

Woodcroft Academy



'Be wise, be wonderful

Principal: Miss C Wright

SEND Policy

September 2023

Introduction

Our SEND policy aims to set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

This policy 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
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report

It also works within Local Education Authority guidelines and other policies currently within the academy, including our academy funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010

Aims:

At Woodcroft Academy we aim to:

- Create an inclusive curriculum for all children.
- Create an interesting and stimulating environment which meets the needs of each child.
- Ensure each child reaches their full potential through high quality teaching and learning.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of all staff in providing for children's special educational needs.
- Raise the aspirations of and expectations for all pupils with SEND and provide a focus on outcomes for children and young people.

Objectives:

At Woodcroft Academy we believe that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to work confidently towards reaching their full potential. All children feel they are a valued member of the wider school community. We provide teaching and learning for all children to gain access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum.

In order to provide for the needs of children with SEND, we seek to:

- Work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
- Ensure equal value for all children.
- Ensure the progress of all children through access to a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.
- Maintain strong home/school links.
- Ensure early identification and assessment of SEN.
- Operate a 'whole pupil, whole school'; approach to the management of provision of support for special educational needs.
- Maintain links with outside agencies in identifying, assessing and providing for the needs of children with SEND.
- Ensure that policies and provision are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and are updated accordingly.

Ensure that every child experience success in their learning and achieves the best possible education and outcomes.

To take into account the views of pupils and their carers and to encourage their participation and partnership in decision making about provision to meet special educational needs.

Ensure that assessment and monitoring systems are effective and provide sufficient information of attainment and achievement for careful planning of progression.

Categories of SEN:

Our academy currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- **Communication and Interaction** - a difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because children have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. For example, children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD), including Asperger's syndrome, and children with speech and language difficulties.
- **Cognition and Learning** - children with learning difficulties often learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs from moderate learning difficulties (MLD) to children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health** – children can experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which may manifest themselves in many ways, for example, becoming withdrawn or isolated, or displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties. Other children may have difficulties such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder.
- **Physical and/or Sensory Needs** – some children require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. For example, children with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) may require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.

Children's needs and requirements may fall into one or more of these four areas; many children will have inter-related needs.

The identification of SEN is embedded in the whole school process of monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. We recognise the benefits of early identification and making effective provision in improving the long-term outcomes for children with SEN. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the academy needs to take, not to fit the pupil into a category. It is also important to identify the full range of needs, not simply the primary need of an individual pupil.

Initial concerns

For children who have been identified as having emerging and/or fluctuating difficulties, an intervention is put in place to target these emerging/fluctuating difficulties to assess if this will aid progress.

A brief record of parental and child views will be made, along with collated assessment data, records of any observations or evidence which supports the observed impact on learning (e.g. class work, photos, etc.), and records of any external agency support or contact (e.g. telephone conversations or emails).

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

We may make the following adaptations to support pupils' needs:

- Differentiating the curriculum to ensure pupils are able to access it, for example, content of the lesson, outcome expectations, etc.;
- Adapting resources;
- Adapting staffing, for example, use of teaching assistants for small group or 1:1 support;
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.;
- Differentiating teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on pupils' progress.

If the support needed is short term or can be provided by adapting the school's core offer then a child might not be considered SEND or placed on the SEND register. If a child's progress continues

to give cause for concern, and the support required is different from or additional to what is ordinarily offered by the school, then the next stage of the Graduated Approach is SEN SUPPORT.

SEN support

In deciding whether to place a child on the SEND register, the teacher and SENCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This will include formative assessment, using effective tools and reliable assessment materials. For higher levels of need, the SENCO may (with parental consent) request the involvement of external support services (such as Educational Psychology, Staffordshire Autism Outreach Team, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Services) who can provide more specialist advice and assessments that can inform planning and measurement of a pupil's progress, give guidance on the use of specialist strategies or materials, help with setting targets, and in some cases provide support for particular activities.

Although the academy can identify special educational needs, and make provision to meet those needs, we do not offer diagnoses. Parents are advised to contact their GP if they think their child may have ASD or ADHD or some other disability.

When pupils have been identified as having persistent and moderate difficulties and display SEND requiring provision that is additional to and different from the mainstream curriculum, a meeting with parents (and pupils where appropriate) will be arranged before placing the child at SEN SUPPORT and adding the child to the school's SEN register. This meeting will include information gathering with the aim to develop a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents' concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the child and the next steps. The academy will then seek to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place, following the cycle of assess, plan, do, review with the child/young person at the centre of the process.

