



# Ark Alexandra Academy

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

At Ark Alexandra Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. We believe unwaveringly that, regardless of background or prior attainment, every student entering the Academy has the potential to leave with a set of qualifications that will enable them to pursue their education at a top university. Fundamental to the realisation of this challenging aspiration is an absolute commitment to providing a learning environment where students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can make exceptional progress and fulfil their potential.

As an inclusive school we provide an education which:

- is characterised by high expectations of every student, including those with SEND
- is broad and balanced with full access to the National Curriculum
- provides careful assessment and close monitoring of each individual student's progress and outcomes
- equips all students with the habits of mind, dispositions and learning power to be successful learners
- recognises and celebrates achievement in all its forms
- enables every student to become a full, independent and positive member of the community.

### Definition of Special Educational Needs

Students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which requires special educational provision to be made for them. At Ark Alexandra Academy, special educational provision means any provision which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for students of their age (Education Act, 1996).

A student is defined as having a disability if he/she has a physical or cognitive impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Disability Discrimination Act, 1995).

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) identifies four areas in which students may experience difficulties. These are:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional, mental Health (SEMH)
- Sensory, Physical and/or Medical.

These needs are inter-related and it is possible that students will have difficulties in more than one area.

A student is identified as having a learning difficulty if he/she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age
- has a disability which prevents him/her from making full use of educational facilities generally provided for students of the same age in schools.

A student is not regarded as having a learning difficulty simply because he/she:

- has a home language which is different from the language in which he/she is taught • is a new arrival in the UK
- has missed school due to persistent absence
- is in care
- has a chaotic or dysfunctional family background
- is from a disadvantaged background.

If a student is identified as having special educational needs, this status is kept under constant review as it is likely that his/her needs will change over time. It is important that no student is unnecessarily categorised or remains on the SEND Register for longer than is appropriate.

At Ark Alexandra Academy we have regard to the SEN Code of Practice when carrying out our duties towards students with special educational needs. This includes forming effective partnerships with parents/carers and recognising the knowledge and experience that they contribute to a shared view of their child's needs. We involve parents/carers in developing a joint approach to learning at home and at the Academy in order to support students with SEND in achieving their potential.

### **Identification and Assessment**

At Ark Alexandra Academy, we are conscious that a student's needs may emerge or change at transition to secondary school. We screen students on entry, using the following tools:

- baseline ARK tests in reading, writing and maths
- reading age tests at the beginning of Years 7-10
- on-going observations by teachers, form tutors and inclusion staff.

The identification and assessment of the SEND of students whose first language is not English is given particular care. The student's performance in a range of subjects is considered to establish whether the difficulties being encountered arise due to English not being a first language or from the student having SEND.

At the beginning of the first term of Year 7, the information collected from the primary school is used by teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that the student is provided with an appropriately differentiated curriculum and targeted support during lessons.

The Academy measures the progress of students with SEND by referring to evidence from teacher observation and assessment, attainment within the National Curriculum (both during and at the end of a Key Stage), reading age tests, and through the use of standardised screening or assessment tools. Assessment for learning is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and is key to students with SEND reaching their potential. It provides a clear and accurate picture of the skills and knowledge that a student has acquired, the progress he/she has made and a diagnostic indication of what he/she needs to do next.

## **Interventions**

When a student is identified as having SEND, staged interventions are provided that are additional to, or different from, those provided as part of the usual differentiated curriculum. These interventions are categorised as, SEN support, and a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). A Provision Map, documenting all of the support available to the student with SEN, is produced annually by the SENCO.

### **a) Additional Educational Needs – (not on the SEND register but are monitored)**

A student is categorised as having **additional educational needs** if he/she:

- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which are not addressed by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

The nature of the above difficulties means that the needs of a student categorised as having Additional Educational Needs can be fully met by the subject teacher through appropriately differentiated, whole class teaching and close monitoring of his/her progress. This is Wave 1 intervention. The SENCOs and lead teaching assistants advise subject teachers and teaching assistants on any specific action or strategies which may be needed to support the student to progress more rapidly.

### **b) SEN Support (K)**

A student is categorised as **SEN support** usually due to the fact that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support, the student:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below those expected of students of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills

- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with his/her own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or direct intervention
- has on-going communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

All students at SEN support are given full access to the curriculum through carefully differentiated schemes of learning and lesson plans (wave 1).

Strategies employed to enable the student to progress are recorded in a Personal Learning Plan (PLP).

The PLP only records that which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum provision and will focus on three or four individual targets to match the student's needs. The PLP includes details of any access arrangements in place to support the student in the classroom and formal examinations. Parents'/carers' views on their child's progress are sought and the student is involved in reviewing targets and setting new targets.

### **c) Education Health Care Plan (E)**

For some students, the support given through **SEN Support (K)** may not be sufficient to enable them to make the progress expected. For such students, a statutory assessment of SEND conducted by the local authority may lead to the issue of a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC plan, where their needs cannot reasonably be provided with the resources normally available to the school. Details of the assessment process can be found in the SEND Code of Practice and the SEN Manual of Guidance produced by the Special Services.

