GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

SEN and Disability Policy

Version: 2.0 Approval Status: Approved

Document Owner:	Kelvin Hornsby
Classification:	External
Review Date:	03/07/2017
Effective from:	1 July 2015

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1. Policy Overview and Purpose

The purpose of the Policy is to outline how the Academy identifies and addresses the needs of all pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) and/or Disabilities (D).

It outlines the principle aims of all **mainstream** Academies belonging to the Greenwood Academies Trust (GAT) in addressing the needs of all pupils (2-19) identified with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

2. Key Definitions

Special Educational Needs (SEN) – Definition

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD) which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

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

i) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of a similar age; or

ii) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition (i or ii) above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

The term SEN includes LDD.

Disability – Definition

Equality legislation defines a disability as:

"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on (a person's) ability to carry out normal day to day activities".

Activities are defined as: mobility; manual dexterity; physical coordination; continence; ability to lift; speech, hearing, eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; understanding of risk of physical danger.

For the purpose of this Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than trivial or minor
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve (12) months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).

This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Progressive conditions; people with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. The extension of the Disability definition to include issues of mental health and facial disfigurements highlights the importance of recognising that 'impairment' can only be viewed within the context of its impact.

3. Responsibilities

The Board of Directors of the Greenwood Academies Trust ("GAT Board") has the overall responsibility of ensuring the Trust has systems to effectively discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to SEND, as outlined in the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2015.

The GAT Board is responsible for approving the SEND policy. This responsibility cannot be delegated to any other committee or officer.

Each Executive Principal, Principal, designated Senior Leader and SENCO will take all reasonable steps, within the limitations of resources available, to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

Each Principal will monitor the Academy SEN and Disability Policy and practices, working closely with the relevant Executive Principal (SEND), Executive Principal, designated Senior Leader and SENCO.

The Principal, via the Academy Advisory Council, has the responsibility for reporting back to the GAT Board to demonstrate that the SEND policy and practice are being properly applied within the Academy.

The Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Education Director and Executive Principal (SEND) have oversight of the policy and have the responsibility of recommending any necessary changes to the policy for the GAT Board to approve.

The Principal or designated senior leader will line manage the SENCo, keep themselves fully up-to-date with working practise and ensure compliance.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- the day to day operation of this policy
- co-ordinating the provision for pupils with SEN and/or Disabilities by working closely with other staff
- liaising with parents and other professionals in respect of SEN and/or Disability needs
- providing related professional guidance to other colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching
- supporting teachers to monitor the standards of pupil achievement
- reviewing targets for improvement
- collaborating with curriculum heads and co-ordinators to ensure that learning for all children is given equal priority

- ensuring that appropriate records are kept
- contributing to the in-service training of staff
- using available resources to maximum effect
- managing support staff who work with SEN and disabled pupils
- maintaining records of work done by external agencies in support of pupils with SEN and/or Disabilities
- ensuring that the published SEN Information Report is accessible and remains current.

4. Information Report

Each Academy, including Trust Special Schools, publishes their Academy SEND Information Report, on their website and regularly reviews and updates this. This is also available, on request, in paper form. The Information Report provides the important details of how SEND needs are assessed; provided for and reviewed in consultation with parents* and other appropriate agencies. The following information is published:

** Here, and throughout this policy, the term 'parents' is to be construed in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and therefore includes anyone who:*

i) is the child's natural parent;

ii) has parental responsibility for the child;

iii) has care for the child.

- The kinds of SEN that are provided for at the Academy
- Processes for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) (mainstream schools)
- Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN and involving them in their child's education
- Arrangements for consulting young people with SEN and involving them in their education
- Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes. This should include the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review
- Arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood, outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society
- The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN
- How adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with SEN
- Additional support for learning that is available to pupils with SEN
- The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- How equipment and facilities to support children and young people with SEN will be secured

- Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEN
- How children and young people with SEN are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the Academy who do not have SEN
- Support for improving emotional, mental and social development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEN and measures to prevent bullying
- How the Academy involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting children and young people's SEN and supporting their families
- Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN
- Where the Local Authority's Local Offer is published
- Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN about the provision made at the Academy.