Targets for children at SEN Support are specific to their needs in the attempt to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers. Interventions are often crucial in closing these gaps, so are monitored closely by both the intervention teacher – who monitors progress towards the targets during the intervention – and by the SENCO, who monitors overall effectiveness and progress after the intervention.

Interventions and other support strategies are planned and reviewed each term or sooner. Children's progress towards their targets is assessed and recorded. A decision is then made as to whether to continue the intervention/support strategy, to change to a new intervention/strategy, or to allow a period of consolidation in class/group.

SEN support can take many forms. This could include:

- an individual learning programme
- evidence-based interventions to support different areas of need
- additional support from a teacher or a teaching assistant
- creating or adapting materials, resources or equipment
- working with a child in a small group
- maintaining specialist equipment
- observing a child in class or at break and keeping records
- supporting a child to take part in class activities.
- making sure that a child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult.
- helping other children to work with a child, or play with them at break time
- supporting a child with physical or personal care difficulties, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing.
- following a care plan or action plan provided by an external agency, e.g. Educational Psychology, Speech & Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Staffordshire Autism Outreach Team, Emotionally Healthy Schools team, etc.

Meetings with parents will be held at least termly and a record kept to support the assess, plan, do, review cycle. A record of any external agency support, contact or advice will also be kept, as well as any records of observations or evidence which supports any observed impact on learning (e.g. class work, photos, behaviour log, etc.)

Support for children at both Initial Concerns and SEN Support levels is tailored to the needs of the individual child and provided through a variety of means. The school uses a range of support strategies and interventions which are recorded on class provision maps. These are reviewed and evaluated at least termly. When allocating additional TA support for children, our focus is on outcomes, not hours: we aim to put in sufficient support to enable each child to reach challenging individual targets, but without developing a learned dependence on an adult.

Complex

If a child's difficulties are persistent and significant, requiring consistent high levels of specialist interventions, the next stage of the Graduated Approach is COMPLEX. If a child fails to make progress, despite the academy having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the needs of the child at SENS, the academy (or parents) may apply for the child to be assessed for an EHC Plan. The Staffordshire Connect Toolkit for SEND provides clear information about when a request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment, or specialist services, may be required.

A request for an EHCP assessment will only be made in a small minority of cases where a child has demonstrated significant special educational needs. The academy (or parents) will complete an EHC Needs Assessment application which collates information about the child's progress over time, and will also include documentation in relation to the child's special educational needs and any action taken to deal with those needs, including any resources or special arrangements put in place. External agencies will be invited to provide additional relevant information. Pupil and parent views will also be collected. The EHC Needs Assessment Application is submitted to the Local Authority. All decisions relating to EHC needs assessments are made by a multi-agency panel comprising of representatives from health, social care, mainstream and special schools, an educational psychologist, a 0-25 SEND Officer and the SEND Service Manager. The parents of any child who is referred for statutory assessment will be kept fully informed of the progress of the referral.

If the application for an EHC Plan is successful, a member of the Local Authority will call a meeting for parents, the child and the academy, together with any health or social care professionals who are involved with the family. The meeting will record the child's strengths and aspirations, as well as the barriers they face. Following the meeting, the LA will produce an EHC Plan which will record the decisions made at the meeting, bringing together the child's health and social care needs as well as their special educational needs. This EHCP will be reviewed by the academy annually. This is then sent to the LA for them to amend.

An EHC Plan includes:

- Record of parental views;
- Record of child or young person's views;
- Ongoing, collated assessment data from a range of sources (e.g. class teacher and SENCO);
- Smaller, SMART targets for the child or young person based on outcomes described in the EHC Plan;
- Record of implemented and reviewed resources and strategies - including resulting impact and progress (assess, plan, do, review cycles);
- Specific amounts (times and costs) – e.g. costed provision map;
- Log of meetings with parents - minimum of 3 meetings within a 12 month period to support the assess, plan, do, review cycle;
- Record of any external support, contact or advice (including action plans, reports or assessments) which has been implemented and reviewed;

- Records of any completed observations or evidence which supports any observed impact on learning (e.g. class work, photos, etc.).
- Attainment data.

Specialist

For a very small minority of pupils with SEND, it may be deemed necessary for them to receive their education within specialist provision. This outcome will be presented at a multi-agency EHCP review meeting, with the final decision being made by a multi-agency panel comprising of representatives from health, social care, mainstream and special schools, an educational psychologist, a 0-25 SEND Officer and the SEND Service Manager.

Criteria for removing pupils from the SEND Register

When a child has made sufficient and sustained progress towards achieving their personal targets and it is felt that they are able to maintain this with quality first teaching, they may be removed from the SEND register with the consent of their parent or guardian. The academy will continue to monitor pupils recently removed from the register to ensure good progress is maintained.

