



Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

Policy Information	
Policy Owner	Rachel Crozier
Issue Version	4.0
Approving Committee	ACE Schools Headteacher and CPG
Adopted Date	2016
Review Cycle	Annual
Last Review Date	June 2024
Next Review Date	June 2025

Adoption of the Policy

This Policy has been adopted and reviewed by the Trustees of Transforming Futures Trust

Signed: *Michael Herron*

Date: 17.06.24

(Chair of CPG)

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I. Introduction

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy and information report aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEND)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in supporting pupils with SEND

As an Alternative Provision (AP) ACE will work to ensure that the education students receive is tailored to meet their individual needs and designed to give them the skills to improve their chances in life whilst accessing as broad a curriculum as possible.

We aim to support the reintegration of students into full time education in school, further education, or employment if possible and appropriate.

For many of our students it can often be difficult to ‘unpick’ what is a ‘traditional’ SEND need, from what might be a trauma response, a mental health or medical need, or a behavioural need. For many of our students, all aspects are intertwined, and we therefore take a holistic view of what the needs of the child are and put in place support, provision and intervention that best meets these needs- whatever this might be.

All children and young people “deserve to get the support they need to thrive and prepare for happy, healthy and productive adulthoods. For children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or in alternative provision, this is especially vital” (*Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan – The Green paper, March 2023*). All children and young people who attend ACE Schools, have needs that could not be met through mainstream provision and require additional support in order to successfully access learning which is why they are on roll with us.

This is why supporting SEND underlies all aspects of school provision- curriculum, pastoral or planning for the future. It is an intrinsic thread that should run through everything we do to support our students.

All staff at ACE are here to support students to access learning regardless of their needs. Every teacher is considered a teacher of Special Educational Needs. Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress of learners in their class, even where learners have access to Teaching Assistants (TAs). Quality First Teaching is differentiated to meet the needs of the majority of the learners. Some learners will need something additional to and different from what is provided. This is SEND provision.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy and information report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (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 (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCos) and the SEND information report

3. Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Children and Families Act 2014 and Revised SEND Code of Practice (2015) state:

"Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they: -

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in school."

Special educational provision includes that which is additional to, or different from the provision generally made for pupils of the same age.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as 'a person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' Thus, the legal definition of disability is not the same as the definition of special educational needs.

It is therefore possible to be disabled under the Equality Act and not have SEND, and vice versa. It is also possible to be both disabled under the Equality Act and have SEN. As advised in the, SEND Code of Practice 2015, the school accepts that a medical diagnosis may mean that a child is disabled but not necessarily have SEN. In this case DfE statutory guidance on 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs', will be followed ('Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs' please see separate policy).

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

4. Objectives of SEND Provision Within ACE

- To provide the best possible experience for all pupils, within a safe, caring, respectful and stimulating environment to reduce barriers to learning.
- To ensure maximum access and progress for all children.
- For all practitioners to be teachers of pupils with additional needs and to differentiate according to the needs of the children in their care.
- To meet the physical, emotional, mental health and intellectual needs of all our children.
- To involve parents and carers in the implementation of programmes of support.
- To involve external agencies as part of the school support system.
- To monitor progress of all children in order to enable appropriate action to be taken.
- To use early identification, assessment and intervention as the key to meeting the needs of individual students.

- To involve children in decision making and problem solving through a person-centred planning approach, listening to pupil voice wherever possible.
- To have due regard to the Revised SEN Code of Practice 2015, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Children and Families Act 2014, and other statutory guidance, and that these requirements are implemented effectively within the school.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The SENDCO

ACE is privileged to have a number of SENDCOs to support across our bases.

Rachel Crozier has overall responsibility for SEND across the school and specifically oversees Plymouth & Devon learners. Email address: Rachel.crozier@transformingfutures.org.uk .

Roberta Lewin is SENDCO with oversight of learners within our Cornwall Bases. Email address: Roberta.lewin@transformingfutures.org.uk .

Xanthe Bulley is SENDCO who supports across our Plymouth & Exeter bases. Email address: Xanthe.bulley@transformingfutures.org.uk .

They will:

- Work with the headteacher, SLT and provision leads to determine the strategic development of SEND support and provision across the school, ensuring the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support, high quality teaching and transitional support
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support as part of daily provision with appropriate resources to effectively meet needs.

6. SEND Information Report- Whole School

Students with SEN and/or disabilities could have difficulties with one or more of the following categories of need:

- **Cognition and Learning**, including specific literacy difficulties.
- **Communication and Interaction**, for example, autistic spectrum condition, speech and language difficulties, sensory processing disorder.
- **Social, emotional mental health**, including ADHD and a range of mental health conditions.
- **Sensory and/or physical**, including hearing and visual impairments.

6.1 Identification, assessment and monitoring progress for pupils with SEND

- When referred to our school, in consultation with parents, and if appropriate other professionals who may be involved, ACE will decide whether additional SEND support is required and carry out further assessment to identify barriers to learning and the nature of their difficulties if needed.
- ACE will pay regard to advice and information from students, parents and previous settings at transition points; liaising as necessary to continue the use of successful strategies and approaches.
- The identification of a student's strengths and difficulties is part of our standard admissions procedures.
- ACE make use of a range of appropriate screenings and assessments to identify needs. If needed these will only be used by appropriately trained and qualified staff.
- We will seek advice from advisory services and outside agencies including the Educational Psychology Service, CAMHS, Speech and Language Service, Local Authority support services etc.
- Progress of all students across the Service, including those identified with SEND is regularly tracked, reviewed and monitored.
- Baseline assessment and school data is used to ensure appropriate target setting is in place so that lack of appropriate progress is identified.
- Good communication between staff is seen as vital and teachers are held responsible and accountable for pupil progress within their class.
- We review and evaluate provision regularly in the light of the information gathered following the **graduated approach** and the four-part cycle of **assess- plan- do- review**. We repeat this process throughout the year.
- Interventions and actions are then put in place and adjusted as appropriate.

6.2 Request for Statutory Assessment (An Education, Health and Care Plan)

If despite receiving individualized support and intervention, a student:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period.
- continues working at levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age.
- has social, emotional or mental health difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group.
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

-then it may be appropriate to consider, in consultation with parents and any outside agencies involved, whether a **statutory assessment** of need by the Local Authority (LA) may be beneficial.

- The LA will then consider the evidence submitted and may decide that they feel the student has need for special educational provision which cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available within school.

- The result of this process of assessment may be the issuing of an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**.

An Education, Health and Care Plan will:

- Identify the desired outcomes and special educational provision necessary to meet these needs.
- Identify the type and name of the school where the provision is to be made.
- Include relevant information on the social and/or health needs and provision (if this is already in place).

Slow progress and low attainment do not automatically mean a pupil has SEND or requires an EHCP. There are sometimes multiple reasons that need to be considered.

6.3 What support can ACE provide for pupils with SEND.

ACE believe in an inclusive approach towards education for all children regardless of their abilities ensuring they have a sense of positive well-being and above all feel safe, respected and happy within our settings.

ACE believe that every child has the fundamental right to access a broad, creative and enjoyable education experience.

Students are placed within a particular base dependent on appropriate identification of their main areas of need or if appropriate, personalised 'bespoke' packages can be put in place to support more complex needs.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. **Quality First Teaching** is the first step in responding to pupils who have SEND. This will be differentiated for individual pupils. This sits alongside our whole school **trauma informed approach** to meeting needs.

In addition to this through the graduated approach:

- Additional key adult support is available to all students. This may be within their teaching groups or provided as interventions outside of lessons.
- Class size and staffing ratios can vary dependent on the individual Base and needs of the student but tends to range from 4-10 students at most if they are within a group.
- Some students will have access to personalised packages of learning. This may include additional support from key adults at all times both in and out of lessons.
- We offer an alternative and flexible curriculum which is carefully created to try to meet the needs of our students in the first instance as part of our universal offer to all. We work closely with a wide range of external vocational providers and services to provide students as many curriculum options as possible.
- Suitable interventions and targeted or specialist additional support (school based and external) will be put in place as needed to meet a student's needs and enable progress to be made. This may be time limited or part of their continuous provision. For example, precision teaching, Lego therapy, trauma informed profiling and activities, literacy and reading interventions such as Read, Write, Inc; play therapy, music therapy, art therapy, sensory diets, access to counselling, social skills programmes and so on.

- We have a dedicated pastoral support team on every base who work supporting students, staff and parents as needed.
- We will seek to involve other professionals as appropriate with your permission and consent.
- All students at ACE have regular meetings with key staff and parents (at least once a term) to monitor, review and evaluate progress. We are happy to continuously review and adapt provision and interventions as needed in order to best support the child or young person's needs.
- We will offer support within the transition into other settings – whether this is a return to a mainstream school, specialist provision or post 16 provision.

6.4 Access to additional external support

Further advice and professional support are sought and implemented as is considered necessary for the individual needs of the children. Many of our students may also receive direct intervention from outside services. We therefore work closely with a range of organisations including:

- The Educational Psychology Service
- CAMHS
- Speech and Language Team
- Communication and Interaction Team (CIT)
- Sensory and Physical Outreach services
- School Counsellors
- Careers Southwest (CSW) or other independent careers advisers
- Health
- Social Services
- Inclusion, Attendance & Welfare Service (IAWS- formerly the EWS)
- Youth Service
- Family Psychotherapists
- Youth Offending Service
- Drug and alcohol support such as Harbour

Parents may also be encouraged to contact Independent Advice and Support services if felt it would be beneficial for them.

