged, with the permission of the recipient.
- The SEND team can signpost students and their families to external clubs to enhance the students' social interaction along with their physical development and wellbeing.

5 How does the academy develop its overall teaching and curriculum to ensure that teachers can include students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

- All of our students have access to the national curriculum. This broad learning experience allows our students with special educational needs to discover their strengths as well as close any gaps.
- Teaching staff are all made aware of any special educational needs a student has and any suggested strategies or external guidance are shared through the use of provision maps.
- All academy teachers are responsible for making their lessons accessible to all.

This is delivered through high-quality teaching scaffolded for individual needs.

- The quality of classroom teaching provided to students with SEND is monitored through a number of processes that include:
 - Classroom observation by the senior leadership team, the SENDCO, and external verifiers
 - Ongoing assessment of progress made by students with SEND
 - Work sampling and scrutiny of planning to ensure effective matching of work to student need
 - Teacher meetings with the SENDCO to provide advice and guidance on meeting the needs of students with SEND

- Student and parent feedback on the quality and effectiveness of interventions provided
- Attendance and behaviour records.
- Where appropriate classroom based support and intervention can take place in one to one, small group, or whole class settings.
- Intervention lessons are also taught by subject teachers or teaching assistants and these can take place before, during, or after the school day. In primary these are mainly in smaller groups or 1:1.
- Literacy and English intervention is available for identified students through timetabled lessons and activities, and is designed to promote independent learning and curriculum access e.g., Lexonic, Lexonic Leap, Read Write Inc.
- Numeracy and Mathematics intervention is available for identified students through timetabled lessons and activities and is designed to promote independent learning and curriculum access e.g., Power of 2, Numicon.
- The academy works within the examination board and STA guidelines to put into place access arrangements that are appropriate and meet the needs of the individual student.

6 What are the kinds of special educational need for which the school currently makes provision?

The academy supports the achievement of students across the full range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities including (in line with the new SEND framework 2015). The four identified areas:

- **Communication and interaction**
- **Cognition & learning**
- **Social, mental and emotional health**
- **Sensory and/or physical**

- For children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan, parents have the right to request a particular school and the local authority must comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC Plan unless:
 - it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude, or SEND of the child or young person
 - the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.
- The academy enlists the services of specialist external agencies for the full range of needs, including Autistic Spectrum Condition, Neurodevelopment pathway, Visual Impairment, Physical Disabilities, Hearing Impairment, Specific Learning Difficulties, Sensory Processing Disorder, ADHD and Speech and Language and moderate learning difficulties.
- In partnership with parents and carers the academy works with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to best meet the needs of our students with social, emotional or mental health issues. The Academy also has a named Educational Psychologist, School Nurse Specialist Practitioner, a counsellor along with a life coach, emotional wellbeing mentor and specialist SALT provision.
- Our more vulnerable students also have access to the pastoral support staff and Early Help Intervention Officers.
- Where appropriate a Health Care Plan is drawn up in conjunction between parents and carers, child and medical professionals. This usually includes the academy nurse; a meeting is called in school when the plan is agreed and signed by the member of staff responsible for the coordination of the plans. These are then reviewed biannually or earlier if circumstances change.
- Support for all of our students across the range of special educational needs extends to before school breakfast club, breaks, lunchtimes and after school

activities as well as lessons. All students will be given the opportunity to take a full part in all aspects of school life.

- We recognise that sometimes students might have an additional emotional or social need that is unconnected to a learning difficulty. Our caring and experienced team within the learning support areas, are able to offer emotional and social support as well as signposting students and families to services such as bereavement counselling, young carers or our own wellbeing mentor.

7 How do we know if students with special educational needs are making progress?

- We have high expectations of the progress our students with special educational needs can make. We set our progress targets in line with national measures.
- Progress of students with SEND support needs is monitored in line with school assessment procedures. Internal tracking systems are used to highlight progress of individuals as well as identified groups.
- Students who are not making expected progress are identified very quickly. Additional action to increase the rate of progress will then be identified and recorded through termly progress meetings.
- All EHC plans are reviewed on an annual basis. Reviews are carried out in line with statutory guidance for reviews.
- Advice is provided by the academy, external agencies, the student and the parent/carer. The meetings are held at mutually agreed times. Summary advice is sent to the Local Authority, the parent/carer and relevant agencies. Students are always encouraged to participate in their meeting.
- Progress data is sent to parents and carers three times a year to ensure they are up to date with how their child is performing across the curriculum. The academy issues two interim and one full report.