Children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND. Where there are concerns, the academy will make an assessment to determine any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues, also taking into account family circumstances and the child's known history of experiences.

If the child's behaviour is felt to be a response to trauma or to home-based experiences (e.g. bereavement, parental separation) we may complete a multi-agency approach with the family (EHS Early Help) and support the child through that process. We try to make appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs in order to prevent problems escalating. Where there are long-lasting difficulties, we will consider whether the child might have SEND, following the graduated approach explained above.

If parents and/or the academy are concerned that a child may have mental health needs, we encourage parents to ask their GP for a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

If the child is felt to have long-term social, emotional or mental health needs, the academy offers a range of social skills interventions. These are generally delivered by trained teachers or TAs who develop positive, trusting relationships with the children. (see positive mental health page and policy on our school website)

All children's behaviour is responded to consistently in line with our Behaviour Policy, although reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

When identifying and assessing SEND for children whose first language is not English, school will look carefully at all aspects of a pupil's performance in different areas of learning and development to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not considered SEND.

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

The Academy recognises that pupils with medical conditions should be appropriately supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Where it is the case that a medical condition meets the criteria of disability, the academy will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will always be made to promote access to all areas of the academy curriculum for pupils with a disability, e.g. an extra adult to accompany a child on school trips or residential visits.

Specific training will be given to support pupils' particular needs, e.g. technical knowledge to maintain auxiliary aids and equipment; use of an epi-pen; managing diabetes.

The academy office is responsible for the administration of medicines and health care plans/protocols. A separate register is kept of children with Medical Needs.

Working with parents and children

At Woodcroft Academy, we aim to build positive and informative relationships with parents. The academy actively encourages and recognises the rights of parents/carers in terms of their involvement in the provision for their child's special educational needs. If a child is experiencing difficulties, parents will be informed either during informal meetings to discuss the child's progress, at parents' meetings, or at meetings called to discuss/review First Concerns, SEN Support or EHC Plans. The class teacher or SENCO will discuss relevant assessments that have been completed and involve the parent/carer in decision-making regarding the strategies by which their child's individual needs will be met. This will usually include an agreed plan of provision for the next term with relevant targets. Children may be invited to attend all or part of these meetings. Thereafter, parents (and children) will be invited to a meeting at least termly (these may coincide with parents' evenings) to review progress made, celebrate successes, update targets and agree provision for the next term.

Equal opportunities and equality

The Governors and staff at Woodcroft Academy are committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. We believe that all members of the academy should be treated with respect and that individual, diverse needs should be recognised and met within a caring and non-judgmental ethos.

The academy complies fully with the Equality Act 2010 and the School Admissions Code 2012 in relation to the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils. Where the academy is oversubscribed, all children are admitted in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Where a child is disabled, the academy will make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids or services where reasonable to ensure that no disabled child is placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other pupils.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;

- helping children to manage their behaviour and emotions, and to take part in learning effectively and safely.

Transitional Arrangements

When a parent seeks a place for a child at Woodcroft Academy, the Principal adheres to the criteria outlined in our Admissions Policy in relation to admitting children with SEND (see Admissions Policy). The academy requests school records from previous settings, including assessment information, Child Protection files (where appropriate), and details of any SEND (including pupil profiles, SEN or inclusion plans, any EHCPs and most recent targets) when a child is transferring from another school.

We make transitions between settings and key stages as smooth as possible for all children, including those with SEND. We will share information with the school or other setting the pupil is moving to.

Enhanced transition arrangements are tailored to meet individual needs. Support strategies may include :

- Additional meetings for parents and child with new teachers;
- Additional visits to new classroom/school environments in order for pupils to familiarise themselves with the new settings;
- Opportunities to meet key people and places in order to create a transition booklet.

Monitoring and evaluation of SEND

The Principal and the senior leadership team regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of provision for all pupils. The SENCO evaluates the quality of SEND provision within school. The impact of SEND provision on the progress and outcomes for children on the SEND register is measured through:

- analysis of pupil tracking data and assessment results at pupil progress meetings
- progress against national data and based on their age and starting points
- interventions baseline and exit data recorded on class provision maps
- progress against individual targets
- termly/annual reviews for pupils with SSPs or EHCPs
- SENCO learning walks and Showbie scrutinies
- pupils' work, questionnaires and interviews

Complaints procedure

Woodcroft Academy works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. However, all complaints are taken seriously and the academy's complaints procedure is outlined in the Complaints Policy. The SEND Code of Practice outlines additional measures the Local Authority must set up for preventing and resolving disagreements. Parents/carers will be given the necessary information upon request.

Review

This document is subject to review as part of the cycle of whole school self-evaluation. The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance).