



Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

January 2025

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| Date Approved by The Board of Trustees | 12.12.24 |
| Effective period | 01.01.25-31.12.25 |
| Reviewer | Zayla Beecham |
| Reviewed | Nov 24 |
| Next Review Due | Nov 25 |

INTRODUCTION

The Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies (HMFA) has a named SENCo – Zayla Beecham. Mrs Beecham is an experienced teacher who has worked in a number of settings, including primary, secondary and specialist, and has completed the National Award for SEND Coordination (NASENCO) and the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET). She is also a member of the senior management team. Mrs Beecham’s email address is zbeecham@lordscudamore.HMFA.org.uk and she can also be contacted by phone on 01432 273951.

Mrs Beecham sits within a wider umbrella of staff and Governors who share responsibility for SEND, as follows:

| School | Executive Head | Head(s) of School | SEND Governor |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Lord Scudamore Academy | Mrs Alison Taylor | Sherry Morris-Davies Becky Wargen | Patricia Rusher |
| St Weonards Primary Academy | | Angela Clarke | Judy Balderson |
| Clehonger CofE Primary School | | Grace Sage | Jane Hirst |
| Kings Caple Primary Academy | | Alison Taylor | Matt Fellows |
| Llangrove CE Academy | | Sarah Dean | Melanie Griffin |
| Marden Primary Academy | Mrs Liz Orton | Kym Johnson | Kate Minto |
| Sutton Primary Academy | | Liz Orton | Keith Lawton |
| Pencombe CE School | | Victoria Goodman | Kevin Ilsley |

Together, we ensure that our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy works within the guidelines and inclusion policies of the Code of Practice (2014), the revised Code of Practice (2015), the Local Authority and other policies current within the school. We passionately believe that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to achieve their full potential, both at school and within the wider community. HMFA is dedicated to this statement and will work with children, their families and professionals from education, health and social services to provide an education which is inclusive to all.

At HMFA we aim to provide the best possible education for all our pupils. We believe that there is a corporate responsibility for us all to support every child, and every teacher within HMFA is a teacher of every child, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND). All our staff are skilled in differentiation, scaffolding and adapting learning and are emotionally literate with a good understanding of the wide range of barriers that prevent children from thriving academically, emotionally and socially.

This SEND policy details how we will do our best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs or disabilities and that those needs are known to all who are likely to work with them. We will ensure that teachers are able to identify and provide for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, allowing them to join in all school activities together with pupils who do not have special educational needs or disabilities. A key message in the Code of Practice is that teachers are at the centre of identifying, planning and delivering additional support for pupils. This is something that the schools within HMFA have always been committed to.

Parents, and those with parental responsibility, have the major role in the care and education of their child. We will be open and seek to consult parents on all issues concerning their child. We will work together to ensure provision in place is appropriate to their child's needs.

Above all, HMFA will use its resources and high levels of professionalism among the staff to enable every child to progress and succeed.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A child has special educational needs or disabilities if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.

Special educational provision means *'educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England. Health care provision or social care provision which educates or trains a child or young person is to be treated as special educational provision.'* (Code of Practice: 0-25 years, 2014)

We are committed to including all pupils within our schools, regardless of their disabilities or special educational needs. Our broad curriculum is open to all.

THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY ARE:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each pupil;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of pupils are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for pupil's special educational needs and to provide opportunities for staff development;
- to enable all pupils to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their pupil's education;
- to ensure that our pupils have a voice in this process.
- To fulfil statutory requirements in administering the correct procedures for pupils with Education and Health Care Plans and plan for smooth transition from EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

IN ORDER TO MEET THESE AIMS, OUR OBJECTIVES ARE:

- to provide a clear identification path for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities;
- to develop a clear, graduated approach to supporting pupils with additional educational needs;
- to ensure all school staff are aware of the pupil's needs and are able to meet those needs within the school setting;
- to ensure pupils' records include information relating to their individual needs, interventions and outcomes;
- to assist staff in modifying curriculum to meet the pupil's needs within the classroom and provide appropriate training to support with this;
- to ensure that no pupil with learning needs or disability is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability;
- to work in partnership with parents, guardians and the pupil themselves in providing appropriate support and advice.