- The academy holds Parents' Evenings for parents and carers to come and discuss the progress being made, the SENDCO or Assistant SENDCO is always in attendance.
- Reviews can be requested by parents and carers at any time. Key staff are available to discuss individual students at any point during the school year, usually by appointment, to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

8 How do we ensure students have a successful transition from one year to another? How do we prepare them for adulthood?

Transition from Primary School and Nursery.

- Staff from the academy meet with nursery staff and the Y6 teachers from the primary schools to discuss each child's strengths and needs. Primary school and nursery school SEND records are requested.
- We listen carefully to guidance from primary school staff. Where they suggest students are buddied together, we endeavor to place those students in the same tutor group or classroom.
- During Open Day in the autumn term staff from the SEND Department are on hand to discuss our provision for students with special educational needs and answer any queries.
- The academy provides an extensive transition programme in the Summer Term to support transition for new Year 7 and reception students, this helps us identify students with any additional needs. Parental meetings may follow and additional transition activities are put into place for identified students, which may include those with SEND. This helps with a smooth and less stressful time for the new students.

Transition to Post 16 Education, Training, and Adulthood.

- We instill in all of our students the importance of effort, good attendance, punctuality, readiness to learn and respect. These are habits that will equip them for their journey onwards into adulthood.
- A specialist Post 16 event is held during the academic year. This is open to any student and their parent/carer. Colleges and training providers will attend and give information. Open days for colleges are published for our year 11.
- Parents may like to access the National Careers Service website, <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>, or examine options identified in the local offer published by the local authority which sets out details of SEND provision and support available to young people with SEN and disabilities to help them prepare for adulthood.
- The academy supports some of our SEND students in attending taster visits to post 16 providers.
- The SEND department can support students, parents and external providers to ensure a smooth transition to post 16 provision, along with helping students complete application forms.
- Additional advice and information is provided to colleges and training providers by the school, with the agreement of the student and family.
- Where a student has an Education, Health, and Care Plan, all reviews of that Plan from Year 9 onwards will include a focus on preparing for adulthood, including employment, independent living, and participation in society.

9 How do we secure additional services and expertise for our students with special educational needs?

- The academy has a graduated approach to intervention. We know that, in addition to high quality first teaching, some students will need the

support of external services and specialists. This will be discussed and agreed with parents and carers.

- We buy in services from Communicate for speech and language therapy.
- We maintain good links with Health. In addition to having an academy nurse, we link with paediatric nurses, ADHD nurses, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and NHS speech and language therapists.
- We secure support from the local authority services including Educational Psychologists, specialists in Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Specific Learning Difficulties, and Sensory Impairment.

10 How can parents and carers contact external services?

Contact details for the services in the Blackpool / Area Wide Local Offer can be found here:

<https://www.fyidirectory.co.uk/kb5/blackpool/directory/localoffer.page?directorychannel=2&district=blackpool>

Staff in Blackpool's Local Council will also be able to provide details of the information contained within SEND Local Offer to those without easy access to the internet. They can be contacted on:

Phone: 01253 477100

Deaf text: 07796994908

E Mail: local.offer@blackpool.gov.uk

11 How are parents and students included and valued in the Academy?

Parent and student views are valued and essential, and parent aspirations are central to the assessment and provision that is provided by the school. Parents and students are encouraged and supported to be involved in all aspects of the

SEND process, from initial planning, decision making and the statutory review process.

This is encouraged through:

- Consultation between school personnel and parents in decision making and intervention planning.
- Finding out what is important to the child through person-centered planning meetings and reviews
- Parents and students are included in the Assess – Plan – Do – Review cycles
- Students work closely with specialist SEND staff to complete individual Student Passports to help their teachers to meet their needs as part of the Quality First Teaching
- Student Passports are intended to identify the student’s abilities and strengths, their personal aims, and the action they require the school to take in order to reduce barriers to learning and social success. They are reviewed on a termly basis in line with the schools assessment calendar. These passports are easily viewed via class charts in school.
- For students with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), statutory reviews are facilitated within the Academy. The student and parent are key stakeholders in this review process and the review is conducted using a person centered approach, including the views of the school.

12 How do we know if our provision is effective?

- The effectiveness of our provision is measured in the progress that individuals and groups of students make over time. The academy measures progress using nationally agreed standards and criteria.

