

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Special educational needs and disabilities policy: document provenance

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Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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1.0 Policy statement

Dixons Academies Trust takes seriously its duty to ensure that all students receive their entitlement to a quality education, one that is appropriate to their individual needs, and promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. Each student's provision should enable them to achieve their best and become confident individuals living rewarding lives, fulfilling our trust mission to challenge educational and social disadvantage in all its forms. All Dixons students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, are supported to make successful transition between phases and then into adulthood, whether into employment, further / higher education or training, and to enjoy and achieve throughout their time in our academies.

This Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy aims to make clear our commitment to high quality education for all students, set out how our academies will support and make provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities, and explain staff roles and responsibilities in relation to SEND.

Each academy within our trust will publish a SEND Information Report and an Accessibility Plan. These documents work alongside the SEND Policy to ensure that each academy's SEND provision is responsive, dynamic and flexible in relation to the needs of their current cohort of students as well as compliant with their Local Authority's guidance and processes.

This policy also links to our trust policies on:

- Anti-bullying
- Student Attendance
- Behaviour
- Care and Control of Students
- Careers
- Child Goes Missing or Absconds
- Child Missing in Education
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Exclusion
- Intimate Care
- Looked After Children (Designated Teacher)
- Medical Needs

All of these policies can be found on our trust website, www.dixonsat.com, and all comply with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2015](#) and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN Information Report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#), which sets out the laws against discrimination, harassment and victimisation of nine protected characteristics, including disability
- As well as the most recent publications of:
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Note. In line with statutory and non-statutory guidance the acronym 'SENCO', to represent the Special Educational Needs Coordinator role, will be used throughout this document. This is a statutory role in schools and all Dixons academies have a person designated as such. However, due to the differing remits and responsibilities of individual post holders there are different job titles and acronyms in use across the Trust, for example 'SENDCO' (with the addition of a 'D' to represent 'disability') and INCO (Individual Needs Coordinator, to represent a responsibility across a range of additional needs), which is at the discretion of the individual academies and does not diminish that person's responsibilities under the statutory SENCO designation. In statutory and non-statutory guidance, the acronyms 'SEN' and 'SEND' are used interchangeably. The latter will be used throughout this document to represent our commitment to meet the needs of all students, including those with special educational needs and those with disabilities.



2.0 Scope and purpose

- 2.1 To ensure all staff understand their role and responsibilities in relation to SEND and inclusion
- 2.2 To demonstrate the Trust's commitment to procedures relating to SEND and inclusion
- 2.3 To facilitate the Trust's commitment to ensuring all students receive their entitlement to a high quality education, appropriate to their individual needs, and can achieve their full potential
- 2.4 To contribute to the wider SEND portfolio of documents:
 - SEND Information Report
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Trust SEND Policy
- 2.5 The SEND policy covers all students who fall within the definitions (section 5), whether they have been issued with an EHCP or placed on the SEN Register
- 2.6 To clarify how we meet the expectations of our funding agreement (see trust website)

3.0 Trust commitment

Dixons Academies Trust recognises that, to meet its commitment to ensuring that all students receive their entitlement to a high quality education, students with SEND need both whole academy systems and approaches that have inclusion built in from the outset, as well as high quality, timely, and regularly reviewed targeted and individualised provision. Academies in our trust will therefore:

- 3.1 Establish and maintain a culture of equality, diversity and inclusiveness that allows students' needs to be met as part of the main offer of the academy wherever possible and for individual needs to be met without stigma or loss of quality.
- 3.2 Establish and maintain an ethos where students, families and other agencies work collaboratively and cooperatively to ensure the best offer for each student.
- 3.3 Ensure that the curriculum and wider experience of students is inclusive by design and not based on segregation or exemption of students with SEND.
- 3.4 Ensure that the approach for managing behaviour is inclusive by design and not based on segregation, exemption or unintentional discriminatory penalisation of students with SEND.
- 3.5 Ensure that all staff are aware of the different types of SEND that are currently present in their academy and the processes in place to support them.
- 3.6 Ensure that all staff understand that SEND is recognised as a potentially exacerbating vulnerability to forms of abuse in Keeping Children Safe in Education and that students with SEND could benefit from early help in relation to child protection and safeguarding before their peers who are not identified as having SEND.