The Statement of SEND/EHC plan outlines:

- details of the student's SEND
- the type of specialist support required
- the student's learning targets
- the role of the school
- any non-educational needs and how they will be met

An EHC plan is reviewed at least annually with the parents/carers, the student, the local authority and the Academy. The review may result in changes to the EHCP. The annual review held in Years 9 and 11 are particularly significant in preparing for the student's transition to Key Stage 4 and 5.

The student's targets and strategies to enable him/her to make progress are recorded in a PLP. This is drawn up by the SENCO in liaison with subject teachers and reviewed termly. (For further details see PLPs in SEN support). Other outside agencies, such as professionals from health or

social services, may be involved in supporting students with a Statement of SEND who have complex needs. In such instances, the Academy seeks the consent of a student's parents/carers and ensures that they have an opportunity to contribute to the process.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Provision for students with SEND is the responsibility of every member of staff at Ark Alexandra Academy. It is crucial that everyone who works with students with SEND has the highest expectations of them as well as the skills to support them in their learning.

## **Responsibilities of the SENCO**

The SENCO's key role is to help to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the Academy, to ensure that students with SEND make exceptional progress and fulfil their potential.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO include:

- maintaining a strategic overview of SEND throughout the Academy, including policy writing and maintaining the SEND Register
- line managing the teaching assistants and oversee the work of any other professionals who provide additional support to students, such as learning mentors and EWOs
- maintaining an oversight of the intervention programmes for students with SEND
- initiating regular, measurable assessments of individual students to monitor their progress and set targets and to disseminate the outcomes
- liaising with feeder primary schools to ensure continuity of support and learning on transfer to Ark Alexandra
- ensuring that the Academy's statutory responsibilities for SEND Statements/EHC plan and their Annual Review are met
- ensuring that resources, support and staff training are carefully targeted so that students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities learn effectively and make outstanding progress
- ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants are fully conversant with the specific learning needs of students on the SEND Register and to lead staff training on effective teaching and learning strategies for supporting students with SEND
- supporting all students with SEND, through carefully targeted interventions, in making significant and continuing progress so that achieve at chronological age level and above
- overseeing the training of staff who teach the intervention programmes and monitoring the impact of their work
- working with and advising class teachers and teaching assistants on planning, differentiating and resourcing lessons to ensure that effective learning takes place for students with SEN

## **Responsibilities of Teachers**

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states 'all teachers are teachers of children with SEND'. In order to ensure that students with SEND learn effectively and make progress during each lesson, teachers at Ark Alexandra Academy take responsibility for adapting their teaching to meet the learning needs of students with SEND. They do not rely on Teaching Assistants to meet the needs of students with SEND.

This key responsibilities of teachers includes:

- taking account of the wide range of current attainment and any specific learning difficulties of the students
- differentiating lessons so that the needs of all students are met
- ensuring that tasks are challenging, and match students' needs accurately
- ensuring that students with SEND are supported and encouraged
- monitoring the learning of students with SEND at each stage in the lesson or sequence of lessons
- knowing what the learning needs of students with SEND are and how their learning can be best supported
- ensuring that the skills gained in intervention are consolidated further in teaching and learning in the classroom
- raising the aspirations of students with SEND by talking to them about their targets and progress towards their targets
- ensuring that outstanding teaching leads to outstanding learning outcomes for all students, including those with SEND
- ensuring that the skills gained in intervention are consolidated further in teaching and learning in the classroom.

## **Responsibilities of Teaching assistants and inclusion staff**

The Teaching Assistants' role is to deliver outstanding support to teachers and students to ensure that students with SEND learn effectively and make outstanding progress.

The key responsibilities of Teaching Assistant include:

- working with class teachers to plan, differentiate and resource lessons that ensure that effective learning takes place for all students
- supporting the learning of individuals and groups of students in lessons to ensure that all students, including those with SEND, make progress during the lesson
- taking an active role in lessons, including (when appropriate) assisting with whole class teaching under the guidance of the class teacher

- planning and delivering short term literacy and numeracy intervention programmes for students with SEND and students who are working below chronological age level who are not on the SEND Register
- supporting students with SEND in becoming independent, resilient learners
- planning and delivering short term intervention programmes to support the development of targeted students' literacy and numeracy skills
- supporting the learning of students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
- carrying out assessments on individuals using a range of assessment tools.

## **Training**

The Academy is committed to offering staff training that enables them to feel confident and skilled when dealing with the diverse needs of the students they are supporting, teaching and working with. A programme of training on issues related to SEND will be scheduled each year, including specific learning difficulties or medical conditions and behaviour for learning.

### **How do I get information about the East Sussex Local Offer?**

The Local Authority are also required to publish details of the SEND Provision that they have in place. Further information can be found on the following website:

SEND Local Offer

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/>

East Sussex have also commissioned 'Amaze' to provide independent advocacy and advice for families of children with SEND. They can be contacted via <http://amazebrighton.org.uk/services-and-support/advice/sussex/independent-support/>.

## **Complaints**

If a parent/carer has a complaint about the progress their child is making or the support he or she is receiving, the SENCO will arrange a meeting to discuss the difficulty with them. If this meeting is unable to resolve the issue, the SENCO will meet with the parents/carers.

Any complaints will be dealt with according to Ark Alexandra's Academy Complaints Policy.

Reviewed January 2023