



RYE HILLS
ACADEMY

Special Educational Needs Policy

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1. Introduction

The North East Learning Trust and Rye Hills Academy have high expectations of our students and staff. We believe students have the right to expect a first-class education, delivered by teachers who are committed to making learning challenging and rewarding.

Ours is a caring community, one based on mutual respect, a school where students feel safe and supported throughout their time with us. The emphasis on good behaviour means that lessons are taught in an ordered and encouraging learning environment. Students are treated as individuals and we recognise and celebrate their different abilities.

At Rye Hills Academy we support and value the abilities of all our students. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every person in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every student as an individual. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life.

The Academy adopts a 'whole student, whole school approach' to management and provision of support for special educational needs. All staff work to ensure inclusion of all students. The school is committed to ensuring that students with special educational needs can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes.

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

In this policy, 'special educational needs' refers to a learning difficulty that requires special educational provision.

The SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2014) states the following:

- A child or young person has SEN if they have 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 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 at the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions.

a) For children aged two or more, special education 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. For children under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

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b) A child under compulsory school age who falls within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

c) Post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The term SEN is used in this Code across the 0-25 age range but includes LDD.

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

3. Definition of Disabled Children and Young People

Many children and young people who have SEN may 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 includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

4. Aims and Objectives

We aim to provide every student with access to a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*.

Our aims are:

- To ensure that all students with SEND have their needs identified to support academic progression and continued good physical and mental health and wellbeing
- To ensure that every student is protected from harm and neglect and that every effort is being made to enable them to learn and grow independently
- To ensure all students can access a balanced curriculum, differentiated where appropriate
- To ensure that all students with SEND can fully access the curriculum by providing extra support or additional resources where appropriate and by removing their barriers to learning.
- To enable students to achieve their best and to become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further education or higher education or training.
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with SEND students.
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014.

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Our objectives are:

- Identify the needs of students with SEND as early as possible. This is most effectively done by gathering information from parents, Local Authority, health and care services, primary schools and any agency working with the student prior to his/her entry into the school.
- Monitor the progress of all students to aid the identification of students with SEN. Continuous monitoring of those students with SEND by their teachers will help to ensure that they are able to reach their full potential.
- Make appropriate provision to overcome all barriers to learning and ensure students with SEND have full access to a broad and balance curriculum. This will be co-ordinated by the SENCO and will be carefully monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that individual targets are being met and all students' needs are catered for.
- Work with parents/carers to gain a better understanding of their child/children and involve them in all stages of their child/children's education. This includes supporting them in terms of understanding SEND procedures and practices, providing regular reports on their child/children's progress, and providing information, where necessary, on the provisions for students within the school, and the effectiveness of the SEND policy and the school's SEND work.
- Work with outside agencies and support the work of external agencies when the students' needs cannot be met by the school alone.
- Create a school environment where students feel safe to voice their opinions of their own needs.

5. Responsibility for the Coordination of SEND Provision

The person responsible for overseeing the provision for students with SEND is, Ms C Ellis, NELT Strategic Lead.

The person coordinating the day-to-day provision of education for students with SEND is Ms V Watson, SENCO.

6. Arrangements for Coordinating SEND Provision

The SENCO, Lead Learning Mentors and Assistant Learning Mentors will hold details of all students on the SEND register. The team will inform staff with relevant information for individual students, as well as developing Passports to monitor progress of SEND students.

All staff can access:

- The Academy SEND Policy.
- A copy of the full SEND Register.
- Guidance on identification in the Code of Practice (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and students with EHC plans).

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- Information on individual students' special educational need, including SEN and EHC plans, targets set and copies of their SEND Passports.
- Practical advice, teaching strategies, and information about types of special educational needs and disabilities.
- Information on the staff IT system on individual students and their special needs and requirements.

This information is made accessible to all staff and, where necessary, in a clear summary version to aid the effective co-ordination of the school's SEND provision. In this way, every staff member will have complete and up-to-date information about all students with special educational needs and disabilities and their requirements, which will enable them to provide for the individual needs of all students, helping to remove barriers in the classroom.

“The Lamb Inquiry (2009) and the DfE (2011) make it clear that good SEN policies should, as well as being short and clear, be developed in collaboration with parents. There is also an increasing interest in making policies and SEN provision arrangements clear to students. A SEN policy should be aimed at a range of audiences not just teachers and school support staff, but this might be achieved through the provision of summary information for particular groups”.