5. Equality Duty

The **SEN and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015)** emphasises the requirements of **The Equality Act 2010** which places a duty to promote equality on all public bodies, including Academies.

This Academy has due regard to the need to:

- eliminate direct or indirect discrimination
- eliminate harassment or victimisation related to a disability
- make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

  This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and non-disabled people
- promote good relationships between disabled and non-disabled children and young people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people.

These duties combine to ensure access to education and the inclusion of disabled pupils in every area of Academy life. The disability discrimination duties provide protection from discrimination, the planning duties provide for improvements in access and the SEN framework provides auxiliary aids and services.

Provision and planning for improved access, including reasonable adjustments for children and young people with SEND is published in the Academy's Accessibility Plan (see the Academy website for the SEND Information Report).

6. Policy Aims

In making provision for pupils with SEN and/or Disabilities this policy and the **Information Report** aim to:

- ensure that all stakeholders, including Academy staff, pupils, parents and commissioners, have a clear understanding of the Academy approach to SEND support; what is expected of them and what they can expect in terms of provision.
- ensure the duties set out in the SEN Code of Practice (2015) and the Equality Act 2010 are fully met, enabling those with special educational needs or disabilities full access to the normal activities of the Academy
- develop a culture of high aspiration supported by high quality provision to meet individual needs
- promote early identification of need and appropriate intervention
- focus on outcomes that ensure successful preparation for adulthood
- involve children, young people and their parents in decision-making, communicating with them so that they can participate as fully as possible
- ensure that training provided to staff aligns with the specific expertise and knowledge needed within the Academy to support its pupils with SEN
- facilitate collaboration between education, health and social services.

The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust ("GDFT") Mission Statement sets out our commitment to high expectations and aspirations to improve outcomes for all pupils ensuring successful transition to adulthood:

i) Believing all our pupils can achieve high levels of success.

ii) Identifying and pursuing opportunities where we can add the most value to young people's lives.

iii) Creating a culture and framework where our pupils and employees can learn, develop and thrive.

7. Supporting Learning and the Curriculum

The SENCO for each Academy site is responsible for co-ordinating the provision for children with SEND.

The Principal, Senior Leadership Team and SENCO support all colleagues to ensure that the Academy:

- provides good quality teaching in all classes, setting suitable learning challenges and giving every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and achieve as high a standard as possible
- promotes an ethos of high aspirations for all pupils regardless of ability where every teacher is accountable for the progress of all pupils in their classes
- allows differentiation according to individual needs, i.e. teaching strategies used will wherever possible reflect the needs of pupils with disabilities, for example pupils with visual problems, information normally provided in writing will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user friendly eg, large print, audio. The SENCO will convene appropriate training for staff

- responds to pupils' diverse learning needs – taking into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths which influence the way in which they learn, when planning teaching and learning
- offers children and young people equality of opportunity and access, ie the curriculum and assemblies.
- encourages staff and pupils to respond positively to the diversity and richness that persons with disabilities bring and positive images will be shown
- staff maintain current good practice in relation to the education of pupils with disabilities
- communicates well with parents and carers, particularly where pupils have additional SEND
- staff are updated on a regular basis with regards to the changing needs of pupils' SEN and disabilities and the training provided.

8. Inclusion

The Academy is fully committed to the principle of inclusion. We aim to offer an inclusive learning environment in actively removing the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils. Wherever possible we try to ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils and that these pupils are not treated differently to others because of the nature of their additional needs.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to withdraw a pupil from mainstream activities, for example when:

- the child will benefit from some intensive individual work;
- medical advice indicates that it is unsafe for the child to participate and some alternative is provided

However, where this is necessary, the general principle that all children will be able to participate in a broad and balanced curriculum will not be compromised and the Academy will act in accordance with its duties under the Equality Act.

Where disability but no SEN is identified, the SENCO will keep an accurate record of the nature of the disability and the additional support needed and provided for the pupil.

Prior to a pupil joining the Academy, the SENCO will liaise with the previous school (where applicable) and outside agencies to assess the needs of the child. Once the pupil has joined the Academy, a teacher who is aware of the pupil's needs and attainment and has a good understanding of their SEN (usually the pupil's class teacher or form tutor), supported by the SENCO, will liaise with parents regarding concerns and reporting progress in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice.

9. Processes for Identification, Provision and Review of SEN

The Academy implements the 4-stage approach, Assess, Plan, Do, Review as outlined in the SEN CoP (2015). This ensures that parents, pupils and teaching staff are clear about how they will help the pupil reach the expected outcomes. The over-riding purpose of early action is to help the pupil achieve the identified outcomes and remove any barriers to learning. Where it is decided that a pupil does have SEN, the decision is recorded in the Academy records and the pupil's parents are formally informed that special educational provision is being made.

Arrangements for appropriate support is made through the Academy's graduated approach to SEN support.

Where a pupil continues not to make expected progress despite appropriate support and interventions having been put in place by the Academy, the Academy will consider requesting specialist support from external agencies and/or making a referral to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

It is the responsibility of the local authority to take decisions relating to the assessment, issuing and content of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) but the Academy will contribute to this process in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice and statutory framework. Details of the process and maintenance of an EHC plan can be found on the SEN section of the Local Authority website.

10. Identification of Disability

The Academy liaises with parents and health professionals to collect and act upon disability information for every pupil, including reporting to the DfE on all Disability data. This information is accessible to Academy staff on a 'need to know' basis.

The existence of an impairment which meets the legal definition of 'disability', whether formally diagnosed or not, is considered to be a disability.

To be classed as a disability, the pupil's impairment must satisfy the full legal definition of "disability" (as set out in the Equality Act 2010), whether or not it has a particular label.

The Academy should consider whether the pupil has difficulty with any of the following 'normal day-to-day activities':

- **mobility;** getting to/from the Academy, moving about the Academy and/or going on Academy visits
- **manual dexterity;** holding a pen, pencil or book, using tools in design and technology, playing a musical instrument, throwing and catching a ball
- **physical co-ordination;** washing or dressing, taking part in games and PE
- **ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;** carrying a full school bag or other heavy objects
- **continence;** going to the toilet or controlling the need to go to the toilet
- **speech;** communicating with others or understanding what others are saying; how they express themselves orally or in writing
- **hearing**
- **eyesight**
- **perception of the risk of physical danger;** inability to recognise danger.

For the purpose of the definition, all treatments, except the use of spectacles, are ignored. The effect of the impairment has to be considered as it would be without any medication or other treatment. So a young person whose epilepsy is well controlled by drugs has to be considered as s/he would be if s/he were not having regular treatment.

Children and young people are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the home language or form of language is different from the language in which they are taught. The needs of such pupils are addressed by language immersion and by specialist English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers in those academies where there is a high proportion of non-English speaking pupils.

11. Medical Needs

We recognise that some pupils at the Academy with medical conditions need support for full access to the curriculum, including off site visits and physical education. Pupils with medical conditions may have special educational needs and or a disability. For children and young people with medical needs this policy is applied in conjunction with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy and the Equality for Pupils Policy.

12. Accessibility

The Academy website publishes a copy of the Accessibility Plan which shows how we currently provide support (reasonable adjustments) and intend to improve accessibility for disabled pupils in the following areas:

- Improving the physical environment eg. lifts and ramps to help physically impaired children
- Making improvements in the provision of written information eg. providing items that are usually provided in writing (hand-outs, timetables etc.) in Braille, large print etc. for visually impaired children
- Increasing access to the curriculum eg. by classroom organisation, assistive technology, (interactive whiteboards), easy to use keyboards.

