

## Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy

This policy has been informed by the Statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; updated 1st May 2015

### Document Control

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**Note on terminology:** Meridian Trust provides education at all ages and stages. For this reason, the term CYP (children and young people) will be used throughout this policy in reference to children, pupils and students.

## 1 VISION

All Meridian Trust staff will work collaboratively to create vibrant, successful centres of learning for those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) in the heart of our local community. Using their best endeavours, educational outcomes will be generated, through exciting, inclusive, forward thinking or different methods, to enable aspirational opportunities for all students.

## 2 VALUES

- Every CYP is a successful learner, confident individual and responsible and employable citizen.
- Our school is a hub for community activities, a centre for extended services and a source of immense pride for students, their families and other local stakeholders.
- An academy for all CYP, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, faith, creed, ability or special educational need and/or disability.
- Trust staff will strive for high levels of respect, openness, honesty, communication and collaboration with parents/carers, students and other professionals, as together we strive for high levels of performance and recognise the contributions and achievements of others.
- Embedded within our Academy: the five core values of the Meridian Trust: pursuing excellence; valuing people; achievement for all; outstanding experiences and extending boundaries.

## 3 DEFINITION and CONTEXT

The 2015 SEND Code of practice identifies the need to explore targeted support if a pupil:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Special Educational Provision is educational provision or training which is additional to, or different from, that made generally for CYP of the same age by mainstream schools or post-16 institutions.

Within the **2015 SEND Code of Practice**, the levels of support are now classed as **SEN Support** and **0-25 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)**. Across the Trust we have adopted a **Four Wave Graduated Approach** for the identification and the targeted support of those with SEND. See Appendix 1.

Under the **Equality Act 2010** some students with SEN may also have a disability that requires additional or different educational provision to be made for them. This is defined as 'a mental or physical impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. Within this definition 'long term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer 'where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition'.

## 4 SEND: Areas of need

There are four broad areas of need, although the Trust recognises that a student's needs may fall into one or more categories.

1. **Communication and Interaction (C&I):** Students with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and/or Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have difficulty communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to (expressive), understanding what is being said to them (receptive) or they do not understand what is being said to them (cognition). They may not understand or use social rules of communication. CYP with Autism can have more prevalent difficulties with social interaction due to differences in their understanding and connections between language, communication and flexibility of thought, which then impacts on how they relate to others.
2. **Cognition and Learning (C&L):** A broad ranging group of learning difficulties including Dyslexia and Dyspraxia as Specific learning Difficulties (SPLD), Moderate learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) where CYP will need support in the curriculum and may have associated

mobility and communication difficulties, to those with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) where CYP have severe and complex learning difficulties with physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

3. **Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties:** CYP diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ADHD of the predominantly inattentive type or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Attachment Disorder may need additional support in the curriculum. Those with Mental Health Difficulties such as anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms, perhaps related to previous trauma, that are medically unexplained may also need additional or different support to access education.
4. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs (SI/PD):** CYP with Hearing (HI) or Visual (VI) Impairment, or Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) may need additional specialist support or equipment to access the curriculum, or rehabilitation support. Some with physical disability (PD) may need additional and ongoing support to enable them to access opportunities available to their peers. SEN provision may be required as they have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making full use of educational facilities generally provided.

## 5. PRINCIPLES

The Trust stands by the stated obligations within **The Equality Act 2010** and as such, for all CYP within the Academy diagnosed with a disability affecting their education, will:

- Not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled CYP and will actively encourage heightened awareness of potential discrimination.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services to ensure that disabled CYP are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. Being anticipatory this duty requires advance planning of adjustments that may be needed to prevent disadvantage over time.
- Have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled CYP, publishing information demonstrating compliance with this duty through specific and measurable objectives published and reviewed against the core aims of the duty.
- Make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services through a published accessibility plan showing how access to both information and the physical environment, for those with disabilities, is to be increased.
- Through the governing body, publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled CYP, steps taken to avoid those with disabilities being treated less favourably and show how facilities through accessibility planning provide assistance.

