



## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY**

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# SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

## 1. Philosophy and definition

All pupils at The Gateway Academy are entitled to support for their learning needs enabling them to develop skills, knowledge and understanding to their full potential and maximum personal benefit.

We define special educational needs in terms of a staged level of difficulty a child has compared with the majority of children of the same age. Provision and resources are available at each stage.

School Action characterised by short-term difficulties in understanding, temporary drop in self-esteem and minor emotional problems.

Low basic skills or specific learning difficulties supported by basic skills programme.

School Action Plus

characterised by very weak basic skills, emotion and behavioural difficulties, or specific learning difficulties supported by basic skills programme advised by LEA support agencies.

Statement

characterised by very weak basic skills, emotion and behavioural difficulties, or specific learning difficulties supported by a programme prescribed by a statement of support.

## Principles

We believe that:

- All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced and differentiated curriculum that satisfies individual learning needs by realistic and achievable methods;
- Pupils are entitled to access the national curriculum
- Pupils' learning happens alongside their physical, emotional and spiritual development
- All teachers at The Gateway Academy are responsible for meeting the needs of the pupils they teach
- Parents have an important role in deciding suitable support
- Pupils have a valuable role in helping to design effective support programmes
- Governors have responsibility for ensuring the school implements its special needs policy
- The school takes account of Race Relations (Amended Act 2001) and Sex Discrimination and SENDA.

## **2. The Role and Responsibility**

### **SEN Co-ordinator**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs J Sullivan who is responsible to Ms C Hill, Vice Principal of Inclusion. Support staff include one Assistant SENCO, Mrs S Newton, and outside Agencies who are responsible to the SENCO in their work with SEN children.

The responsibilities of the SEN Co-ordinator may include: (SEN code of practice)

- The day to day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy
- The deployment of support staff
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- Initial assessment and diagnosis of pupils including liaison with primary feeder schools
- Advising and arranging INSET with regard to SEN issues
- Taking the lead in managing provision for pupils in key stage 3 and 4
- Updating and overseeing the records of all pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Writing IEP's with consultation with teaching and support staff
- Monitoring and reviewing IEP's
- Working in partnership with parents of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Liaising with external agencies including the educational psychology service, and other support agencies, medial and social services and voluntary bodies
- Arranging and chairing the annual review of pupils with statements and those with School Action Plus
- Making referrals for a Statement of Education and providing sufficient evidence
- Making special arrangements for SEN pupils taking SATs and GCSE examinations with subject teachers and examinations secretary

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

It is the role of the school's governing body to be up to date and knowledgeable about the SEN provisions available, including how funding, equipment and personnel resources are deployed. The nominated Governor for SEN is Mrs Sarah Sivell. It is their role as governors to ensure that the SEN provision is an integral part of the school development plan and that the quality of the SEN provision is continually monitored.

### **The Role of the School**

The Gateway Academy Policy complies with current legislation and will be maintained in line with new legislation as required – see Appendix 1.

## **The Role of the Support Staff**

- To take responsibility for supporting named children with identified special needs and/or statements
- To support the child(ren) in class and/or withdraw in order to meet their IEP targets
- To keep accurate records of each pupils progress using the recording devises provided by the SEN Co-ordinator
- To liaise with the SEN Co-ordinator
- To be active in seeking further training provided by the school
- To be available to contribute to the Annual Statement Review.

### **3. Staffing Provision**

All staff have responsibility for meeting SEN needs

SENCO	1.0
Assistant SENCO	1.0
Learning Support Assistants	20
Total staffing	22
Higher Level Teaching Assistants	5 (in training)

### **4. Resource Allocation**

The Special Needs Department has its own budget to be managed by the SENCO. This is used to assist the raising of children's skills, ensuring access to the curriculum and taking account of individual needs.

Resources include:

- Staff expertise and time
- Wide range of books, materials and tasks to suit pupils of differing abilities. Reading books have been especially chosen to be at the interest level and reading level of those on the SEN registers
- A range of information technology facilities including SEN register spell checkers, lap top computers and CD Roms
- Library provision which reflects the needs of pupils with special educational needs

## **5. Admissions**

Pupils with special educational needs but without statements are treated as fairly as all other applicants for admission. *'Admission authorities must consider applications from parents of children with special educational needs but with no statements on the basis of the school's published criteria'* (SEN Code of Practice).

The policy and guidelines for admissions of all pupils is outlined in the schools general admissions policy and arrangements as per LEA policy.

Prior to admission parents of SEN children are given time to share information and concerns regarding the transition with the SENCO.

