



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

2023-25

Gordon Children's Academy

Part of Thinking School's Academy Trust

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CHILD FIRST – ASPIRE – CHALLENGE – ACHIEVE



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-ofpractice-0-to-25>)
- SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Part 3 Duties on Schools – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
- Schedule 1 regulation 51- Information to be included in the SEN information report
- Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012
- SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Complaints Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

This policy was developed with the governing body, teachers and incorporates actions from feedback provided from parents/carers of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Definition of SEND

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.



A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty 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. SEN Code of Practice (2015, p 15)

Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’ SEN Code of Practice (2015, p16).

1 The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at the school

At The Gordon Children’s Academy, we can make provision for every kind of frequently occurring special educational need without an Education, Health and Care Plan, for instance Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, speech and language needs, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Asperger’s syndrome, learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. There are other kinds of special educational needs which do not occur as frequently and with which the school is less familiar, but we can access training and advice so that these kinds of needs can be met.

The school also currently meets the needs of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans with the following kinds of special educational need: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia, Global Developmental Delay, Autism Spectrum Disorder, significant Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties, Speech and Language disorders. Decisions on the admission of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans are made by the Local Authority.

The admission arrangements for pupils without Education, Health and Care Plans do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs.

2 Information about the policy for identification and assessment of pupils with SEN

At The Gordon Children’s Academy we monitor the progress of all pupils six times a year to review their academic progress. We also use a range of assessments with all the pupils at various points, e.g. reading age test, spelling age test.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if special educational needs have not been identified, we put in place extra support to enable the pupil to catch up. Examples of extra support are: Targeted support in class,



extra resources in class (move and sit cushion, writing slope, pencil grip, weighted lap cushion, word mats, fiddle toy, visual timetable, individual work station, now and next board, ear defenders), Cognition and Learning interventions (phonics, reading, Maths, writing, Lexia, handwriting, precision teaching), Social and Emotional interventions (social skills groups, emotional support, mediation, lunchtime provisions, anger management, Learning Mentor support), Physical and Sensory interventions (sensory circuits, BEAM, Fizzy, heavy work), Communication and Interaction interventions (speech and language programmes). These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as 'notional SEN funding'

Some pupils may continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents/carers, we will use a range of assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty. At The Gordon Children's Academy, we are experienced in using the following assessment tools: Lucid Dyslexia Screener, Speech and Language Link assessments, Lexia baseline assessment, Visual Stress Screener. And we have access to external advisors who are able to use the following assessment tools: Cognitive assessment administered by Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language assessment administered by Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapy assessment administered by Occupational Therapist.

The purpose of this more detailed assessment is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to enable the pupil to make better progress. These will be shared with parents/carers, put into a SEND Support Agreement, reviewed three times a year and refined / revised if necessary. At this point we will have identified that the pupil has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the pupil which is additional and different to what is normally available.

If the pupil is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the pupil as having a special educational need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources he or she will not be identified with special educational needs. When any change in identification of SEND takes place, parents/carers will be notified.

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used.

3 Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have Education, Health and Care Plans, including:

3a How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils



Each review of the SEND Support Agreement will be informed by the views of the pupil, parents/carers, class teacher and the assessment information from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17) describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

For pupils with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan there will be an annual review of the provision made for the child, which will enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of the special provision. The collation of all annual review evaluations of effectiveness will be reported to the governing body.

3b the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked six times per year. In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments. The assessments we use at The Gordon Children's Academy are detailed in section 2. Using these it will be possible to see if pupils are increasing their level of skills in key areas.

If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made, the SEND Support Agreement will be reviewed and adjusted.

3c the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered, SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.37)

At The Gordon Children's Academy, the quality of teaching was judged to be Good at our most recent Ofsted inspection in February 2017.

3d how the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs



At The Gordon Children's Academy, we adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in Education, Health and Care Plans.

As part of our requirement to keep the appropriateness of our curriculum and learning environment under review, the Governors regularly assess the suitability of current provisions, including the use of accessibility ramps and lifts to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The school also regularly reviews its curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all its learners, making adjustments where necessary. Staff have access to appropriate resources and expertise and the school regularly provides high quality CPD from external specialists. The CPD programme reflects the needs of the schools' current pupils and is reviewed termly.

3e additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs

As part of our budget we receive 'notional SEN funding'. This funding is used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and different teaching for pupils requiring SEN support. The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6000 per year of resource for pupils with high needs, and above that amount the Local Authority should provide top up to the school.

3f how the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at The Gordon Children's Academy are available to pupils with special educational needs either with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan. Where it is necessary, the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity.

3g support that is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs

At The Gordon Children's Academy, we understand that an important feature of the school is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching for instance PSHE lessons, circle time sessions, social skills groups, emotional support sessions, anger management groups, mediation sessions, lunchtime provisions and indirectly with every conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.



For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we also can provide the following: mentor time with a member of the senior leadership team, external referral to CAHMS, Emotional Literacy Support sessions and Learning Mentor support.

Pupils in the early stages of emotional and social development because of their special educational needs will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately. This will usually require additional and different resources, beyond that required by pupils who do not need this support.

4 The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator

The SENCo at The Gordon Children's Academy is Mrs Langiano, who is a qualified teacher and is working towards the National Award for SEN Co-ordination.

Mrs Langiano is available to contact via the school office.