The Trust stands by the principles underpinning the **2015 SEND Code of Practice** where Local Authorities must have regard to:

- The views, wishes and feelings of the CYP and their parents/carers
- The full participation of the CYP and their parents/carers in any decisions through accessible timely information and support as is necessary to enable them to participate in those decisions fully
- Any support the CYP and their parents/carers need in order to facilitate the development of the CYP and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

The Trust employees, governors and wider community believe all CYP within the Academy are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress and through this that they are able to:

- Achieve their best.
- Become confident individuals, with the skills needed to live fulfilling lives
- Be supported to make successful transitions into adulthood, whether to employment, further or higher education or training

## **Appendix 1 APPROACH**

### **Assessment and Identification.**

The Trust will

1. Use our best endeavours to make sure that all CYP with SEND get the support they need.
  - Ensure decisions are informed by insights of our parents/carers and CYP themselves.
  - Have high aspirations and set challenging targets for them
  - Track and monitor their progress towards individual goals
  - Keep under review the different or additional provision that is made for them
  - Promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development
  - Ensure that approaches are based on evidence and deliver impact
2. Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in order for those with SEND engage in the activities of the Academy alongside peers without SEND.
  - All Academy students will access a broad and balanced curriculum, personalised in terms of their learning, progress, outcomes, character development and onward journey to future pathways
  - All Academy teachers will set high expectations through ambitious target setting, adaptive teaching to enable curriculum access for every student, regardless of prior attainment.
  - Assessment targets from prior attainment will be set centrally by the Academy according to the Academy's Assessment Policy.
  - Students 16-19 will have met the entry criteria for the Academy and be enrolled on a program which is suitable and provides stretch and progression. Pupils will not be able to repeat learning already completed successfully.
  - Alternative provision may be commissioned for CYP who face barriers to participation but only when other mainstream options have been exhausted.
  - The Academy believes that in preparing students for future life, developing a student's individual character and building skills from their starting points for successful adult life are important.
  - Students in the Academy will be encouraged to undertake wider enrichment activities including trips and visits through reasonable adjustments.
3. Designate a teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision (SENDSCO)
  - The SENDSCO has the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those with EHC Plans.
  - The SENDSCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies to meet the needs of the CYP. They will be aware of provision in the Local Offer.
  - The SENDSCO will advise the Vice Principal and Principal on the deployment of the Academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet student need working alongside the Principal and Governors to ensure that the Academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
4. Inform parents/carers when we are making special educational provision for CYP.
  - The Academy will determine through assessment the levels of support required through the core offer or whether something alternative or different is required
  - Parents/carers will be informed where the SENDSCO or classroom teacher feel that concerns in progress may indicate that a CYP has a SEND

### **SEN SUPPORT CYCLE**

The Academy acknowledges that students that make slow progress and/or have low attainment do not necessarily have SEND. There are many factors that impact on progress and therefore it will not automatically lead to a student being recorded as such.

In addition, the Academy acknowledges that progress in line with chronological age data does not mean that there are no learning difficulties or disability. The impact of issues linked to Social Emotional and Mental Health such as bereavement, bullying or significant illness can impact on a CYP's wider educational development and progress. Teachers should monitor closely any changes and alert the SENDCO to potential learning difficulties. These should be discussed with House, pastoral, and safeguarding team staff where appropriate and provisions for example nurture group, social skills workshops, counselling or other wellbeing support, put in place in consultation with parents/carers and the CYP.