- The effectiveness of provision for individual students who require additional SEND support is monitored via an assess plan do review cycle:
- Assess – data on the student will be collated in order to make an accurate assessment of the student’s needs
- Plan – if review of the action taken indicates that additional or different support will be required, then the views of all involved will be attained and the appropriate evidence-based interventions identified, recorded, and implemented
- Do – SEND support will be recorded and a clear set of outcomes identified, taking into account academic and developmental targets and student and parent aspirations
- Review – progress towards these outcomes will be tracked and reviewed termly, and next steps identified.
- Where appropriate, the academy will oversee and support the application for statutory assessment of SEND
- The SENDCO along with leaders across the academy use learning walks, lesson observations, progress data and book scrutiny to monitor how effective our provision is for all students, including those with special educational needs.
- Students with special educational needs are consulted on their views and opinions about the academy, their learning and wellbeing through the review of their passports to learning.
- We work in partnership with home as much as possible. The academy encourages open conversations with the student and home about intended outcomes. We will seek feedback in evaluating how effective any support is in meeting those outcomes.
- Home-school communication for students with special educational needs and disabilities is achieved in a range of ways including the

reflection log, letters, text, primary reading records, telephone calls and meetings. Where needed we also do home visits.

- Parents and carers are given the opportunity to indicate if they have a strong preference for how we work together.
- The academy works with families, parent partnership officers, and where appropriate wider agencies to review provision, progress and set new outcomes.
- Parents and carers are also encouraged to give feedback at our Parents'
- Evenings with subject teachers, primary class teachers and SENDCO
- Parental focus groups and co-construction.

13 How do we make our facilities available to all?

- The academy is fully inclusive and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure access for all to the curriculum and to the wider life of the school including clubs and trips.
- On admission to the school any young person with a disability will meet the SENDCO, where provision, facilities and assistance to the school will be discussed with parents/carers and a plan will be put in place to ensure everything is accessible.
- Our Accessibility Plan, available on the school website, describes the actions the school has taken to increase access to the environment and the curriculum for disabled students along with SEN.
- Special equipment is provided when a need is identified and resources are allocated e.g., a lift is available to reach all floors, enlarged text for our visually impaired students as well as teaching assistance to accompany students to their lessons safely.
- Students with a disability will be provided with reasonable adjustments, such as auxiliary aids and services, to overcome any disadvantage experienced in schools and increase their access to the taught curriculum.

- The school has some useful contacts with external clubs and groups specifically for Special Education Need and Disabled students to ensure they have a full range of opportunities both in and out of school.
- Students with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Individual Health and Care plan. All medicine administration procedures adhere to the Department of Education guidelines included within *Supporting students at school with medical conditions* (DfE) 2014.
- We have a Specialist School Nurse Practitioner available to support students and parents who also offers weekly 'drop in' sessions for students.
- We have a medicine management policy which is adhered to regarding storage and administration of medicines.
- In practical subjects such as PE, Technology subjects or Science there is a technician or teaching assistant who can assist with ensuring the facilities can be accessed by our students with special educational needs or disabilities.
- All academy teachers are responsible for making their lesson accessible to all.
- Where appropriate classroom based support and intervention can take place in one to one, small group or whole class settings.
- All academy visits are inclusive and follow Blackpool's approved risk assessment procedure and are processed through the "Evolve" system. All risk assessments are attached to forms, checked by EVC and delivered by group leaders/responsible staff.
- The school ensures that it has sufficient staff expertise to ensure that no child with SEN or Disabilities is excluded from any activity arranged by the school where possible.

14 What training do staff have?

- Each teaching and non-teaching member of staff is given relevant training at the start of the school year and as necessary throughout the year.
- All academy staff have ongoing and personalised professional development and training. This is delivered through a mix of in-house and external specialists.
- Our academy is sponsored by the Fylde Coast Academy Trust. FCAT is a partnership between two of the Fylde's most successful educational organisations, Blackpool Sixth Form College and Hodgson Academy. Both of these organisations are rated outstanding by Ofsted. Our staff have access to FCAT's professional development programme throughout the year.
- Specialist nurses and agencies are able to provide advice and strategies for teaching students with SEND and medical conditions.
- The academy nurse is available and offers updates and training where needed. Updates are made available to staff, by the SENDCO, via staff briefings.
- Meetings are held with the teachers of individual students in order to share expertise about the provision of effective support.
- An updated guidance with strategies and recommendations for the use of staff in their planning of SEND students is given out annually to support their needs.

15 What are the extra-curricular activities that can be accessed by students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- All of our students are actively encouraged to take a full part in wider school life and develop their strengths and interests. There is an exciting range of extra-curricular enrichment activities available to all students; the activities include sport, music and drama.
- Activities are timetabled and updated throughout the year.

