SEND policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy outlines the commitment and approach of the Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust to meeting the educational needs of pupils/students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across our academies. It sets out the Trust's current statutory duties and the expectations placed on academies, leaders and staff in delivering inclusive, high-quality provision.

The Trust also recognises the direction of travel set out in the 2026 schools white paper and accompanying SEND reform consultation. While the current legal framework remains in force unless and until national reforms are enacted, this policy reflects the Trust's intention to strengthen inclusive mainstream practice, early identification, timely support, partnership with families, and improved outcomes in areas including progress, attendance, participation, transition and preparation for adulthood.

1.2 Legal Framework

This policy complies with current legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- the Children and Families Act 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted
- the SEND Code of Practice 2015 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2024 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/535/made
- the Equality Act 2010 https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
- Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (September 2014)
- Further education: guide to the 0 to 25 SEND code of practice Advice for further education colleges, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, and independent specialist colleges approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348883/Further_education__guide_to_the_0_to_25_SEND_code_of_practice.pdf
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting students at school with medical conditions (December 2015) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (as updated annually) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

The Trust is also reviewing practice in light of the 2026 schools white paper and accompanying SEND reform consultation. References in this policy to emerging reforms,

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including layered support and individual support documentation, are included to support future readiness and do not replace current statutory duties.

2 Aims & Objectives

2.1 The Heart of Mercia Multi Academy Trust recognises the achievements and abilities of all our pupils/students. We value the contributions that every child and young person can make to the educational and cultural life of our academies. We are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

All HoM staff will actively seek to raise achievement, remove barriers to learning and increase physical and curricular access for all. All pupils/students with SEND are valued, respected and equal members of our community.

2.2 This policy works in conjunction with HoM academy SEND policies and other relevant policies which safeguard the interests and welfare of children.

Policies are reviewed annually or updated if national guidance requires, in-year. These include:

- Accessibility Plan (HoM and Local)
- Anti-bullying Policy (Local)
- Safeguarding Policy (HoM and Local)
- Behaviour and Conduct Policy (Local)
- SEND Information Report (Local)

Relevant policies can be found on the HoM and Academy websites (below).

Academy	Website
The Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust	Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust
John Kyrle High School	John Kyrle High School - Home (jkhs.org.uk)
The Chantry School	Chantry School – Excellence in all, Excellence for all
Hereford Sixth Form College	Welcome to Hereford Sixth form college
King Edward VI College Stourbridge	King Edward VI College, Stourbridge (kedst.ac.uk)
Worcester Sixth Form College	Home Page - Worcester Sixth Form College (wsfc.ac.uk)

2.3 We believe in raising aspirations and expectations for all children and young people in our academies. In relation to pupils/students with SEND, we focus on the outcomes for each individual and on removing barriers to learning, participation, attendance, belonging and successful transition.

We believe that, wherever possible, local children and young people should attend local schools and colleges and have their needs met through inclusive mainstream practice, with timely access to specialist support where required. We are committed to early, fair and effective support and to strong partnership working with families and external services.

2.4 Our overarching aim is to create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect for achievement and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all children and young people can thrive. To achieve this, the Trust will:

- work within the current SEND Code of Practice and wider statutory guidance, while remaining responsive to national reform.
- identify needs early and provide support as soon as possible.
- secure full access to learning through high-quality adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments and evidence-informed provision.
- involve parents/carers and children or young people in planning, review and decision-making.
- promote strong attendance, participation, enrichment, successful transition and preparation for adulthood.
- monitor the impact of provision through clear measures including progress, attendance, engagement, behaviour, transition and stakeholder voice.

3 Definitions and Types

3.1 Definitions

The list below includes key terms used across the Trust. It is intended to support common understanding and is not exhaustive.

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) refers to a child or young person who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- Disability has the meaning given in the Equality Act 2010 and may require reasonable adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services to prevent substantial disadvantage.
- SENCo means the designated person with responsibility for leading and coordinating SEND provision within an academy.
- Individual support documentation refers to the academy's working documents used to record needs, classroom strategies, provision and review arrangements. This may currently include local formats such as pupil learning profiles, individual learning reports or support plans.
- Personalised support plan refers to documentation used by an academy when requesting a statutory assessment from the local authority.

- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) means the statutory plan setting out a child or young person's needs, outcomes, provision and placement where issued by the local authority.
- SEND register means the academy record of pupils/students identified as requiring SEND support and/or having an EHCP.
- The Trust recognises emerging national proposals relating to digital Individual Support Plans (ISPs). Until any reforms are enacted, academies will continue to use current statutory processes and local documentation.

3.2 Types of SEND

SEND is divided into four types, although it should be recognised that some conditions cut across the typology below:

- **Communication and Interaction** - this includes children or young people with speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia, hearing impairment, and those who demonstrate features within the autistic spectrum.

- **Cognition and Learning** - this includes children or young people who demonstrate features of moderate, severe, or profound learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, or dyspraxia.

- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health** - this includes children or young people who may be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive, or disturbing, hyperactive or lack concentration.

- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs** - this includes children or young people with sensory, multi- sensory and physical difficulties.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring SEND policies and procedures are in place and adhered to across the Trust.

- It ensures that the Trust creates a culture of inclusion, valuing the contributions that every child or young person can make to the educational and cultural life of our academies. It ensures that Academies offer an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all pupils whatever their needs or abilities.
- The Board of Trustees, through the Scheme of Delegation, delegates the day-to-day management and implementation of SEND to the academies of the Trust and Principals/Heads of each Academy within the Trust.