Rye Hills Academy welcomes further suggestions from parents/carers which may help improve the provision for students with SEND.

7. Admission Arrangements (see also Trust Admissions policy)

The admission arrangements for all students are in accordance with national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. This includes students with any level of SEND, those with EHC plans and those without.

All SEND paperwork and relevant information will be gathered by the SENCO/Lead Learning Mentors/Pastoral staff from our primary feeder schools and any agencies working with the student as soon as possible. If the student is making a transition from another school, a meeting may be set up between the feeder school and the Academy's SENCO to aid the smooth transition of the student and discuss arrangements to be made as well as any other important information relating to that student's needs. Where face to face meetings are not possible, contact will be made via telephone and/or email to ensure that there is a good understanding of why type of provision required.

Where possible the Academy will do its best to ensure that the necessary provisions and preparations are made prior (where possible) to the start of the student's school year. The student will be closely monitored from the start of the new school year to ensure that all the appropriate provisions are in place.

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8. Identification of Student's Needs

Identification

At Rye Hills Academy KS2 data and information gathered prior to entry, will determine the level of initial intervention. As well as this the following graduated approach will be followed.

A Graduated Approach:

Quality First Teaching

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who may have SEND. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class:

- a) Any students who are falling significantly outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators and grade boundaries will be monitored.
- b) Once a student has been identified as *possibly* having SEND, he/she will be closely monitored by staff to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties.
- c) The student's class teacher will take steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities that will aid the student's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied.
- d) The SENCO will be consulted as needed for support and advice and may wish to observe the student in class.
- e) Through (b) and (d) it can be determined which level of provision the student will need going forward.
- f) If a student has recently been removed from the SEND list, he/she may also fall into this category as continued monitoring will be necessary.
- g) Parents/carers will be informed of any concerns and the school action taking place. Parents/carers are encouraged to share information and knowledge with the Academy.
- h) Concerns by teachers and/or parents/carers will be investigated. Students will only be placed on the SEND register once the need is confirmed.
- i) Student progress meetings are used to monitor and assess the progress being made by the student. The frequency of these meetings is dependent on the individual's student's needs and progress being made.

Individual Needs Students (K)

- a) This recognises students who are identified as requiring additional and different help, as well as the regular differentiated curriculum. The Academy puts provision in place

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without resource to regular external advice or additional resources provided by the local authority.

- b) Class/subject teachers collaborate with the SENCO on evidence gathering and identification.
- c) Once the SENCO has been notified, he or she will make their own assessment through reviewing the evidence of identification supplied by the teacher and/or through observation and/or against formal criteria. With this knowledge, the SENCO can help with planning for future in-school support. Action that has already been taken is reviewed and altered in line with the new findings.

9. A Single Category of Need

Where a student has been identified as having SEN, a four-part cycle to remove barriers to learning and to put effective special educational provision will be put in place. All teachers work closely with the SENCO to identify and make provision. This is an evidenced based approach to making provision and the expectation is that staff working with SEND students will have enough knowledge and skills to make a difference. Consultation with parents/carers and students is essential throughout the process.

Assess

Our SENCO and class teachers will work together to analyse needs using a range of sources, including the Academy's approach to student progress, attainment, and behaviour. Consultation is key, and it may be necessary to consult widely both in school, with parents/carers and with external support services to get the best picture of needs. Establishing close links with those responsible for assessment and home school links is also important to us here at the Academy. The assessment should be reviewed regularly.

Plan

This is when the Academy decides to provide SEND support. Parents/carers are formally notified and invited to a planning meeting. Interventions and support are provided in consultation with the parents/carers, child, SENCO, and class teachers. The expected progress, development and behaviour are agreed, and a date for review set. In this planning phase, we identify the gaps in the child's learning and current provision, and what is expected in terms of results following any provision.

Do

This involves providing effective support and interventions with regular feedback to students, parents/carers, and staff about progress. Our SENCO and Learning Support

team support class/subject teachers in any further assessment and provide coaching and mentoring in all aspects of curriculum modification.

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Review

Here at the Academy, we have termly reviews of progress. Review meetings with parents/carers and students occur twice a year. Baseline data and outcomes will guide the review and this information is communicated to parents/carers via school reports and any gaps can be identified and planned for.

