

# The Vale Primary Academy

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) POLICY

Policy updated: Steph Rowse on: 16.01.18

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SENCO: Steph Rowse

### INTRODUCTION

It is our policy to provide access to learning opportunities for all pupils regardless of diversity. With each child having a unique combination of abilities we need to be fully aware of the diverse needs of children and the importance of a differentiated programme of study matched to their individual capabilities. High quality teaching is that which is differentiated to meet the needs of the majority of students. Some students will need something **additional to** and **different from** what is provided for the majority of students; this is special educational provision and we will use our best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it. We take safeguarding very seriously and all of our policies are developed with a high priority on children's safety and in the light of our safeguarding policy. This policy is in line with our teaching and learning policy and equality of opportunity policy and aims to support inclusion for all of our children. The Governing Body, Head teacher and the SENCo will work together closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively.

### The SEND team at The Vale Primary Academy

The Vale Primary Academy will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs or disabilities. We will ensure that all staff in the school are able to identify and provide for those students who have special educational needs or disabilities to allow students with SEND to join in the activities of the school.

The staff and governors of the School will also work to ensure that all SEND students reach their full potential, are fully included within the school community and are able to make successful transfers between educational establishments. This policy aims to support all members of staff in providing positive whole school approaches towards the learning, progress and achievement of SEND students. With this as an underlying principle, we believe that;

***All teachers are teachers of Special Educational Needs.***

***Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class even where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.***

Teaching and supporting students with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response. Meeting the needs of students with SEND requires partnership working between all those involved – Local Authority (LA), school, parents/carers, students, children's services and all other agencies.

Inquiries about an individual child's progress should be addressed at first to the class teacher since he or she is the person who knows the child best. Other enquiries can be addressed to Steph Rowse – SENCo.

Please make an appointment with the academy office if you wish to speak to the SENCo.

## **Definition of Educational Special Needs**

Any pupil at some stage within their academy career may develop an individual educational need that differs from the majority of their peers.

The 2014 Code of Practice says that:

“A person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. At compulsory academy age this means he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or, 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 academies.”

*Taken from 2014 SEN Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years*

## **Headlines from the 2014 Code of Practice**

From September 2014:

- No more statements will be issued by the Local Authority. Statements have been replaced by Education, Health and Care plans (EHC Plans) which can be used to support children from birth-25 years.
- Academy Action and Academy Action Plus have been replaced by one academy based category of Need known as ‘Special Education Needs Support’ (SENS). All children are closely monitored, and their progress tracked each term. Those at SENS are additionally tracked by the SENCo.
- There are four broad categories of SEN:
  - communication and interaction
  - cognition and learning
  - social, emotional and mental health
  - physical and sensory
- We are working more closely with parents and children to ensure that we take into account the child’s own views and aspirations and the parents’ experience of, and hopes for, their child. Parents are invited to be involved at every stage of planning and reviewing SEN provision for their child.
- All children benefit from ‘Quality First Teaching’: this means that teachers are expected to assess, plan and teach all children at the level which allows them to make progress with their learning. In addition, we implement some focused interventions to target particular skills.
- We have high expectations of all our children. Children on our SEN register make progress which compares well with the progress made by other children in academy.

## Aims and objectives

- To identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, barriers to learning and participation for pupils with SEND;
- To ensure all of our students are able to access the same opportunities for learning and social development achieving maximum progress, fulfilling their potential and promoting their well-being.
- To provide the structure for a pupil-centred process that engages pupil, family, school and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality, needs led provision that is consistent across the school.
- To enable all children to participate in lessons fully and effectively
- To value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the academy
- Ensure the Equality Act 2010 duties for students with disabilities are met,
- To take into account the views of the students with special educational needs,
- To encourage good communication and genuine partnerships with parents/carers of children with special educational needs,
- To work with the Academy Advisory Board (AAB) to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role with regard to the Policy Statement for SEND
- To implement a graduated approach to meeting the needs of students using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process,
- Develop a culture of inclusion valuing high quality teaching for all learners, with teachers using a range of effective differentiation methods,
- Employ a collaborative approach with learners with a SEN or disability, their families, staff within school, other external agencies including those from Health and Social Care,
- Set appropriate individual learning outcomes based on prior achievement, high aspirations and the views of the learner and family,
- Share expertise and good practice across the school and local learning community,
- Make efficient and effective use of school resources,
- To ensure that all staff have access to training and advice to support quality teaching and learning for all pupils

## Identifying children at SENS (SEN Support)

Students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him/her. This provision will be **is additional to or different from** that normally available in a differentiated curriculum. ANY School regards students as having a Special Educational Need if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age, or;
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders him/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
- c) A child under compulsory age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014)

Children with SEN are identified by one of three assessment routes all of which are part of the overall approach to monitoring progress of all pupils:

- The progress of every child is monitored at pupil progress meetings where children are identified as not making progress in spite of Quality First Teaching. They are discussed with the SENCo and a plan of action is agreed.
- Class teachers are continually aware of children's learning. If they observe that a child, as recommended by the 2014 Code of Practice, is making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances, they will seek to identify a cause. This can be characterised by progress which:
  - 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 the child and their peers
- Parents sometimes ask us to look more closely at their child's learning. We take all parental requests seriously and investigate them all. Frequently, the concern can be addressed by Quality First Teaching or some parental support. Otherwise, the child is placed at SEN on our SEN register.