For Plymouth families, please contact [Plymouth Information, Advice and Support for SEND - Supplying you with information, advice and support \(plymouthias.org.uk\)](http://plymouthias.org.uk)

For those families living in Devon, please contact [Home - Devon Information Advice & Support \(devonias.org.uk\)](http://devonias.org.uk)

For those families living in Cornwall, please contact [Home - SEND IASS - Cornwall \(cornwallsendiass.org.uk\)](http://cornwallsendiass.org.uk)

6.5 Involving Parents and Students

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with SEND to achieve their potential. ACE recognizes that parents hold key information and have valuable knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them.

All parents will be supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

The majority of our parents/ carers have weekly, if not daily contact from key members of staff involved with their child.

Parents/carers are invited to participate in regular review meetings (at least every term) to discuss concerns, progress and to be involved in setting targets with appropriate intervention strategies to help the student both in school and at home. Our staff will happily visit you at home if this is more appropriate.

Children and young people have a unique knowledge of their own needs. They will be encouraged to participate in all decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the reviews and transition processes when appropriate.

ACE use a person-centred planning approach whenever possible when working with a young person and believe that **student voice** is key to successful collaboration.

6.6 Appropriately Trained Staff

ACE work to the principle that all staff are responsible for meeting the individual needs of all pupils that they work with, and so all teachers and staff are equipped to deal with a diverse range of needs.

Therefore:

- All members of staff attend relevant training to meet the specific needs of the children within their cohort or particular role. For example, this may include supporting literacy/ASC/ Mental Health/ Child Protection etc.
- Specialist training is delivered on a regular basis by appropriately qualified staff (i.e. the SENDCo) or specialist external support services such as CAMHS or Speech & Language Team as required.
- Individual needs of staff are also identified and audited regularly to ensure that all staff training needs are met.

6.7 What if you're not happy?

Parents should feel free to contact the school to discuss any concerns which will be dealt with appropriately and promptly. Please liaise with your relevant base in the first instance.

Any formal complaints or concerns that you as a parent may have regarding the provision available and in place for your child should be made in line with ACE's complaints policy.

Further details and a copy of the Complaints Policy can be found on the main Trust website [Trust Policies - Transforming Futures Trust](#)

Our **Head Teacher is Mrs Ruth Westwood**. Please contact the main ACE office (on 01752 396100) if you wish to arrange an appointment to see her or speak to her directly.

6.8 Where do I get more information?

For further information, parents are advised to speak to the relevant Base Manager, Pastoral Support staff or learning mentor in the first instance.

ACE is privileged to have a number of SENDCos to support across our bases. You are welcome to contact any of them as below:

Rachel Crozier has overall responsibility for SEND across the school. Email address: Rachel.crozier@transformingfutures.org.uk .

Roberta Lewin is SENDCo with oversight of learners within our Cornwall Bases. Email address: Roberta.lewin@transformingfutures.org.uk .

Xanthe Bulley is SENDCo who supports across our Plymouth & Devon bases. Email address: Xanthe.bulley@transformingfutures.org.uk .

Please also look on our website- [ACE Schools - Home \(transformingfutures.org.uk\)](https://transformingfutures.org.uk)

Or at our latest inspection report – [ACE Schools - Inspections \(transformingfutures.org.uk\)](https://transformingfutures.org.uk)

6.9 The Local Authority's 'Local Offer'

Local Authorities are obliged to set out their local offer regarding the special educational provision that all early years' providers, schools, post-16 providers and other institutions within their locality are able to provide to children and young people with SEN.

For Plymouth- further information on this is available on [Plymouth Online Directory - Plymouth Online Directory](#)

For Devon- further information on this is available on [Special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) Local Offer - Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

For Cornwall- further information on this is available on [SEND Local Offer | Care and Support in Cornwall](#)

We greatly value the input that parents make to their child's education and aim to work closely with parents to provide the best support possible. We welcome feedback from parents and other key stakeholders. If you would like to comment on the usefulness or clarity of information in the SEND Information Report which is also published as part of the LA's Local Offer, then please contact relevant ACE staff.

We are grateful for the contributions we have received so far from a number of parents/ carers.

7. Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on a regular basis by the SEND Team and relevant staff in conjunction with the governing body and Trustees; any key changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

Appendix I – Version Control Amendments

Version No	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	15.06.16	
2.0	24.05.21	
3.0	06.06.22	
4.0	11.06.24	Amendments to staffing. Updated links. Updated introduction. Some wording changes throughout.

