

Ormiston Academies Trust

Sandymoor Ormiston Academy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy

Policy version control

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Scope of this policy

This is the Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) SEND policy which complies with all statutory requirements, including those relating to the legislation contained in the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and follows the statutory guidance within the [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years \(2014\)](#)

The Ormiston Academies family comprises primary, secondary and special schools, as well as a number of specialist bases/resourced provisions. This policy is relevant to all types of setting.

In addition to the SEND policy, academies publish further details of their local SEND arrangements on their academy website. This information will always include the SEN Information Report, information on the local offer and the contact details of key staff involved in SEND provision.

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1. Key principles

- 1.1. OAT is a values-led organisation and one of its four key values is to 'be inclusive'. Inclusivity is therefore a key cornerstone of achieving more together.



- 1.2. Five key principles underpin OAT's approach to inclusion and provision for children with SEND:
- 1.2.1. SEND is a whole school responsibility requiring everyone in school to work together to make sure that a child/young person with SEND gets the support they need
 - 1.2.2. All academies are inclusive and will make sure that they include children with SEND in all aspects of academy life
 - 1.2.3. Collaborations and partnerships between home and school are key to successful outcomes
 - 1.2.4. Children's views, needs and interests will always be considered when making decisions
 - 1.2.5. OAT academies will always seek to identify children's needs as early as possible and provide high quality support working in partnership with parent/carers, and outside agencies when needed

'Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights.'

(The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education Needs, 1994)

2. Legal framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986

2.2. This policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2015) updated 16 August 2017 'Supporting students at academy with medical conditions'
- DfE (2016) updated 1 September 2023 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2015) updated 23 February 2024 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2014) updated 19 September 2019 'Academy admissions code'
- DfE (2022) SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan
- DfE (2022) Working together to improve school attendance
- DfE (2011) Updated 2021 Teachers' Standards

3. Definition of SEND

3.1. A child has a SEN where their learning difficulty calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to children of the same age. For example, a child may have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- 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

3.2. The Equality Act 2010 states that a child has a disability if they have:

3.2.1. 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

- Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing
 - ‘Long term’ means that the impairment is likely to last for the rest of a person’s life or has lasted at least 12 months or the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months
 - ‘Substantial’ means more than minor or trivial
- 3.3. There are four broad areas of need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Children may have needs that overlap one or more areas and detailed assessments should ensure all needs have been identified. The broad areas of need are:
- 3.3.1. **Communication and Interaction:** this can include speech, language and communication needs and autism spectrum difficulties
- 3.3.2. **Cognition and Learning:** this can include moderate, severe, and profound and multiple learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia
- 3.3.3. **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties:** this can include behaviours that reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or eating disorders. It also includes other disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder.
- 3.3.4. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs:** this can include visual, hearing, or multi-sensory impairment and physical disabilities.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. Assessments should be used to determine whether there are undiagnosed learning difficulties, health/medical conditions or whether causal factors such as domestic circumstances are contributing to the presenting behaviour.

Difficulties related solely to limitations in English, from children whose first language is not English, are not special educational needs. SEND Code of practice (6.23)

3.4. Medical Conditions

3.4.1 All academies will make arrangements to support children with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such children. If a child has a medical condition and SEN, their provision will be planned and delivered in a coordinated way with the healthcare plan. [Microsoft Word - Supporting children with medical needs policy 23 \(sandymoorea.co.uk\)](#)

4. Roles and responsibilities

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the school. A newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within three years of appointment.

SEND Code of practice (6.85)

4.1. The SENCO will:

4.1.1. From September 2024, all SENCOs and aspiring SENCOs need to:

- take the NPQ for SENCOs if they have not completed or started the NASENCO
- complete training within 3 years of appointment - schools and SENCOs must make sure they enroll on training that will meet this requirement
- SENCOs appointed before 1 September 2009 are not required to take the NPQ but will be expected to ensure compliance with the regulations.

4.1.2. Work with and be supported by the principal or appropriate member of the senior leadership team and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy in order to raise the achievements of children with SEND.