In addition, the LA will make suitable arrangements for transport to and from the Academy for eligible disabled children.

13. Pupil/Parent Voice

In addition to the ongoing dialogue with pupils and parents about individual provision for SEN and/or Disability (SEND), annual meetings will be convened with a sample of SEND pupils and their parents for the purpose of recording their views on SEND provision as part of the Quality Assurance measures.

14. Admissions

The Academy aims to meet the needs of any pupil whose parent(s) wish to register him/her at the Academy as long as a place is available and the admissions criteria fulfilled. No pupil will be refused admission solely on the grounds that he or she has SEN or a Disability. However, where he or she is the subject of a “Statement of Special Educational Need” or an “Education, Health and Care Plan” and it is proposed that the Academy is named in that Statement or EHC Plan, the Academy may make representations to the local authority that placement at the Academy is incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources, and no reasonable steps may be made to secure compatibility.

15. Transitions

Smooth transitions between key stages are important for all children. For children with SEN and/or Disability this process may be more disruptive. Advance planning for the transfer of pupils with SEN and/or Disability between phases is essential.

Individual Review meetings with the SENCO will take particular account of any such transitions and provisions planned to meet needs.

Once pupils reach year 9, we will work with disabled pupils and other agencies to provide them with a Transition Plan so that they plan for what they want to achieve in their teenage years, to enable them to live as independently as possible as they move into adult life.

For young people reaching the statutory school leaving age and leaving the Academy the SENCo will liaise with the college or work place to ensure continuity of support and understanding of the needs of any student with SEND

After the meeting, the pupil and their parent(s) or will normally be sent a copy of the Transition Plan.

16. School Transfers

The SENCO will arrange planning meetings with parents and other agencies when a pupil is moving on.

In the case of pupils joining the Academy, the SENCO will attend meetings with the current education setting to gather information; plan provision with parents and arrange any necessary transition activities. New admissions that have SEN and/or Disability should have, on transfer, information which includes; detailed background information, copies of written plans and information about external agency involvement. The SENCO may wish to assess the child to supplement transfer information.

Planning for SEND children starting school for the first time will take place with parents and other agencies already working with the family. The SENCo will ensure that all necessary information is recorded and shared with parents and Academy staff.

When a pupil transfers to another Academy or school, the SENCO will forward all relevant information regarding the child's needs within fifteen (15) days of the pupil ceasing to be registered with the Academy.

17. Other Agencies

The Academy will engage with outside agencies to work with individual pupils when it is deemed appropriate, following discussion with parents. In order to ensure good quality provision for pupils' needs SENCOs will liaise regularly with specialist agencies who offer support and guidance.

The following are examples of such specialist agencies:

- School Nurses
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Community Educational Psychology Services (CEPs)
- Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)/Attendance Officer
- Local Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Co-ordinator
- Local Inclusion Services for Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development; Sensory and/or Physical needs
- Paediatricians
- Police Liaison Officers
- Youth Offending Teams (YOT)
- Substance Misuse Agencies, eg Compass
- Youth Services
- Appropriate local voluntary agencies (often for an identified, individual pupil).

18. Complaints

If a parent has a concern regarding their child's SEN, they may wish to discuss this with the SENCO in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved and the parent wishes to make a formal complaint then the parent should follow the process set out in the Academy's Complaint Policy. There is a formal Complaints Policy on each Academy's website.

19. Related Policies

This policy is applied in conjunction with the following GAT policies:

- Equality for Pupils
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- Safeguarding

This policy has been written by the GAT Senior SEN Advisor with guidance from NASEN and the SSAT thereby ensuring compliance with and reflection of the spirit of the new **SEND Code of Practice (January 2015)** and **The Equality Act 2010**. It is the result of consultation with all GAT Academy SENCOs and approved by the Trust Board.

The policy is subject to annual review ensuring regular updating as new SEND reforms are developed and implemented. The annual review will reflect feedback from all stakeholders that will improve policy and practice of our Academies.