



# SEND Policy

Approved by the TCES Operational Board on behalf of  
Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor

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This policy applies to the TCES National Online School

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### **This policy is written in line with the requirements of:**

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEN Code of Practice 2015
  - SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
    - Part 3 Duties on Schools – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
    - Schedule 1 regulation 51– Information to be included in the SEN information report
    - Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012
- SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

### **This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:**

- Behaviour Support policy
- Diversity and Equal Opportunities policy
- Safeguarding policy

This policy was developed in collaboration with our governors, pupils, and parents and will be reviewed annually.

### **Definition of SEND**

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. SEN Code of Practice (2015, p 15)

### **Definition of disability**

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’ SEN Code of Practice (2015, p16)

### **Our Context**

Almost all our pupils within The National Online School have an Education, Health & Care Plan and many have a long history of school refusal.

Given that some of our pupils are referred to us only at KS4 or with us for a small amount of time, we are acutely conscious that we have a very limited 'window of opportunity' to address the issues set out in those pupils' EHCP. In addition, a significant number of our pupils arrive with a worrying lack of information about their achievements and/or attainments such as SAT results. This may be because they have failed to take such tests or because their results have become 'lost' in the system.

Therefore, in order to be able to address their SEND, it is vital that we offer all pupils a comprehensive assessment on entry that is rigorously monitored and evaluated, shared with the pupil and their family or carers and that enables the pupil to engage in their own learning and enjoy their school life (sometimes for the first time ever!). Many of our pupils have experienced multiple exclusions not only from mainstream schools but also from other specialist settings such as PRUs.

It is the policy of The National Online School that all pupils will have access to a curriculum that addresses the difficulties that have caused them to be referred to us, promotes and recognises their learning, offers them opportunities and experiences that will enable them to meet the challenges of adult life and that promotes the values of caring for others, setting clear boundaries with explicit consequences and that operates in a fair and consistent manner.

In addition, for pupils with SEND, we will ensure that we work in line with the recommendations set out in Removing Barriers to Achievement and will promote the outcomes required by Every Child Matters.

Specifically, we will:

- Support and enable the 5 key areas of the national strategy for SEND.
- Early Intervention – ensuring every pupil is assessed within 15 days of admission and teaching and learning will be informed by the assessment.
- Removing barriers to learning – ensuring every pupil has a Pathway Plan and is encouraged and enabled to progress and learn.
- Raising expectations and achievement – by ensuring all teaching teams have access to appropriate and on-going CPD so they have the skills and strategies to personalize learning and measure progress through on-going assessment.
- Delivering improvements in partnership working – we will work closely with parents, the LA, and other organizations to ensure the needs of all our pupils are addressed.
- Preparing for Adulthood – by ensuring that from Year 7 we plan effectively for life beyond school so that pupils are ready for further or higher education, employment, and independence including meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks for Careers.
- All pupils will have access to Quality First Teaching and a continuous process of Assess-Plan-Do-Review (APDR) for all pupils with identified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, through a graduated approach.

## Identification and Assessment of pupils with SEN

At TCES we monitor the progress of all pupils through the graduated approach to review their academic progress, using a range of assessments with all the pupils at various points.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if special educational need has not been identified, we put in place extra support to enable the pupil to catch up.

We recognise that some pupils may continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, we will use a range assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty, and we have access to both internal and external advisors who can assist in appropriately assessing need.

The purpose of this more detailed assessment is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to enable the pupil to make better progress. These will be shared with parents, put into the pupil's Pathway Plan, and reviewed regularly, and refined/revised if necessary. At this point we will have identified that the pupil has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the pupil which is additional and different to what is normally available.

If the pupil is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the pupil as having a special educational need and interventions will remain on the pupil's provision map and pathway plan. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources, he or she will not be identified with special educational needs. When any change in identification of SEN is changed parents will be notified.

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used. This will be done through our integrated services model of collaborative working around each pupil.

### **Evaluation of the effectiveness of our SEND provision**

Each review of the SEND provision map will be informed by the views of the pupil, parents and class/subject teachers and the assessment information from teachers, pastoral care co-ordinators and teaching assistants, which will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17) describes inadequate progress where a pupil:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress.
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress.
- Widens the attainment gap.

For pupils with or without an Education, Health, and Care Plan there will be an annual review of the provision made for the child, which will enable an evaluation of the

effectiveness of the special education provision. The collation of all annual review evaluations of effectiveness will be reported to the governing body.

## **Standards**

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may not have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.37).

At The National Online School, we adapt our curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies outlined in Education, Health Care Plans.

As part of our requirement to keep the appropriateness of our curriculum and learning environment under review the Governors continuously assess improvements as part of the school's accessibility planning including improvements that have been made to building, curriculum and the training of staff.

The following standards set out clearly the responsibilities of managers and staff for meeting the needs of pupils with SEND in the school.

The Head Teacher will ensure that the school has a culture that meets the needs of pupils with SEND by:

- Ensuring that the school works within and all staff know about and adhere to, the SEND Code of Practice as revised 2015, Removing Barriers to Achievement, ECM and the DFES SEND Toolkit.
- Ensuring that the school responds positively to national curriculum developments such as the new 14-19 curriculum as a means of ensuring pupils with SEND have access to the same opportunities and challenges as their peers.
- Ensuring all staff are fully aware of SEND policy and practice and work within it and that this is reflected in the schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson evaluations that they use.
- Ensuring there is an annual audit and plan for the curriculum that covers all aspects of it as set out in the definition above, that demonstrates how each pupils SEND is met.
- Ensuring all new staff are aware of the of each pupils SEND as appropriate and the actions that flow from it.
- Ensuring that the school monitors and evaluates the progress each pupil with SEND makes and aggregates the information as one measure of the school's effectiveness.
- Ensuring that teachers are up to date in their knowledge of SEND matters and can advise their colleagues in an effective and productive manner.
- Ensuring that staff are kept up to date with regulations, research, and legislation in relation to SEND.

- Ensuring partnership arrangements with parents are productive and effective.
- Ensuring partnership arrangements with LA colleagues who have responsibility for SEND are productive and effective.
- Ensuring that all external consultants and trainers assisting in SEND matters have clear guidelines regarding what is expected of them and requiring of them to set out how their input will improve outcomes for pupils.

#### **Teachers will ensure:**

- They play a full and active part in the development of policies, plans and processes for supporting and challenging pupils with SEND.
- They have a good understanding of the curriculum modifications and adaptations that secure broad, balanced, and relevant opportunities for pupils with SEND.
- They deliver the curriculum in a manner that promotes the learning of each pupil and meets the requirements and learning style of each pupil as set out in their SEND and/or assessment.
- They keep up to date, are aware of and incorporate as planned all relevant curricular developments i.e., the 14-19 curriculum for pupils with SEND.
- They are clear about the relationship between SEND, the curriculum, schemes of work, lesson planning and outcomes for pupils.
- They are using appropriate adaptations and/or resources in order to meet particular SEND requirements.
- They monitor the progress of each pupil and the class overall and evaluate pupils progress, achievements, learning, participation, and enjoyment of their work.
- They incorporate both the formal and the hidden curriculum in all that they do to address pupils' SEND – see curriculum guarantee.
- They ensure the TA's they work with understand each pupil's SEND and its importance in enabling pupils to learn.

#### **All staff will ensure they:**

- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of their professional duties and the statutory framework within which they work including the importance of addressing each pupils SEND.
- Work as directed by the Head Teacher or Teacher to review with named pupils the targets set as a result of the SEND.
- Contribute to the development of all aspects of the curriculum as appropriate to their role including meeting the SEND of named pupils.
- Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues to promote the curriculum, managing their work where appropriate and sharing the development of effective practice with them.

### **Reviewing Pupil Progress**

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked throughout the year. In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments of reading age, spelling age etc. Using these it will be possible to see if pupils are increasing their level of skills in key areas.

If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made, the SEND provision map and pathway plan will be reviewed and adjusted.



## **Improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs**

At The National Online School, we understand that an important feature of our schools is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching for instance list e.g., PSHE and our award-winning LIFE programme, but also indirectly with every conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.

Using our Triangle of Interventions model, each learner will be evaluated on their breadth of needs and appropriate interventions will be implemented to ensure pupil success. For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we also can provide access to therapy, mentoring from trained peer and alumni mentors, external referral to CAHMs, etc.

Pupils in the early stages of emotional and social development because of their special educational needs will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately. This will usually require additional and different resources, beyond that required by pupils who do not need this support.

### **SEND Coordination**

The National Online School provides a SENCO, who is a qualified teacher and has been accredited by the National Award for SEN Co-ordination. Our SENCOs are part of our senior leadership teams to ensure that SEN is core to our strategic vision for the schools. Our SENCOs are available through the contact link on our website.

### **Staff Expertise**

All teachers and teaching assistants have had SEN awareness training, including autism awareness and the Zones of Regulation.

In addition, we have speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and a variety of art therapists available onsite to support teaching and learning. Our art therapists are an integral part of our work in schools and are all SEND trained.

Teachers will be given regular training, at least once a term on pedagogy and SEND

### **Involving Parents in decisions about SEND**

All parents/carers of our pupils receive a written pupil report 6 times per year. In addition, we are happy to arrange meetings with families to discuss pupil progress. As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a special educational need. All such provision will be recorded, tracked, and evaluated on a provision map and pathway plan which will be shared with parents.

If following this normal provision improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having special educational needs because special educational provision is being



made and the parent will be invited to all planning and reviews of this provision. Parents will be actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review. In addition to this, parents of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

### **Involving Pupils in decisions about SEND**

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning. Parents are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

### **Governance and the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs**

Initially, we encourage parents to discuss their concerns with their child's class or subject teacher, SENCO, or the headteacher to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the governing body.

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an EHCP where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision to the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.