4.1.3. Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEND.

4.1.4. Liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after child has SEND.

4.1.5. Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parent/carers, and other agencies to ensure children with SEND receive effective support and high-quality teaching.

4.1.6. Advise on the graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) to providing SEND support.

4.1.7. Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet children's needs effectively and efficiently.

4.1.8. Liaise with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health, and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.

4.1.9. Work with the Principal and governing board to ensure that the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

- 4.1.10. Ensure the academy keeps the records of all children with SEND up to date and in line with current GDPR policies and shares information if a child transfers to another school or education institution
- 4.1.11. Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure a child and their parent/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- 4.1.12. Monitor the effectiveness of any special educational provision made and when appropriate secure additional services and provision
- 4.1.13. Liaise regularly with parent/carers, external agencies, and the local authority to provide information on children' needs, provision, and outcomes
- 4.1.14. Prepare and review information required by law to be published in relation to special educational needs provision

4.2. The SEND governor will:

- 4.2.1. Ensure that leaders are ambitious for all children with SEND
- 4.2.2. Work with the Principal and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- 4.2.3. Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the academy and provide regular reports to the governing body
- 4.2.4. Raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- 4.2.5. Ensure the SENCO has sufficient time and support to fulfil their role and responsibilities
- 4.2.6. Help to review the academy's SEN information report and provision for children with SEND
- 4.2.7. Ensure that the academy's website reflects OAT's values of inclusion and publishes an annually updated SEN Information Report and information on the local offer

4.3. The principal will:

- 4.3.1. Ensure that all staff are ambitious for all children with SEND
- 4.3.2. Ensure that children with SEND are included in all aspects of academy life
- 4.3.3. Work with the SENCO and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- 4.3.4. Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of children with SEND

4.4. Each teacher is responsible for:

- 4.4.1. Setting ambitious but achievable academic expectations and supporting children to achieve positive outcomes

- 4.4.2. Delivering high quality teaching and adapting the curriculum so that it is coherently sequenced to meet all children's needs, starting points and aspirations for the future.
- 4.4.3. The progress and development of every child in their class, including where children access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff
- 4.4.4. Working closely with any additional adults within the setting to assess, plan, do and review support and intervention for each child with SEND in their class
- 4.4.5. Working in partnership with parent/carers, health professionals, therapists, social workers and other providers or agencies to secure the best outcomes for children
- 4.4.6. Working with the SENCO to review each child's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- 4.4.7. Assessing the learning and development of children in line with academy policy
- 4.4.8. Teachers will make regular assessments of the progress of all children and identify those who need additional support or adjustments.

5. Identifying needs

- 5.1. All academies will seek to identify a child's needs at the earliest opportunity. Each child's current skills and levels of attainment will be assessed on entry, building on information from the home, previous settings, and Key Stages, where appropriate. Teachers, together with the academy's SENCO, may consider the following:
 - 5.1.1. Is a child's progress significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline?
 - 5.1.2. Does a child fail to match or better their previous rate of progress?
 - 5.1.3. Is a child failing to close the attainment gap between themselves and their peers?
 - 5.1.4. Is the attainment gap widening?
 - 5.1.5. Does the child have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 that may require reasonable adjustments to be made?
 - 5.1.6. Does the child lack progress with wider development or social needs?
- 5.2. If a child is not making expected progress, high quality teaching should be used to target any areas of weakness. If difficulties persist, relevant teaching staff together with the SENCO should assess whether the child has SEN.

'All those who work with children and young people should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parent/carers know their children best, and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parent/carers express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.'

SEND Code of Practice (6.20)

- 5.3. Academy staff will work with the SENCO to consider all information about a child's progress and any information gathered from high quality and accurate assessment tools or materials. SENCOs may also need to ask for more detailed assessments to be carried out by external agencies and professionals.
- 5.4. An early discussion will be held with the child and their parent/carers when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will ensure that:
 - Everyone develops a good understanding of the child's areas of strength and difficulty
 - The carers and children's views are considered
 - Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
 - Everyone is clear on what the next steps are
- 5.5. Notes of these early discussions will be added to the child's record and communicated to their parent/carers.
- 5.6. Where it is decided that a child does have SEN, this will be recorded in a child's records and the child's parent/carers will be formally informed that special educational provision is being made. A clear date for reviewing progress will be agreed and the parent/carers, child and teaching staff will be clear about how they will help a child to achieve agreed outcomes.