4.0 Definitions

The following definitions are taken for the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

- 4.1 A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her
- 4.2 A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 Post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) but the term SEND is used in the Code of Practice across the 0-25 age range and, for the purposes of meeting our statutory duties, across our trust.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The Trust Board and Local Academy Boards will:
 - help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing body meetings



- monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within their academy and update the governing body on this
- work with the leadership team and SENCO to determine the strategic development of SEND provision in their academy

5.2 The principal and academy leadership team will:

- work with the SENCO to determine the strategic development of SEND provision in their academy
- have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of students with SEND
- ensure all staff are empowered to work inclusively
- protect the SENCO's time, a minimum of 30%, for the purpose of managing SEND and inclusion, including from cover, duties and other responsibilities

5.3 The SENCO will:

- work with the leadership team and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of SEND provision in their academy
- ensure that there are systems in place for the early identification of needs and for timely intervention
- have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND portfolio of documents and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those who have EHCPs
- provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN Support
- advise on the deployment of their academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively
- be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the Local Authority and its support services
- liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure students and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- work with the leadership team and SEND governor to ensure that their academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (link in section 1) about reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensure that their academy keeps the records for all pupils with SEND up to date

5.4 Class teachers will be responsible for:

- the progress and development of every student in their class(es)
- working closely with any learning support or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- working with the SENCO to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- ensuring they adhere to the SEND portfolio of documents for their academy

5.5 Learning support and specialist staff employed by the academy will be responsible for:

- working closely with the class teacher(s) to plan, deliver and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- working with the SENCO to ensure effective deployment to meet the needs of all students requiring support
- ensuring at all times that they are promoting the development, independence, and personal wellbeing of the student(s) they are supporting
- ensuring they adhere to the SEND portfolio of documents for their academy

6.0 Procedures

Each academy will make explicit their arrangements for SEND and inclusion through their SEND Information Report and Accessibility Plan, but all academies will be guided by these key principles.

6.1 Each academy must ensure that there is a qualified teacher, employed by the academy, designated as the SENCO.

6.2 The SENCO must achieve the NPQ SENCO qualification within three years of appointment, accredited by a recognised provider, or have already achieved that or its predecessor the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASENCO).