THE GOVERNORS' ROLE

The Governing Body/Local Area Board must:

- do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs;
- ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those pupils who have a SEND;
- ensure that a pupil with SEND joins in the activities of the school with pupils who do not have SEND, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible;
- have regard for The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2014);
- ensure that parents are notified about any provision for their child.

The quality of SEND provision in the schools will be continually monitored to ensure that it is an integral part of the school development plan and that the governors are knowledgeable about the provision, funding, equipment and personal resources available.

THE ROLE OF THE SEND CO-ORDINATOR

The SENCo will:

- oversee the day-to-day operation of the Federation's SEND policy;
- monitor the provision being made for children with SEND through the use of relevant documentation;
- provide advice and guidance to staff on monitoring and reviewing the SEND needs of the children in their class;
- liaise with parents of children with SEND;
- refer children to the appropriate agencies in order to access more specialist support and advice;
- contribute to the in-service training of staff;
- liaise with the pastoral and safeguarding manager to ensure effective communication;
- liaise with external agencies, including local authority support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies;
- organise and conduct annual reviews for children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and other necessary meetings according to need;
- maintain whole school records of SEND for children who have been identified as having SEND or those with EHC Plans;
- apply for additional funding for children with complex and/or severe SEND.

IDENTIFICATION OF SEND

We are committed to identifying barriers early and providing measures and support that is 'additional to and different from' that provided within the differentiated curriculum. These measures are designed to respond to the four areas of need identified in the Code of Practice (September 2014, January 2015).

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory/physical needs

Behaviour is no longer seen as a barrier to learning in isolation. At HMFA we welcome the drive, enshrined in the Code of Practice, to discover the underlying causes of negative behaviour and to tackle those with targeted support.

Within HMFA, pupils are deemed to have special educational needs if they are working significantly below national expectations, have regular interventions as part of input/recommendations from external agencies (e.g. speech and language therapy, physiotherapy) or have a diagnosis or condition that impacts upon their learning. These children may be offered additional support through small group or 1:1 activities in order to boost their skills level and confidence.

We believe in early intervention, therefore children whose progress/development is initially highlighted by class teachers as a cause for concern may start to be monitored by the SENCo. These children will receive targeted support, at the discretion of their teacher, in order for them to make accelerated progress towards Age Related Expectations (ARE).

The purpose of recognising SEND is to identify what action the school needs to take to support pupils to become the best they can be. They are not identified so they can fit into a category but to enable teachers to work with pupils to celebrate their key strengths and support their areas of difficulty. When we identify pupils with SEND we consider the whole child and not just their difficulties.

PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

All children will have the opportunity to access all areas of the National Curriculum. All planning will reflect the needs of all the children in the class. All lessons will be differentiated to provide for the needs of all pupils.

We will provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils within our daily lessons and will provide for the inclusion of all using the three key principles as stated by the National Curriculum (2014). These principles are:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

Children with SEND are primarily supported through Quality First Teaching (QFT). We use teaching assistants increasingly to provide support for children with SEND and to enable even greater differentiation in our schools. Small group intervention programmes are used to increase the quality of the provision in small groups and on an individual basis. Our teaching assistants have a good working knowledge of intervention materials, and good quality training and support is also available to ensure successful intervention for our pupils.

Parental involvement and support is also paramount to the success of every child's educational progress. Parents/carers will be encouraged to support their child's learning at home and suitable 'homework' materials will be provided. We currently have a range of ICT-based learning opportunities for use within the home environment.