6. Provision for special educational needs

- 6.1. Where a child is identified as having SEN, all academies will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. When deciding whether additional support or provision is required, the process will start with the desired outcomes, including expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the child and their parent/carers. SENCOs will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed. If different or additional provision is required, all academies will follow the graduated approach.

7. The graduated approach

- 7.1. As outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (6.45-6.56), all academies will follow a four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review which is known as the 'graduated approach'.

- 7.2. **Assess:** A clear analysis of child's needs will be carried out. Regular assessment of a child's progress and development will be carefully tracked and compared to their peers and national expectations if appropriate. Assessments will include the views and experiences of parent/carers and the child and if relevant, assessment and advice from external support services.
- Assessments will be reviewed regularly to ensure interventions are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome and support is effective.
- 7.3. **Plan:** Where SEND support is required the SENCO with the support of relevant staff will put together a plan outlining the provision to be put in place for the child as well as the expected impact on progress and outcomes. This will be done in partnership with the child and parent/carers and all staff who work with the child will be made aware of the plan and the outcomes sought.
- 7.4. **Do:** The class or subject teacher is responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. The teacher will also liaise closely with any teaching assistants or specialists who provide support set out in the plan and monitor the progress being made. The SENCO will provide support and guidance for the teacher.
- 7.5. **Review:** The impact of the plan will be reviewed at least each term (three times a year) by the teacher, SENCO, parent/carers, and child. This will inform the planning of next steps and feedback into the analysis of a child's needs.

Academies will record information at all stages of the graduated response and ensure that parent/carers are made fully aware of assessments, planned support and interventions and are given clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided.



Assess	Assess the needs of the pupil
Plan	Plan for adjustments, <u>interventions</u> and support to be put in place
Do	Implement the provision
Review	Review the impact of the adjustments and provision

8. Requesting an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment

- 8.1. The first stage of additional or different support is called SEN Support. If, under SEN Support, a child has still not made expected progress, the academy and/or parent/carers may consider requesting an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) needs assessment.

- 8.2. A parent/carers can make a request for an EHC needs assessment directly to the local authority. However, where possible, this should be with the knowledge and support of the academy. Similarly, where a request is made by the academy, this should be done with the knowledge and, where possible, agreement of the child's parent/carers or the young person.
- 8.3. A local authority **must** conduct an assessment of EHC needs when it considers that it **may** be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child and young person in accordance with an EHC plan.
- 8.4. Further information on EHC needs assessments and plans can be found at Section 9 of the SEND Code of Practice.

9. Approach to teaching children with SEND

- 9.1. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the children in their class. High quality teaching is always the first step in responding to children who have SEND. Academies will employ a variety of strategies to support the needs of children with SEND. These may include the following:
 - 9.1.1. Adapting how children are taught by, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, using 'phased learning' or interleaving (short bursts of learning and over-learning)
 - 9.1.2. Adapting resources by, for example, providing writing frames or concrete maths resources known as manipulatives
 - 9.1.3. Using recommended aids, such as laptops, visual timetables, larger font or spell checkers
 - 9.1.4. Providing small group or 1 to 1 interventions to focus on key skills

Any adaptations should be delivered in a way that, as far as possible, minimises the appearance of difference and maximises participation in class alongside a child's peers. Any removal from a child's regular class or peers for individually tailored intervention should be considered carefully and the benefits weighed against potential feelings of difference and isolation. Academies must also consider what parts of the curriculum are missed in order to deliver intervention and plan for appropriate 'catch up'.