- The academy also provides many clubs and after school sessions based around our taught curriculum. In KS2 & KS4 these are designed to help students access extra tuition to achieve their best examination grades.
- For all students with special educational needs in KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4, additional after school help with homework is also available from the SEND Department.
- During break and lunch times, the SEND Department run a nurture club to actively promote social integration, communication skills and friendship support under the supervision of an adult.
- There is a high staff presence around the academy during unstructured times. However we know that some students prefer to be in a smaller environment with familiar faces at these times. At break and lunch time the SEND areas and SEAL room are available and can be a place of calm and relaxation for our more socially, emotional and vulnerable students.
- We encourage all of our students to take part in available visits. All academy visits are inclusive and follow Blackpool's approved risk assessment procedure and are processed through the "evolve" system. All risk assessments are attached to forms, checked by EVC and delivered by group leaders/responsible staff.

16 What if I want to make a complaint?

- We work in partnership with home and listen fully to the views of our parents and carers. This includes any concerns or issues.
- The range of formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to meet with us means we can regularly check in and listen to the views of home about our provision.

- We welcome all parents and carers contacting the academy and raising any concerns they have. We encourage home to do this as early as possible so we can work together to resolve any issues.
- The academy has a formal complaints policy and procedure in place. This can be requested by parents at any time.

17 How does the Local Authority support children, young people and families of children with a special educational need?

Find out more about the Blackpool / Area Wide Local Offer

<https://www.fyidirectory.co.uk/kb5/blackpool/directory/localoffer.page?directorychannel=2&district=blackpool>

Staff in Blackpool's Local Council will also be able to provide details of the information contained within SEND Local Offer to those without easy access to the internet. They can be contacted on: Phone: 01253 477100

Deaf text: 07796994908

E Mail: local.offer@blackpool.gov.uk

18 How does the SEND team collaborate with other departments in school to ensure that students' individual needs are met?

The SEND team and Pastoral support team work collaboratively at Unity Academy. There is a weekly Student Support Panel meeting held in order to ensure that the right personnel, from the Academy and from external agencies are in place to support students and to evaluate the input of support intervention. The Student Support Panel is attended by:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator
- Assistant Head Teacher – Behaviour

- Pastoral Team Leader (Child Protection & Safeguarding)
- Student Welfare Officer
- Year Heads

19 Glossary

SEND Glossary: What does all the jargon mean?

Please see below the different words and abbreviations that we use in school:

- **SEND** - Special Educational Needs and Disability
 - **SEN** - Special Educational Needs
 - **SENDCO** - Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator: the person in school responsible for managing SEND (Mr Bold oversees the whole school, Mrs Marshall is the Nursery- Yr 6 point of contact)
 - **SLT** - Speech and Language therapist
 - **TA** - Teaching assistant (This may be a specialist teaching assistant)
 - **Learning passports** - Individual Education Plans for children on SEN register so that you can see what help your child is receiving and how often. The targets on the Learning passports are reviewed up to 3 times a year. If we have received any information from any other people who support your child (for example: NHS Speech and Language, CAMHS, Audiology), their recommendations will be on the Learning Passport too. Please be aware, that it is only practical to work on a handful of targets each time we review the Learning Passports. We encourage you to help us work on the targets with your child at home too.
 - **Areas of need** – There are 4 main areas of need in the SEN Code of Conduct: Cognition and Learning (Learning need), Communication and interaction (Speech, Language, Communicating), Sensory/Physical, and SEMH (Social, emotional and mental health and behaviour). You may see these written on the passports.
 - **Outside Agencies** - Any professional from an agency or service who provides advice to the school and family
 - **Transitions** - A change or transfer from one school, school year or class to another. This can also be from one lesson to another.
 - **Provision** - Any extra help, support or equipment that a child receives
 - **Education, Health and Care Plans** - From September 2014, these replaced Statements - A document provided by the Local Authority which outlines a child's special educational needs and the support that they need. These are applied for and require a very high level of need – usually in many areas.
 - **Health Care Plan** - This is a document which describes any significant medical conditions that a child may have which requires special medication or adjustments. The plan outlines the child's needs and what needs to be put in place to support them. It is then shared with all those staff supporting the child.
 - **Behaviour Plan** - This is a plan which outlines any behavioural difficulties and how to support the child. It is then shared with all those staff supporting the child.
 - **SEAL support** – Support with emotional literacy (knowing emotions, managing emotions, self-motivation, developing empathy, handling relationships)
- Graduated response** – This is the way that children are supported with SEN needs in school according to the SEN code of practice. This means that the child is supported within the classroom first. If more support is needed, the teacher asks the SENDCO for advice. If, after at least 6 weeks intervention, further support is needed the SENDCO may observe the child and give further recommendations. At each point, conversations need to be held with parents by the class teacher. We can then ask for a bit more help from advisory teachers if this is appropriate. We keep working together to support your child.