4.2 The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will ensure that procedures are in place to monitor that SEND policies and procedures are in place and adhered to across the Trust.

4.3 Academy Principal/Head

- Creates a culture where the inclusion of all pupils/students is paramount, and staff feel confident to challenge over any concerns.
- Ensures that the SEND policies and related procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support, and resources, including cover arrangements, when necessary, to enable the SENCo to carry out their role effectively.
- Works closely with the SENCo and ensures job descriptions reflect the role.
- Ensures induction and training of all staff.
- Works closely with the Central Trust team and Chief Executive as required.
- Monitors and reports to the academy LGB and Chief Executive as appropriate about the implementation of the SEND policy and related procedures and outcomes.
- The Principal/Head may delegate this role to a designated member of the academy Senior Leadership Team.

4.4 Academy SENCo

- The Academy has appointed a member of staff with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision.
- This member of staff will take lead responsibility for SEND arrangements. This is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- This person will have the appropriate status and authority within the Academy to perform the duties of the post.
- They will be given the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on SEND arrangements, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children or young people.

Their responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school/college SEND policy.
- Co-ordinating the provision for children or young people with special educational needs.
- Ensuring that an agreed, consistent approach is adopted.
- Liaising with and advising other school/college staff.
- Helping staff to identify children or young people with special educational needs.
- Conducting assessments and observations of children or young people with specific learning problems.
- Supporting teachers in devising strategies, drawing up support plans/SEN guides.
- Setting targets appropriate to the needs of the child or young person and advising on appropriate resources and materials for use with children and young people with

special educational needs and on the effective use of materials and personnel in the classroom.

- Liaising closely with parents of pupils/students with SEND alongside teachers, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process.
- Liaising with outside agencies, arranging meetings, and providing a link between these agencies, teachers, and parents.
- Maintaining the academy's SEND register and records.
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils/students with SEND through the use of existing school assessment information.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Liaising with the SENCos in receiving schools or colleges to help provide a smooth transition from one to the other.

4.5 All HoM Staff

All staff are responsible for creating inclusive classrooms and learning environments, implementing agreed strategies and reasonable adjustments, and following the guidance in this policy and that provided by the SENCo and academy leaders.

All staff are expected to contribute to early identification, deliver high-quality adaptive teaching, monitor the impact of provision, communicate concerns promptly, and work in partnership with families and external professionals where appropriate. SEND is the responsibility of all staff, not only of specialist teams.

5 Key Principles

- **Inclusive mainstream practice**

  We are committed to an inclusive education system in which children and young people are supported to succeed in their local mainstream setting wherever possible, with timely access to specialist expertise where required.

- **Person-centred partnership**

  Our approach is child and young person centred and is strengthened through collaboration with parents/carers, staff, the local authority and external agencies.

- **Early support and clear accountability**

  We aim to identify need early, respond proportionately, and evaluate the effectiveness of provision through progress, attendance, engagement, behaviour, transition and stakeholder voice.

6 Identification and Assessment

- **Early identification**

  HoM academies have processes in place to identify and assess pupils/students with SEND as early as possible, drawing on teacher assessment, pastoral information,

attendance and behaviour information, parental views, pupil voice and specialist advice where required.

- **Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR)**
  Academies follow the APDR cycle to identify need, agree outcomes, implement provision and review impact. High-quality adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments remain the starting point for all pupils, with additional intervention and specialist advice used where appropriate.

The following factors alone do not constitute SEND, although they may coexist with SEND and require careful consideration:

- attendance or punctuality concerns
- health and welfare needs
- being subject to a child protection or child in need plan
- English as an additional language
- disadvantage or being in receipt of pupil premium
- looked after status or service family status

HoM and its staff observe two key duties under the Equality Act 2010: they must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people, and they must make reasonable adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to avoid substantial disadvantage.

Provision and Support

HoM academies provide support through a graduated and responsive approach. Current statutory arrangements remain in place. In reviewing provision, academies may describe support through a layered model to aid clarity and future readiness:

- **Universal provision** – high-quality teaching, adaptive practice, reasonable adjustments, pastoral support and inclusive routines available to all pupils.
- **Targeted support** – additional short- or medium-term support, intervention or strategy beyond ordinarily available classroom practice.
- **Targeted plus support** – more specialist input, advice or coordinated provision where a pupil requires more sustained or complex support.
- **Specialist provision** – provision delivered through statutory processes and/or highly specialist support, including EHCP arrangements where applicable.

Each academy of the Trust has a designated individual responsible for overseeing SEND provision at academy level and liaising with external agencies. Support should be clearly documented, understood by staff, and reviewed regularly with pupils/students and parents/carers.

8 Involvement of Parents/Carers

HoM academies actively involve parents/carers in the assessment and planning process and encourage open communication to ensure the best outcomes for pupils/students with SEND.

9 Staff Training and Development

HoM and its academies provide regular training and professional development opportunities for staff to improve their capacity to support pupils/students with SEND effectively.

10 Transition Planning

HoM Academies ensure effective transition planning for pupils/students with SEND, whether transitioning within academies or to other educational settings.

11 Review and Monitoring

11.1 Annual Review

This SEND policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.

11.2 Monitoring

The Trust and its academies will monitor the progress of students with SEND and the effectiveness of SEND policies through regular assessments and data analysis.

12 Complaints and Concerns

HoM and its academies have procedures in place for handling complaints and concerns related to SEND provision. Parents/carers and pupils/students are encouraged to raise any issues promptly.

13 Equality Impact

The Trust's responsibilities towards promoting equality, diversity and inclusion have been considered when drafting this policy.