- 9.2. Sometimes a child may benefit from the support of a teaching assistant or learning mentor. Teachers will monitor the level of support delivered and intervene at an early stage if there is a risk of over reliance or inappropriate dependency. Teachers will ensure that this support focuses on developing a child's learning and independence rather than on task completion.
- 9.3. Further details on teaching children with SEND can be found in an academy's SEN Information Report on each academy website.

10. Transition

- 10.1. SEN support will include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life. All academies will agree with parent/carers and children the information to be shared as part of this process.

11. Additional support

- 11.1. Academies may involve specialists to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. This could include educational psychologists, Child, and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the school nursing service, specialist teachers or support services and therapists. Parent/carers will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists and all discussions and outcomes will be shared with parent/carers.

12. Training

The SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the school. A newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within three years of appointment.
SEND Code of practice (6.85)

- 12.1. The SENCO is expected to attend regional and national network meetings to share good practice with colleagues and to keep up to date with national SEND developments.
- 12.2. The specific training and expertise of other school staff are listed on each academy's SEN Information Report.
- 12.3. All staff should receive regular training on SEND and this should form part of an academy's programme of continuing professional development (CPD).

13. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

- 13.1. Within an academy, the effectiveness of SEND provision is evaluated by:
- 13.1.1. Regularly (at least three times a year) reviewing children's individual progress and attainment with parents/carers and the child, where appropriate
- 13.1.2. Reviewing the impact of interventions
- 13.1.3. Using child and parent/carers questionnaires and interviews to gain feedback
- 13.1.4. Monitoring by the SENCO including use of the OAT SEND SEF and Action Plans.

13.2. An academy's overall SEND provision is evaluated by:

- 13.2.1. Regular monitoring and evaluation by the SEND governor and reporting of findings to the Local Governing body
- 13.2.2. Reporting on key performance indicators at academy Progress Boards (4-6 times/year chaired by the Regional Director or Director of Inclusion)
- 13.2.3. Regular analysis of key data and performance indicators (including exclusions data) by the Director of Inclusion
- 13.2.4. Academy monitoring visits and support

14. Enabling children with SEND to engage in activities

- 14.1. All academies will ensure that children with SEND are included in all aspects of academy life, including core and extra-curricular activities.
- 14.2. The accessibility plan for each academy is published on the Statutory Information page of its website.
- 14.3. All extra-curricular activities and trips/visits are available to all children, including any before-and after-school clubs. All children are encouraged to go on residential trips. No child should be excluded from taking part in such activities because of their SEN or disability.

15. Behaviour and reasonable adjustments

15.1. The OAT Behaviour policy states that:

Supporting children to manage their behaviour ensures a calm and safe learning environment for all. This includes:

Providing additional support, including reasonable adjustments for special educational needs and disability (SEND), to children who find it difficult to maintain positive behaviours.

- 15.2. Some children who frequently display challenging behaviour may lack the ability to self-regulate because of a SEND or mental health issue. Perceived 'misbehaviour' may also be a sign that they are unable to access the work that has been set.
- 15.3. While it should not be assumed that every incident of misbehaviour will be connected to their SEND, all staff should consider behaviour in relation to a child's SEND in the first instance. Consideration should be given as to whether children's needs are being adequately met and whether they can effectively access the curriculum.

- 15.4. Children learn best to manage their self-control, behaviour and learning when they feel well supported by staff who are caring, understanding, curious and consistent. Staff will try to anticipate triggers of misbehaviour and put in place preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of a behaviour incident.
- 15.5. Staff will be supported in this by the academy's SENCO, and Behaviour lead and will have reference to OAT's Behaviour Policy and the DfE's Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance¹
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/625ee6148fa8f54a8bb65ba9/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools.pdf
- 15.6. In line with the Equality Act 2010² and the Children and Families Act 2014³, the academy will:
- Take such steps as is reasonable to avoid any substantial disadvantage to a disabled child and,
 - use their 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of those with SEND (including children who have unidentified SEND)
- 15.7. At Sandymoor Ormiston Academy, we will make reasonable adjustments for behaviour according to individual needs. Examples of reasonable adjustments include:
- Providing equipment for children who struggle with memory and organisation
 - Allowing 'time out' for a short movement break or to go to a safe space when feeling overwhelmed
 - Allowing children to move or use a fidget toy agreed by the academy
 - Adjusting uniform requirements if there are sensory or medical issues
 - Adjusting seating plans for children who have visual, hearing, sensory, attention or other areas of need
 - Providing a visual timetable showing what is happening now and what is coming next and making sure any changes are communicated in advance
- 15.8. Children who have an identified SEND will be supported with their behaviour through the graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review⁴. Where a child continues to experience difficulties, despite evidence-based support and interventions, the academy may involve the following specialists:
- Ed Psych
 - CAMHS
 - Counsellor
 - Specialist teachers/support services
 - Wood view NHS referrals
- 15.9. The SENCO, academy staff, together with any specialists, and involving the child's parents, will consider a range of evidence and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies, and interventions to support the child's progress. Outcomes to be achieved through the support will be agreed, including a date by which progress will be reviewed.