MONITORING OF PROVISION

All children (not only those with SEND) who have been identified as requiring extra intervention are tracked using a Group Provision Map. Each child who has been identified as having SEND is given an Individual Provision Map which sets out next steps and assesses how their learning is progressing. This is reviewed and updated in consultation with the child's parents on a termly basis.

At appropriate intervals during the school year the provision for each individual is discussed and decisions regarding intervention groups are made. Children who may need support and haven't yet been formally identified as having SEND are also discussed, as are those who have made good progress and therefore no longer require any additional intervention. This information enables the SENCo to consistently monitor and adapt the provision being made for all children within each school.

The SENCo ensures that all relevant documentation is completed and monitors the provision being put in place by teachers. The class teachers are responsible for keeping parents informed and the SENCo is available for meetings with parents when required.

When evaluating SEND support, the child's needs are paramount. As the child gets older, their input is sought so that they are able to review their own progress. The child remains central to their own learning and, if at any time the child feels unhappy or uncomfortable with the extra support they may be receiving, their support will be reviewed and appropriate changes made.

If a child is not making expected progress they will be reviewed and the decision to seek further support with outside agencies will be discussed. If this is the case, the SENCo will wish to liaise with the parents and seek their opinions before proceeding. We will always seek the full support of the parents and will always follow their wishes, unless we feel a child is at risk of harm if we do so. If a parent does not authorise involvement from external agencies, we shall not seek it (unless we feel that there is a child protection issue or concerns about the safety of other children, staff or visitors to the school – see child protection guidelines for further information). Equally, if a parent requests a referral to an external agency we will always try to support this request (within the referral guidelines of the relevant agency).

If a child does not make expected progress despite Quality First Teaching and access to appropriate intervention programmes, advice will be sought from external agencies such as the Educational Psychologist (EP), Speech and Language Therapy Service (SaLT), Occupational Therapy Service (OT) or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). These children may require an Early Help Assessment which will enable them to have quicker access to any outside agencies which may be of help.

HMFA funds input from an independent Speech and Language provider, Summer Hill Speech Therapy. Our speech therapist, Nicky Gilbert, mainly works within the EYFS phase to observe, assess and identify children with speech and language difficulties. We also employ a full-time Speech and Language Teaching Assistant, Mrs Maddy, who runs specific Speech and Language interventions for individuals and groups of children, as advised and supported by the Speech and Language Therapists.

HMFA also funds input from an independent Educational Psychologist (Jane Mansfield). Staff may contact the Educational Psychologist and discuss any concerns regarding any child at their discretion however if we require the Educational Psychologist to conduct a more formal assessment or observation, parental consent will always be sought.

If a child is a concern on health grounds, we will always advise parents to seek support from their GP in the first instance. When the child already has a health need that is known to the family and school, we will seek support and gain advice from the relevant health professionals involved with the child, with consent from parents.

With a child who may be under the care of the Local Authority the social worker will be contacted for any background information that may be needed. Teachers will make it a priority to attend any meetings held by social services with regards the child in question.

When professionals from external agencies are involved, parental involvement becomes even more crucial and, for successful intervention, we must always have the full support of the parents. We will always respect a parent's wishes and always seek permission before a child is seen by anyone from another agency. We will also endeavour to set up an interview time for the parents to meet with the person concerned, where appropriate. Any reports written about a child will always be circulated to the parents as well as to the classroom teacher and other staff (as deemed necessary). Reports such as this are vital in enabling teaching and non-teaching staff to understand and address the child's needs effectively.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

If we feel that a child's needs are severe, complex and long-term or in-school options for support have been exhausted, we may ask the Local Authority to carry out a Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Need.

If, after the assessment, the local authority agrees with our application they will issue an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan (formerly known as a Statement of SEN). This plan will draw together assessments of the child's education, health and care needs and will state the desired outcomes and provision required to meet those outcomes. This is a legal document and it sets out the child's needs and the particular arrangements required to support them.