This allows necessary resources and arrangements to be put in place.

## **6. Communication**

The SEN Co-ordinator will meet regularly with members of the Support Staff team to discuss the progress of named child(ren) in relation to the targets on their IEP.

The SEN register is updated regularly and distributed to all staff members electronically. The IEP's for each pupil are updated twice each year and also available electronically.

## **7. Expertise and Training**

The school operates a 'Golden Group'. This is designed for pupils with very low KS2 attainment levels. The selected pupils are taught for all of their timetable English, Maths, Science, ICT and Citizenship within the group following the national curriculum. It is aimed at providing an easier transition into secondary education helping to build self-esteem and give the pupils more support.

The Gateway Academy has a commitment to continuous staff training and development with regard to meeting the individual needs of all children within the classroom and through statemented support. We are committed to maintaining and improving the level of staff expertise in this area.

All staff are made aware of their responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs whether or not pupils have a statement of special education needs. All staff have access to this policy, the register of special needs, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and guidance booklets for meeting the needs of a variety of learning, sensory and behavioural difficulties. The SENCO and other Special Educational Needs staff keep up to date with new developments in Special Educational Needs by:

- Reading relevant Special Educational Needs literature
- Regular access to Special Educational Needs web sites (eg. SENCO Forum, DfES Special Educational Needs site)

- Informal Advice from external agencies
- Accredited training.

## **8. Identification, Assessment and Review**

Pupils with Special Educational Needs are identified as early as possible through close contact with feeder schools and parents. A system of passing on records from primary schools is in place and the SENCO visits the primary school prior to year 6 pupils joining the Gateway Academy.

Clear procedures for identification are:

- Previous teaching records
- Current teaching records
- Half yearly screening
- NFER screening
- Key Stage SAT's results
- Teaching assessments and observations
- Information from parents
- Staff discussions with SENCO and other colleagues
- Detailed monitoring and Individual Education Plan reviews
- Specialist expertise
- Opportunities for pupils and parents to be involved
- Frequent and detailed reviews of progress.

The Gateway Academy follows the guidelines within the SEN Code of Practice (2001), this outlines a model of action and intervention to help children who have Special Educational Needs. This approach recognises that there is a continuum of Special Educational Needs and where necessary, increasing specialist expertise will be brought to bear on difficulties that a child may be experiencing.

Support provided will be within the context of an inclusive curriculum and employ the suggestions as outlined in the Special Educational Needs Toolkit (section 6) Strands of Action to meet Special Educational Needs.

The Gateway Academy adopts a staged approach to meeting the needs of pupils with SEN as recommended by the revised Code of Practice for SEN.

The triggers for intervention at School Action will be concern underpinned by evidence that a child, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities is making:

- Little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the school's usual behavioural management techniques

- Has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little 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. SEN Code of Practice (2001).

Once a pupil has been identified following the above criteria the decision to place the pupil at School Action is taken with consultation between teachers, SENCO and parents.

## **9. Provision at The Gateway Academy**

### ***School Action***

The structures and systems that may be used are:

- Transition Group
- Accelerated reading programme
- Accelerated numeracy programme
- Reading and comprehension groups
- Individual sessions working on IEP targets
- In class support
- Homework clubs
- Mentoring
- Anger Management
- Speech Therapy
- Social Group
- Continued discussion with colleagues re progress
- IEP is written and distributed
- Review of progress twice yearly with SENCO, colleagues and support staff. This is discussed with parents/carers and pupil at Review and Guidance.

If the pupil continues to make little or no progress this will be discussed with teachers, SENCO and parents at each review of the child's Individual Education Plan. A decision may be taken that a referral school be made to School Action Plus.

### ***School Action Plus***

The triggers for intervention at School Action Plus will be that despite receiving individualised support under School Action the child:

- Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- Continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of similar age
- Continue to have difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas

- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group despite having an individualised behavioural management programme
- Has sensory or physical problems and requires specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- Has an ongoing communication and/or interaction difficulty that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning. (SEN Code of Practice 2001)

The SENCO and teacher in consultation with parents will seek advice or support from external specialists. Additional strategies to those at School Action are put in place and an IEP is written and the SENCO will co-ordinate the following:

- Any further assessment
- Planning future interventions
- Monitoring and reviewing the action taken
- Liaising with outside agencies

### **Provision at School Action Plus**

The structures and systems are as School Action with the addition of:

- Outside agencies assess the pupil's needs and suggest targets and strategies to be incorporated into an IEP. Where appropriate work on personalised learning programmes
- A review takes place twice yearly and is attended by the SENCO, parent/ carer, pupil and outside agencies when appropriate.