¹ See chapter 3 – understanding the link between mental health and behaviour

² Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010

³ Section 66 of the Children and Families Act 2014

⁴ See chapter 6 of the SEND Code of practice: 0-25 years

- 15.10. Where, despite the academy having taken all relevant actions to meet the SEND needs of the child, they have still not made expected progress, the academy or parents will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.
- 15.11. If a child already has an Education, Health and Care plan, the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the academy must co-operate with the local authority and other bodies.⁵
- 15.12. Patterns of challenging behaviour by children who are not on the SEND register, will be raised as a concern to the SENCO for investigation into unmet or unidentified SEND or mental health issues using the academy's first concerns form. This is available for staff or parents to complete.

16. Suspensions and Exclusions

- 16.1. The OAT Suspension and Exclusion Policy states that:

A decision to exclude a child will only be taken:

- *In response to serious breaches of the academy's Behaviour Policy; **and***
- *If allowing the child to remain in the academy would seriously harm the learning or welfare of the child, other children, or staff in the academy.*

- 16.2. Any unlawful suspension or exclusion of a child with a disability may amount to disability discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. An academy may have discriminated against a disabled child if they were aware of the child's disability, and the exclusion was because the child is disabled or because of something which happened because of their disability. Academies must have due regard to their obligations to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a child's disability, which includes behaviour transgressions linked to a special educational need.
- 16.3. Suspensions and permanent exclusions should always be issued as a last resort. Children with an EHC plan require additional protections as they are especially vulnerable to exclusions and Principals should avoid permanently excluding these children wherever possible. Where a principal feels there is a legitimate reason for a permanent exclusion of a child with special educational needs, they must ensure they can provide evidence of mitigating risk of exclusion by supporting a child with any identified and/or unmet needs.
- 16.4. In all cases of a potential permanent exclusion of a child with an EHCP, the Principal must contact the Director of Inclusion and Education Director for further advice prior to issuing the exclusion. Where the child is on SEND Support a potential permanent exclusion should be discussed with the academy's Education Director and Lead Practitioner for SEND. It is expected that OAT's pre-exclusion checklist is completed and shared with relevant OAT staff during this process for children regardless of the level of SEND support they are receiving.

⁵ Section 29 and Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014

17. Complaints about SEND provision

- 17.1. Parent/carers with any issues regarding the SEND policy or the provision made for their child are urged to raise their concerns at the earliest opportunity. In the first instance, parent/carers should speak to their academy SENCO. If parent/carers feel their child's needs are still not being met, they should make an appointment to see the Principal or SEND governor.
- 17.2. If concerns are still unresolved parent/carers may wish to use the local Information, Advice and Support Service for Special Educational Needs and Disability (see the Contacts and Responsibilities on the academy website) or engage with the procedures explained in the OAT complaints policy, available on the Sandymoor website.

18. Monitoring Arrangements

- 18.1. This policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner if required by statutory guidance) by the OAT Director of Inclusion and approved by the OAT Board.
- 18.2. The SEN Information Report will be updated annually by each academy SENCO.
- 18.3. The Responsibilities and Contacts forms will be updated by each academy SENCO as and when required.