EHC Plans are reviewed annually and all relevant professionals, parents, school staff and the child, if appropriate, are involved in this process. The EHC Plan will be reviewed for the Local Authority and they will make adjustments to the plan where appropriate.

Annual review meetings are a fundamental part of ensuring any child with an EHC Plan is succeeding and thriving within our settings. Great importance is placed on the process and it is valued as a time when quality time can be spent with professionals and parents discussing one child.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION

Through all subjects we ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

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

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

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- planning quality first teaching to develop children's understanding;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage and develop their learning behaviour in order to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, in order to take part in learning.

RECORDING AND MONITORING OF PROGRESS

All pupils identified as having a special educational need are listed on a register at each individual school to ensure accurate and consistent monitoring procedures. This register is monitored by the SENCo and forms the basis of staff meetings and reviews of children with SEND. All information on a child regarding SEND will be held in their SEND file in the office at each individual school.

SEND provision is reviewed by class teachers at the beginning of each term. Results of end of Key Stage or end of year assessments are considered alongside the teacher's on-going assessment results when determining progress and next steps for each pupil. More detailed assessments may be carried out by the SENCo or the Educational Psychologist, as appropriate. The results of these assessments are then used to inform progress not only of the individual but of each school as a whole; if there is seen to be a need in any one area, then the need will be addressed by training and highlighted on the school development plan for each individual school.

STORING AND MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

SEND information is stored according to the HMFA Data Protection policy, which includes information on data security, storage of records, and the sharing of personal data. All documentation will remain confidential; information will be retained on the child's record and recorded on the Scholarpack/SIMS SENCo module on the school's administrative computer until the child leaves the setting, at which point all records (both electronic and hard copies) will be transferred to the child's new school.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 (2014) states:

"Parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development."

Our schools have an 'open door' policy towards parents. Parents are in partnership with us in educating their child, and the support of the parents will always be beneficial for all concerned. We will always seek the agreement of parents before intervening or providing their child with additional support. We will also respect parents' concerns with regards their child and will refer or signpost parents and families to the appropriate agency when necessary. Parents of children with SEND will be directed to the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) to ensure they have access to free, confidential and impartial information if required. If there are any concerns about any child, the SENCo will welcome meetings with parents at any point.

TRAINING AND INSET

Both teaching and non-teaching staff attend relevant training when available and necessary, either as part of a whole-school or federation-wide arrangement. Training is continually being undertaken by staff responsible for the care of children with medical needs.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Please refer to the HMFA Complaints Policy for full details of our complaints procedure.

TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

When a child with an EHC Plan joins one of our schools as a mid-year transfer, we will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate staff before the child joins the school. This is ideally done at the child's current setting so that we can observe the support and provision in place. It also provides an opportunity for a member of our staff to meet the child and, if possible, parents, before the transfer. We will also contact the relevant agencies for support and information relevant to the child.

When a child with an EHC Plan transfers *from* one of our schools, we again will endeavour to meet with the relevant staff at the new setting (where possible). We may invite the staff to our setting to discuss any relevant issues and provisions. Information will also be transferred via school files and through the local authority's secure transfer process.

When a child with an EHC Plan is transferring to Key Stage Three, a transfer review will be held. Support will be given to the child and parents in choosing the next school and a transition package will be implemented in partnership with the prospective high school.

Children transferring to one of our schools and already identified as having special educational needs (but without an EHC Plan) will continue to be monitored in our setting after consultation with the parents. A 'settling in' period will be given before targets are set and additional support is provided within our setting.

COMPLIANCE

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (September 2014, January 2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, Feb 2013)
- Herefordshire Guidance on the School and Local offer
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical conditions (Dec 2015)
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document (Dec 2014)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2017, updated September 2021)
- Safeguarding policy
- Accessibility Audit and Plan
- Teachers Standards (July 2011, last updated Dec 2021)

CONSULTATION

This Policy has been written in consultation with:

- Executive Head Teachers
- Governing Body/Local Area Board for each school