- 6.3 The SENCO works closely with the senior leadership team to provide professional guidance to colleagues, and will work closely with staff, parents and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.
- 6.4 The SENCO and class teachers, together with any specialists and involving the student and their families, should consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions in order to support the student's progress.
- 6.5 The identification of SEND should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.
- 6.6 Each academy will meet its statutory duty to follow the graduated approach to meeting the needs of students with SEND as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
- 6.7 Each academy's leadership team should regularly review how expertise and resources used to address SEND can be used to build the quality of whole-academy provision as part of their overall commitment to school improvement.
- 6.8 The quality of teaching for students with SEND, and the progress made, should be a core part of the academy's approach to professional development for all teaching and support / associate staff.
- 6.9 Each academy's leadership team, along with their SENCO, should notice any patterns in the identification of SEND, both within the academy and in comparison with local and national data, and use this to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.
- 6.10 Each academy will meet its statutory duty to make arrangements to support students with medical conditions, usually through the implementation of an Individual Health Care Plan specifying the type and level of support the student needs - please refer to the Medical Needs policy for further information.
- 6.11 In some cases, a student with SEND may also require a level of personal or intimate care to be provided in order for them to access their entitlement to a full and quality education. In these circumstances, an Intimate Care Plan (ICP) should be considered – please refer to the Intimate Care Policy for more information.
- 6.12 In some cases, a student with SEND may require a level of physical support in order to fully access their entitlement to a quality education. In these circumstances, a Physical Handling Plan (PHP) should be considered – please refer to the Care and Control of Students Policy for more information.
- 6.13 In some cases, a student with SEND may require special consideration and support in order to be able to evacuate the building in an emergency such as a fire. In these circumstances, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) should be in place for them. This should include details of why the PEEP is required and how they will be supported, and should be written collaboratively between the SENCO, families, any involved healthcare professionals and, where possible, the student. These should be reviewed at least annually and following any change, incident or at the request of any stakeholder.
- 6.14 Whenever there is known risk associated with a student, including any arising from a special educational need or disability (for example, use of specialist equipment), an individualised risk assessment should be considered. Risk assessments should be written collaboratively between the most appropriate staff member (in the case of a student with SEND this is likely to be the SENCO), families, any involved healthcare professionals and, where possible, the student. These should be reviewed at least annually and following any change, incident or at the request of any stakeholder.
- 6.15 For students identified as SEND, part of their provision includes planning, preparation and support during the transition between phases and for adult life, including timely information sharing when a student is moving between schools.
- 6.16 All students will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum - leadership teams, teachers and support staff will set high expectations for every student, taking into account but not limited by their prior attainment.
- 6.17 All students, including those with SEND, from year 8 until year 13 will be provided with independent careers guidance.
- 6.18 Academies will work cooperatively and supportively with their Local Authority in order to meet their statutory duties regarding SEND and inclusion.
- 6.19 Academies will work cooperatively and supportively with other agencies, for example CAMHS and Educational Psychology, in order to ensure that the needs of students with SEND are fully understood and met.
- 6.20 Academies will ensure the views, wishes and feelings of the student and their parent / carer, including supporting them to participate fully in decisions, are kept front and centre at all times.
- 6.21 Academies are committed to the UNCRPD definition of inclusion as the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in education i.e. the commitment to developing increasingly inclusive whole academy practices alongside providing the support and intervention as part of their SEND offer.

7.0 The Graduated Approach



The graduated approach is a repeated four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. The graduated approach is made up of the following stages:

ASSESS: Teaching staff, working closely with the SENCO, draw on a range of information (progress, attainment, behaviour, attendance, student voice, parent / carer voice, and outside agency advice) in order to fully understand the student's needs.

PLAN: Strategies, including for both in lessons and through discrete interventions where appropriate, the intended outcomes and the needs being addressed are shared with teaching and support staff, as well as with the parent / carers.

DO: Classroom teachers remain responsible for working with the student to work towards the identified outcomes. Where interventions are being delivered in small groups or 1:1, teachers, the SENCO, and support staff should work closely together to ensure continuity and consistency.

REVIEW: The effectiveness of the strategies is reviewed regularly and feeds back into assessment of the student's needs in order to inform a new cycle of support and intervention.

The graduated approach in Dixons academies:

- 7.1 The assess, plan, do, review (APDR) process will be aligned with whole academy assessment cycles as the norm (but with the ability to have more regular review where needed)
- 7.2 Teachers and support staff will be facilitated to contribute to the APDR process through, for example, dedicated staff meetings
- 7.3 Families will be facilitated to contribute through consistent but flexible opportunities, for example, through phone calls, email or face to face meetings
- 7.4 Students will be facilitated to contribute in a way that is both meaningful and developmentally appropriate, for example, collecting student voice through a questionnaire, scaling activities, or by observation
- 7.5 All strategies, support and intervention will be planned and implemented in line with a commitment to the progressive removal of barriers to participation in learning and the experience of education, as well as to enable students to thrive outside of school and as adults
- 7.6 The progress and attainment of students identified as SEND will be monitored and reviewed through whole academy systems and available data, such as baseline, formative and summative academic assessment, attendance, behaviour and whole year group screeners, enhanced by further assessment and review relating to their individual needs. This will be different for each student, depending on their needs and provision, and could include but is not limited to:
 - standardised tests, e.g. DASH handwriting assessment, Boxall Profiles, CTOPP2 etc.
 - intervention specific baselines and assessments
 - documents designed to monitor and review individual targets, e.g. Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
 - progress against targets and outcomes listed in a professional's reports or an EHCP