### Waves of Intervention

- **Wave 1.** The academy believes that most-high incidence SEND can be supported in the classroom by the class teachers' quality first teaching and through their knowledge and the quality of their adaptive teaching strategies, assessed and monitored in line with their peer group.
- **Wave 2.** Where the CYP struggles to make progress, despite quality first teaching, further investigation is needed to put effective provision in place. This will take the form of a short-term intervention. A baseline will be taken before the intervention starts in order to ensure that impact can be measured. Impact will be measured after 6-12 weeks and this will inform the next step. The outcomes of Wave 2 should be evaluated with the parents/carers CYP.
- **Wave 3** A four-part cycle is formalised in order to document the CYP's needs, provision and progress (**APDR**). The APDR could be created by a range of staff.
  - i. **Assess** The CYP's needs will be explored to form a picture of the current position. External Agencies may be asked to support in this collection of information and the parent and CYP will be asked for their views.
  - ii. **Plan** The SENDCO will oversee the creation of the plan, involving the views of CYP, including strategies, for parents/carers and teachers to support the CYP in making satisfactory progress. Targets will be set and reviewed. The plan will be formalised and agreed in consultation with parents/carers.
  - iii. **Do** The subject teacher and Teaching Assistants or other support staff work together to enact the plan and assess the impact of the provision.
  - iv. **Review** The effectiveness of the provision and progress made will be reviewed and evaluated with the parent and CYP, ensuring that their voice is captured.. This will then feed into the following possible next steps:
    - i. If the CYP makes progress with their target, then it may inform a move back to Wave 2 or Wave 1, in consultation with parents.
    - ii. If not already involved, specialists may be contacted for further advice eg Educational Psychologists, Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS), speech and language therapist-multi sensory needs, or visually/hearing impaired.
    - iii. When the Academy has taken relevant and purposeful action and the student has not made expected progress then the academy or parents/carers may make a referral for an Education Health and Care needs assessment.
- **Wave 4** CYP receiving support at Wave 4 all have an EHCP. The SENDCO holds responsibility for ensuring appropriate provisions are in place and support is provided to meet the CYP's needs.
  - i. The Academy will monitor and review the progress made by the CYP termly holding an Annual Review meeting including the parent, CYP (this might be before or during the formal meeting), a representative from the Academy, and inviting a Local Authority SEN officer, a health representative and Local Authority Social Care representative, where these are involved with the CYP.
  - ii. Two weeks' notice will be given and information circulated on the progress made against outcomes will be discussed and new agreed where appropriate
  - iii. The Academy will send out a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting including any recommendations and amendments required to the EHC Plan

- iv. Within four weeks of the meeting the Local Authority will decide whether it will keep the plan as is, amend the plan, or cease to maintain the plan. They will notify the CYP, the Academy or other institutions that attended the meeting of their decision.
- v. The Local Authority will notify the parents/carers or the CYP of their right to appeal, the time limits and the requirements for them to consider mediation including support and advice and disagreement resolution services should the EHC Plan not be amended.
- vi. Children in Care (CIC): It is important that the annual review of any EHC Plan of a CYP who also has a Personal Education Plan coincides. The Academy must work closely with other relevant professionals including the Virtual Schools Head and social worker to decide any review of educational provisions for the CYP.

The Waves of provision are fluid processes built on a cycle of interventions. A CYP moving into Wave 2 for assessment and planning may return to Wave 1 if the difficulties faced in accessing learning and making appropriate progress can be met with training, guidance and adaptation in the classroom through high quality teaching. Those needing more specific interventions moving to Wave 2 may undertake a targeted intervention of 6 weeks in length and return to Wave 1. Alternatively, the needs identified through the Wave 2 assessment process may be such that Wave 3 interventions, which include referrals to external agencies or similar, need to be sustained and progress may be slow or difficult to identify. An application may be started at this point, after at least two cycles of the APDR process with parental support for an EHC Plan.

Students that exhibit persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours, where ongoing concerns exist that are not resolved through quality first teaching strategies should be raised through the pastoral team or SENDCO. Where it is thought domestic circumstances may be contributing to the behaviour seen, evidence should be collated by those working directly with the CYP and discussed with the pastoral team. This may then be used to initiate an Early Help Assessment to be explored for accessing support.

### **SCHOOL INFORMATION REPORT**

The Academy will publish on its website the implementation for the policy for students with SEND. This will be reviewed and updated annually and identify arrangements for meeting the Equality Act 2010

Information includes:

- Kinds of SEND provided for
- A summary including SENDCO contact details, arrangements for consulting CYP with SEND and their parents/carers, for assessing and reviewing CYP's progress towards outcomes, transition arrangements, approaches to teaching those with SEND, the expertise and training of staff to meet the needs of those with SEND including how specialist support will be secured.
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of provisions available
- Identification of how those with SEND are engaged in activities across the school and how these are adapted to ensure inclusivity
- Provision for improving emotional and social development, including pastoral support arrangements and prevention of bullying
- How other support bodies including Health and Social Care, Local Authority Services, voluntary organisations are involved in meeting the students' needs with SEN and provides support for families
- Arrangements for handling complaints from parents / carers of CYP with SEND
- The Academies contribution to the Local Offer including information pointing to the Local Authorities Local Offer
- A member of the Governing Body as Academy Champion should be named
- Effectiveness of the use of resources and expertise should form part of the whole school monitoring and review processes and link into whole school improvement and development planning
- Progress of those with SEND should form part of the Academy review cycles with termly reviews of provisions for those on Waves 1-3 and an Annual Review for those on Wave 4

## **OUTCOMES**

### **Quality of Teaching and Learning**

The Academy will ensure that the quality of teaching and learning for all students including those with SEND will form part of the Academies performance management process and the professional development of staff.

- High quality teaching, assessment and review forms the norm across the Academy
- Provision that is different or additional is monitored and through the upskilling of teachers the number requiring provisions is reduced
- On-going high quality training is recognised and will form a clear element in training events

### **Progress**

The Academy will review information collected on CYP with SEND at data collection and review points identifying any patterns and comparing these to National Data.

- Use of Data for identification: The Academy recognises the benefit of early intervention and targeted provision to improve long term outcomes for CYP. Assessment will be undertaken on entry for reading, spelling, writing and numeracy. Cognitive assessments will also be undertaken. Data will be scrutinised alongside KS2 data to inform teaching and set provisions as required.
- CYP who are identified as working below age related expectations will receive additional support with progress reviewed regularly to narrow the gap. Where the gap does not start to narrow or additional concerns are raised the SENDCO and their team will undertake further investigations. Evidence will be considered to see if a CYP may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments will be made. See Waves of intervention above.

### **Transition**

#### **Primary phase**

Primary settings work in close partnership with feeder preschools, nurseries and infant schools. There are opportunities for parents / carers to come and meet with the school SENDCO and parents / carers are encouraged to share information in advance where there may be a need for additional provision and SEND to be supported.

- Discussions with feeder settings/schools when at transition stage
- Annual Reviews in final year of preschool will be attended where appropriate to support transition
- Where there is a transition to a new setting between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the Year 2 Annual Review will be attended where appropriate to support transition.
- Additional visits and discussions with parents / carers and the child will be explored and where needed further transition support during transition year will be included
- For those with an EHC Plan and where this is known in sufficient time interventions will be planned and in place for the first weeks.
- Where an early years setting has identified a child as having a SEN and additional Wave 1-3 support this will be recorded by the primary school, shared with teaching staff and monitored across the first year. Needs will be evaluated and if sufficient progress is made the pupil removed from the SEN list.
- Where progress is not as expected the class teacher in conversation with the SENDCO will discuss further assessment and Wave 2 interventions. The SENDCO will discuss these with parents / carers and the CYP beginning the APDR process as identified above

#### **Secondary phase**

Secondary settings work in close partnership with their feeder primary schools. Parents/carers are encouraged through their primary school to agree to share information in advance where there may be a need for additional provision and SEND to be supported.

- Discussions with feeder settings/schools when at transition stage
- Annual Reviews in Year 5 and Year 6 will be attended where appropriate to support transition



- Additional visits and discussions with parents/carers and the child or young person will be explored and where needed further transition support during Year 6 will be included
- For those with an EHC Plan and where this is known in sufficient time interventions will be planned and in place for the first weeks.
- Where a primary school has identified a child as having a SEN and additional Wave 1-3 support this will be recorded by the secondary school, shared with teaching staff and monitored across the first year. Needs will be evaluated and if sufficient progress is made the pupil removed from the SEN list.
- Where progress is not as expected the class teacher in conversation with the SENDCO will discuss further assessment and Wave 2 interventions. The SENDCO will discuss these with parents/carers and the CYP beginning the APDR process as identified above

## **Transition to Post 16 education**

The Academy works in partnership with post 16 providers. It will work to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of those with SEND and use this to plan support around them.