5 Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured

All teachers and teaching assistants have had the following awareness training:

- ASD Awareness - EIPEN training
- Attachment - GDPR
- Behaviour – reviewing and tracking - Learning Environment
- Behaviour – the Stepped Approach - Marking and Feedback Policy
- Behaviour Management - Memory and Cognition
- Behaviour Policy - Performance Management
- Professional Growth - PIXL analysis-DTT/QLA
- Dyslexia - Questioning using the Q-Matrix
- English the Gordon way - Safeguarding and De-escalation
- SEND Code of Practice - Thinking Hats
- SEND support Agreements - Thinking Keys
- Objectives - Thinking Skills
- Supporting pupils with social and emotional needs - TSAT Moderation
- Working Memory

Times Tables



Where a training need is identified beyond this we will find a provider who is able to deliver it. Training providers we can approach are: Bradfields Specialist Support Service, Marlborough Outreach Team, Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy. Where needed, we will also contact other providers to deliver more specialist training. The cost of training is covered by the notional SEN funding.

6 Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the notional SEN funding.

7 The arrangements for consulting parents/carers of children with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

All parents/carers of pupils at The Gordon Children's Academy are invited to discuss the progress of their children on two occasions a year. In addition, we are happy to arrange meetings outside of these times. As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a special educational need. All such provision will be recorded, tracked and evaluated on Provision Map Writer.

If following this normal provision, improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents/carers to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having special educational needs because special educational provision is being made and the parent will be invited to all planning and reviews of this provision. Parents/carers will be actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review.

In addition to this, parents/carers of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents/carers.

8 The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning. Parents/carers are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

9 The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school



The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at The Gordon Children's Academy are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents/carers to discuss their concerns with the following to resolve the issue before making a formal complaint to the Chair of the governing body:

- Class Teacher
- Phase Leader
- Assistant Headteachers
- SENCo
- Deputy Headteacher
- Head of School
- Executive Headteacher

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, where there is a statutory right for parents/carers to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

10 How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The governing body have engaged with the following bodies:

- Access to Medway's School Support Group when needed for advice for specific pupils
- A Service Level Agreement with Educational Psychology service
- Access to local authority's service level agreement with Speech and Language Therapy Services and Occupational Therapy Services for pupils with requirement for direct therapy or advice



- Access to Medway Children's Social Services when needed
- Access to Medway Community Healthcare when needed
- Access to Medway Young Persons' Wellbeing Service when needed

11 The contact details of support services for the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and children and young people with SEND up to age 25 (Code of Practice 2015, 6.39)

There are external support services available for parents/carers of children with SEND. The contact details for these services are set out below:

- Children and Family Hubs in Medway – website:
https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children_and_families/323/choosing_childcare/4
- Medway Autism Group and Information Centre (MAGIC) – phone: 01634 570706, website:
<http://medway-magic.org/>
- Medway Family Information Service (FIS) – phone: 01634 332195, website:
https://admissions.medway.gov.uk/Synergy/fisd_welcome.aspx
- Medway SEND Information, Advice and Support Service – phone: 01634566303 website:
<https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/send/medway-sendias/>
- Medway Community Healthcare – Child Health Service – website:
<https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-services/child-health-service>
- St. Augustine's Parent Support Group for Parents of Children with ADHD – phone: 01634 851312, website: <https://staspsq.wixsite.com/adhd/upcoming-meetings>
- The Challenging Behaviour Foundation – phone: 0300 666 0126, website:
<http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/>
- Young Minds – parents/carers helpline – phone: 0808 802 5544, website:
<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

12 The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At The Gordon Children's Academy, we work closely with the educational settings used by the pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make sure the transfer is as seamless as possible. We understand what a stressful time moving schools can be therefore many strategies are in place to enable the pupil's transition to be as smooth as possible. These include:



- Phone conversations between the previous or receiving schools prior to the pupil joining/leaving. These phone conversations are shared with Class Teachers to ensure that they are aware of the needs of any new pupil.
- Where a pupil may have more specialised needs, a separate meeting can be set up with Mrs Langiano, the previous school's SENCO and the parents/carers.
- Mrs Langiano is always willing to meet parents/carers prior to their child joining the school or after they have started.
- All pupils attend at least one transition session where they spend some time with their new class and teacher.
- Additional visits are also arranged for pupils who need extra time in their new school - The Parent, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) welcomes new members.

Children joining the Foundation Stage (FS)

- There is a meeting for new parents/carers in the Summer Term (Term 6) for all children who will be joining the Foundation Stage in September.
- Transition events for children take place in the Summer Term.
- Children are visited at their current setting by a member of the Foundation Stage team before joining.

Children joining at other times

- Children who join The Gordon Children's Academy at a later date are given a tour of the school by a member of the senior leadership team and the provision offered is explained.
- Previous schools are contacted to discuss any concerns and information is shared.

Transition to a new class each academic year

- Transition to a new class within The Gordon Children's Academy is facilitated by several sessions to meet new class teachers and get used to a new class environment.
- Pupils who may find this more difficult are given additional support where needed.

Children leaving The Gordon Children's Academy to join other schools

- Where notice is given, the SENCO can liaise with the new school to pass on information.
- All paperwork is sent to the new school as soon as possible.

We also contribute information to a pupils' onward destination by providing information to the next setting.



13 Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200139/social_care_and_health/466/medway_s_local_offer/1 and parents/carers without internet access can make an appointment with the SENCo for support to gain the information they require.