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 ASC or ADHD or some other disability

### **Working with Parents and Children**

We aim to have good and informative relationships with all of our parents/carers. If a child is experiencing difficulties, parents will be informed either at parents' meetings (autumn and spring terms) or during informal meetings to discuss the child's progress.

Once a child has been identified as having SEN, the class teacher will invite the parents to a meeting to:

- formally let them know that their child is being placed at SENS
- discuss assessments that have been completed
- agree a plan and provision for the next term.

This is part of the graduated approach cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' required in the Code of Practice. Depending on their age, and their interest, the child may be invited to attend all or part of the meeting.

Records are kept of these meetings and copies are available to parents.

Thereafter, parents – and children- are welcome to make an appointment to review progress made, set targets and agree provision for the next term.

### **Moving to an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)**

If children fail to make progress, in spite of high quality, targeted support at SENS, we may apply for the child to be assessed for an EHC Plan. Generally, we apply for an EHC Plan if:

- The child is Looked After and therefore additionally vulnerable
- The child has a disability which is lifelong and which means that they will always need support to learn effectively

- The child's achievements are so far below their peers that we think it likely that the child may at some point benefit from special academy provision.

Children, who we think will manage in a mainstream academy, albeit with support, are less often assessed for EHC Plans. Having a diagnosis (e.g. of ASD, ADHD or dyslexia) does not mean that a child needs an EHC Plan.

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, their dreams and aspirations as well as the barriers they face. Following the meeting, the LA will produce the EHC Plan which will record the decisions made at the meeting.

## **Teaching and Learning**

We believe that all children learn best with the rest of their class. Our aim is for all children to be working independently, in class, at the cusp of their potential. Children with SEND and disabilities are entitled to be taught by their teacher, not always by a TA. Teachers aim to spend time each day working with all children with SEND, individually or as part of a group.

When allocating additional TA support to children, our focus is on outcomes, not hours: we aim to put in sufficient support to enable the child to reach their challenging targets, but without developing a learned dependence on an adult.

The academy has a range of interventions available which are listed and on a provision map.

When considering an intervention, we look first at the child's profile of learning in order that we can select the intervention which is best matched to the child.

Targets for children at SEND pupils are deliberately challenging in the attempt to close the attainment gap between the children and their peers. Interventions are often crucial in closing these gaps, so are monitored closely by both the class teacher- who monitors progress towards the targets during the intervention- and by the SENCo who monitors overall progress after the intervention.

- Interventions are planned in six week blocks
- At the end of each block, children's progress towards their targets is assessed and recorded.
- A decision is then made as to whether to continue the intervention, to swap to a new intervention, or to allow a period of consolidation in class.

## **Children with social, emotional and mental health needs**

Behaviour is not classified as an SEN. If a child shows consistent unwanted behaviours, the class teacher will assess the child's needs, 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 complete a Early Help Intervention with the family and support the child through that process.

If parents and academy are concerned that the child may have mental health needs, we encourage parents to ask their GP for a referral to CAMHS. If the child is felt to have long-term social, emotional or mental health needs- for example with anger management- the academy offers a range of social skills or therapeutic interventions. These are generally delivered by a trained Learning Mentor who develops good, trusting relationships with the children. All

children's behaviour is responded to consistently in line with our Behaviour Policy, although reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs. The academy has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, especially towards children with SEND and disabilities. We will actively investigate all allegations and, if there is cause, work with both the bully and the victim to improve their social skills.

### **Transition Arrangements - Transition into and within academy**

We understand how difficult it is for children and parents as they move into a new class or a new academy and will do what we can, according to the individual needs of the child, to make transitions between classes- including from the nursery- as smooth as possible. This may include, for example:

- Additional meetings for the parents and child with the new teacher
- Additional visits to the classroom environment in order to identify where the toilets are, where the pegs are etc.
- Opportunities to take photographs of key people and places in order to make a transition booklet.

Enhanced transition arrangements are tailored to meet individual needs.

#### *Transition to Secondary Academy*

Transition reviews for Year 6 pupils are held, where possible, in the Spring term of Year 6. Additional transition arrangements may be made at these reviews e.g. extra visits, travel training etc.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The academy is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability in all aspects of academy. We promote self and mutual respect and a caring and non-judgmental attitude throughout the academy.

Teachers will consider the inclusiveness of all trips and activities before going ahead with planning. Teachers will meet with parents where necessary to discuss potential barriers and how they may be overcome. The health and safety of the child and others will take priority in the decision making process for the outcome of the trip/event.