- The Academy will enable students to explore the various post 16 options and the help that can be provided to get the SEN student to this point.
- In Year 10 more specific courses and providers will be explored including encouragement to attend taster days or visits as relevant. In year 11 students and families will be supported to make a firm decision for post 16 and to familiarise themselves with the new setting.
- For post 16 YP with EHC Plans moving from the Academy to post 16 institutions or apprenticeships will have their plans and provisions reviewed at least five months before the move. Others will be reviewed at least three months before the March of the year of transfer.
- Where YP change their plans or do not meet the criteria for entry the plan must be reviewed and Local Authority informed as soon as possible.
- Under statutory guidance within the Autism Strategy, the SENDCO should inform the YP with Autism of their rights to a community care assessment and their parents/carers to a carers assessment. This should be built into the preparing for adulthood review meeting for those with an EHC Plan.

The academy will ensure that as YP get older they will be increasingly involved in decision making about their future. The Trust recognises that after compulsory school age the right to make requests and decisions under the Children and Families Act 2015 applies to them directly, rather than their parents/carers. The Academy will continue to involve parents/carers wherever possible and appropriate whilst recognising the decision rests with the YP.

## **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

The Trust stands by the principles of coproduction. The academy will ensure that it is working in partnership with the Local Authority, Education professionals, other education partners or relevant agencies whose support will be relevant in ensuring the ambitions of the CYP are fulfilled in relation to accessing Higher or Further education/employment/apprenticeship, independent living, participation in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

From Year 9 and where relevant before, preparing for adulthood will be an explicit element of the conversations with CYP and their families.

- Careers education. The Academy will ensure that all students between years 8-13, including those with SEND are provided with Careers advice (see Careers Policy). The Academy will ensure that it works to raise the career aspirations of those with SEND through this guidance and broadens their career employment horizons. Pupils will be guided to attend careers events, taster days, work experience, mentoring, enterprise experience, meet role models and inspiring speakers to support discussion and conversations around choices.

- The Academy will seek to work in partnership with other agencies such as employment services, colleges, post 16 providers, alternative education partners, housing agencies, disability organisations and other relevant agencies as required, to ensure that a YP has knowledge about and understands available support and opportunities as they get older.

## **Admissions**

The child's parent or young person has the right to request the Academy in their EHC Plan. The Local Authority must comply with the preference unless it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the CYP, or 'others' meaning the CYP they will directly come into contact with on a regular day to day basis.

The Local Authority will consult the Academy in these circumstances and consider the comments made carefully before deciding to name it on the EHC Plan. The Academy will have 15 calendar days to respond. Where the Academy is named in the EHC Plan the CYP must be admitted.

## **Appropriate/Alternative Provision (AP)**

Meridian Trust believe that AP stands for 'Appropriate', rather than 'Alternative' Provision as considering whether Provision is 'Appropriate' ensures that the needs of CYP are more likely to be met effectively.

When a CYP attends AP commissioned by a Meridian Trust school, the provision will be quality assured using the Meridian Trust AP Quality Assurance framework.

When a CYP attends AP commissioned by a Local Authority, Meridian Trust will request the quality assurance documentation held by the local authority.

## The Graduated Approach

**CYP are referred through the different Waves using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process**

**CYP can move up and down based on the provision they are receiving**

### Wave 1

HQT with reasonable adjustments

- High quality teaching with some reasonable adjustments.
- Pupil Passport/One Page Profile in place detailing reasonable adjustments.

### Wave 2

Targeted support

- Not making expected progress despite reasonable adjustments at Wave 1.
- SEND baseline assessments to be completed with recommendations.
- Short term, evidence based intervention implemented for 6-12 weeks.
- Impact measured.

### Wave 3

Long term intervention

- CYP placed on SEND Register.
- Evidenced based intervention coordinated and monitored by SENDCO.
- CYP will have individual APDR with measurable outcomes and provision stated.
- CYP may access specialist support from outside agency.

### Wave 4

EHCP

- CYP placed on SEND Register.
- Legal document setting out aspirations, needs, measurable outcomes and provision required.
- Outcomes and provision closely monitored by APDR cycles.
- Formal review of document annually.