8.0 SEND Information Report

- 8.1 Each academy will make explicit their provision for SEND and inclusion in the publication of their statutory SEND Information Report, in line with guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and the SEND Regulations 2014
- 8.2 The SEND Information Report will be published on the academy website and updated annually, with any changes made during the year to be updated as soon as possible
- 8.3 The contents of the SEND Information Report are prescribed by law in the documents mentioned in paragraph 7.1 of this policy
- 8.4 Each academy will ensure that their SEND Information Report is easily accessible and set out in clear, straightforward language
- 8.5 The SEND Information Report should include relevant named contacts who are available at the academy
- 8.6 The SEND Information Report must include information on the academy's contribution to the Local Offer (see section 9) and information on where the Local Offer is published
- 8.7 The SEND Information Report must include information on where to find the academy's Accessibility Plan and what will be detailed within that plan
- 8.8 All academies will use the Dixons aligned format for their SEND Information Report

9.0 Accessibility Plan



- 9.1 All schools have a statutory duty, under section 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (link in section 1), to produce an Accessibility Plan detailing how they are going to increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in their curriculum, improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated benefits, facilities and services, and improving delivery to disabled students of information which is readily available to students who are not disabled
- 9.2 The Accessibility Plan must be in writing, take the views of students and their families into account, and be regularly reviewed
- 9.3 The school has responsibility for allocating adequate resources to ensure the advancement of the Accessibility Plan
- 9.4 Each academy will comply with this statutory duty by publishing an Accessibility Plan in the form of a rolling development plan detailing strategies, timeframes, financial requirements and persons responsible over a three-year period
- 9.5 The SENCO, along with the leadership team and Local Academy Board, will take overall responsibility for producing, maintaining and monitoring the Accessibility Plan, including at least annual review of progress made
- 9.6 All academies will use the Dixons aligned format for their Accessibility Plan

10.0 Local Offer

- 10.1 Each Local Authority has a statutory duty to produce a 'Local Offer' detailing information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHCP, in their area.
- 10.2 As a 'partner body or agency', schools have a statutory duty to cooperate with the Local Authority in the development and review of the Local Offer.
- 10.3 Each academy will comply with their Local Authorities guidance on how schools should contribute to the Local Offer in their area.
- 10.4 In order to support external stakeholders to understand how all Dixons academies meet the needs of students with SEND, but in different ways in response to the specific needs of their cohorts, we have included a 'Dixons Offer' overview as an appendix of this policy (Appendix A).

11.0 Exam Access Arrangements

- 11.1 The SENCO, along with the senior leadership team and teachers, have additional responsibilities in relation to externally marked examinations as detailed in JCQ's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments annual publication.
- 11.2 The trust understands and takes seriously its legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments to any student disadvantaged in examinations by a Special Educational Need or Disability.
- 11.3 Entitlement to exam access arrangements (EAA) will be determined through a combination of relevant assessments administered by a qualified assessor, evidence provided by outside agency professionals (such as the educational psychologist), evidence collected from education (such as teacher feedback and evidence of 'normal way of working') and, where relevant, a student's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in accordance with JCQ guidance for each type of access arrangement available.
- 11.4 Where a student's needs have been met through normal way of working, including high quality teaching that can be provided through the academy's universal offer, it may be the case that a student is entitled to EAA even though they have not been placed on the SEN Register.
- 11.5 Where a student's additional needs do not place them at a disadvantage in an exam or other eligible assessment, it may be the case that they are not entitled to EAA despite being on the SEN Register or having an EHCP.
- 11.6 Families should be kept informed about access arrangements testing and possible outcomes, and be facilitated to contribute to the final decision alongside the academy and student.
- 11.7 Requests for EAA to be provided that are made by families or outside agency professionals, for example GPs or paediatricians, will always be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. EAA will only ever be provided in accordance with JCQ guidance and so such requests may not always result in a student being eligible for any access arrangements to be made.
- 11.8 Where relevant, the SENCO will ensure that a student's EAA documentation, including information about their EAA assessor, is forwarded to their next place of education so that appropriate reasonable adjustments based on normal way of working can continue to be made for them.