If the pupil continues to make little or no progress this will be discussed with teachers, SENCO and parents at each review of the child's Individual Education Plan. In severe and complex cases, a decision may be taken that a referral should be made to the Directorate of Education for a Statutory Assessment of Special Education Needs.

### **Review**

IEP reviews take place twice yearly to which the SENCO, pupil, parent and other relevant outside agencies attend. Statement pupils also have a yearly review with the SENCO, parent, pupil and outside agencies and a representative from the SEN team.

## **10. External Support**

The school has a named school nurse, educational psychologist, counsellor and connexions advisor to whom references are made. Similarly contact is made with the Social Services Department and Education Welfare Service as appropriate. We also work with the following services provided centrally by the local Education Authority and the Health Authority.

- Learning Support Services
- Hearing Impairment Services
- Autistic Outreach Team
- Speech Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- CAMHS
- Travelling Children Services

## **11. Facilities and Physical Access**

- Ramps
- Disabled toilet
- ICT facilities
- Learning Support Rooms equipped with specialist resources

Improvements to facilities and physical access are ongoing in the Whole School Improvement Plan.

## **12. Inclusion**

Principles of inclusive education:

- Inclusion is a process by which schools, local education authorities and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include pupils
- With the right training strategies and support nearly all children with Special Educational Needs can successfully be included in mainstream education
- An inclusive education service offers excellence and choice and incorporates the views of parents and children
- The interests of all pupils must be safeguarded
- Schools, local education authorities and others should seek to remove barriers to learning and participation
- All children should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential
- Mainstream education will not always be right for every child all of the time. Equally just because mainstream education may not be right at a particular stage it does not prevent the child from being included successfully at a later stage.

## **13. Evaluation of SEN Provision**

The evaluation is ongoing and reported to the Governors annually. Analysis of SEN pupil performance data:

- Valued added using P levels, NC levels
- Improvement in reading and spelling scores
- % achieving IEP targets

- Number of exclusions
- SEN attendance
- Number of pupils moving up, down or off SEN stages
- Lesson observations
- Feedback from teachers, support staff, parents and pupil
- Minutes of key SEN meetings
- Evidence of impact of SEN training for SEN staff

#### **14. Parent Partnership**

All staff will actively work with parents of pupils with Special Education Needs to enable and empower as per the SEN Code of Practice (2001).

Parents must always be informed when a teacher first identifies that a child has special Educational needs.

In The Gateway Academy we endeavour to communicate positively with parents by:

- Using parental knowledge
- Focus on the child's strengths as well as areas of weakness
- Recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents
- Ensure parents understand the procedures
- Respect differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different view points
- Respect the differing needs parents themselves may have
- Recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings.

The Gateway Academy will always seek parental permission before making a referral to other agencies for support for their child. Where parents do not wish to have their details passed on to third parties their wishes will be respected.

#### **15. Complaints**

As a school we believe that the Special Educational Needs of pupils are best met when there is effective collaboration and communications between school, other agencies, families and pupils. We aim to foster good working relations with all of these groups especially parents.

Procedures at the Gateway Academy

- If a parent is not satisfied with the Special Educational Needs arrangements for their child, the problem should first be discussed with the form teacher. A meeting at a mutually convenient time is arranged. The SENCO is informed
- If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved then a meeting is arranged between the parent, teacher and the SENCO
- In some cases it may be necessary to involve the Head Teacher
- Parents are given the opportunity to speak to the SEN Governor

- If still no solution is found parents are advised to contact the LEA
- The school informs the LEA.

## **16. Transition Arrangements**

The general procedures for receiving and transferring pupils is in line with the agreed LEA policy document.

In support for these arrangements the following additional information and documentation is provided by the SENCO to the receiving school for pupils with Special Educational Needs:

- Individual Education Plans
- Review of Individual Education Plans
- Statements
- Assessment details
- Reports

For pupils with statements a transition review will take place of the annual review in year 9 and year 11. The review aims to give recommendations as to the type of provision the child will require in future years. The child's statement can then be amended appropriately.

## **APPENDIX 1**

Support and aspiration : A new approach to special education needs and disability.

The Green Paper 2011 proposes :

1. Early identification and assessment
2. Giving parents control
3. Learning and achieving
4. Preparation for adulthood
5. Services working together for families

The consultation and testing will begin in September 2011 and detailed plans will be drawn up by the end of 2012.

These plans will form the basis of any legislative changes that are to be taken forward from May 2012.

[www.education.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/)

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