10. Referral for Statutory Assessment

For a small number of students, who continue to have significant difficulties and where following reviews and amendments to their SEN Plan over time, have not led to the desired outcome and improved progress, a more structured holistic assessment is required. In these cases, it will be necessary to proceed to a request for additional high needs funding via a Consideration of Statutory Assessment (COSA) or for short term additional resource (STAR).

Statutory assessments are undertaken for students where there are significant special educational needs. It can be undertaken where there is convincing evidence that despite the school, with help from external specialists, taking purposeful and relevant action to overcome the needs, needs cannot be met within the notional/delegated budget.

The application of the EHCP will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents/carers
- Teachers
- SENCO
- Pastoral/Support staff
- Educational Psychologist
- Other professionals.

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set.

A statutory assessment is a multi-agency investigation that aims to define the long-term needs of a student. It may or may not result in an EHCP being drawn up.

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11. Personal Budgets

Our SENCO is involved in contributing to the development and implementation of EHCPs from 2014 onwards. The DfE is committed to introducing personal budgets from 2014 for families of children and young people who are eligible for an EHCP. SENCOs and Headteachers will have key roles to play in partnership planning with families, so that budget expenditure used in school context is educationally appropriate. As an Academy we will be producing Costed Provision maps to ensure that all parents/carers whose child has an EHCP know where their child's money is being spent in school.

12. Access to the Curriculum, Information and Associated Services

Students with SEND will be given access to the curriculum through the specialist SEND provision provided by the Academy as is necessary, as far as possible in line with the needs of the individual.

The systems in the Academy provide, in the main, for students with SEND to be educated alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom through QFT. However, the systems also allow for other flexible arrangements to be made for withdrawal of students for individual or small group work.

The Academy's curriculum is regularly reviewed by the SLT and subject departments to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

It is our aim to ensure that all resources and SEND provisions are being used effectively and efficiently within the Academy setting to support the taught curriculum and enables students to reach their full potential. The Academy does this by:

- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs of any students in their charge, including sharing reports, medical reports, and teacher feedback where appropriate
- Providing regular training and learning opportunities for staff in all departments about SEND and SEND teaching. Academy staff should be up to date with teaching methods which will aid the progress of all students including those with SEND
- Making use of all class facilities and space
- Using support effectively to ensure that the curriculum is differentiated and accessible
- Making sure that individual or group tuition is available where it is felt that students would benefit from this provision
- Setting appropriate individual targets that motivate students to do their best and celebrating achievements at all levels.

13. Inclusion of Students with SEND

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The Executive Headteacher, Head of School, SENCO and Link Governor oversees the Academy's policy for SEND and is responsible for ensuring that it is implemented effectively throughout the Academy.

The school curriculum is regularly reviewed by the SLT and Heads of Departments to ensure that it promotes the inclusion of all students. This includes learning outside the classroom.

We aim to optimise opportunities for participation and achievement across all areas of school activity (social, curricular, physical) by:

- Providing a balanced curriculum for all students both in and outside of the classroom, including play and interaction at breaks and lunchtime, and extending to extra-curricular activities and Academy day trips and residential visits
- Practicing differentiated teaching methods that suit the needs of individual students
- Promoting an inclusive ethos throughout our Academy and encouraging social responsibility and understanding amongst all our students.

14. Evaluating and Success of Provision

To make consistent progress in relation to SEND provision, the Academy encourages feedback from staff, parents/carers, and students throughout the year. Surveys are regularly put out to students and parents/carers, encouraging participation and engagement. The analysis of results can inform change to our systems/procedures, making staff aware of issues raised by students and parents/carers.

15. Support Students at School with Medical Conditions

The Academy recognises that students at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including educational visits and PE. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the Academy will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some students may also have special educational needs or disabilities and may have a statement or Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. See the Trust's Policy for Supporting Students with Medical Conditions.

16. Preparing for Adulthood

Being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for children and young people with SEN. This support needs to start early and should centre around the student's aspirations, interests, and needs. All professionals working with the students should share high expectations and have a good understanding of what support is effective in enabling them to achieve their ambitions.

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Preparing for adulthood means preparing for:

- higher education and/or employment – this includes exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supporting employment agencies
- independent living – this means young people have choice, control and freedom over their lives and support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living
- participating in society, including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- being as health as possible in adult life

17. Complaints Procedure

If a parent/carer has any concerns or complaints regarding the provision in place for their son/daughter, an appointment can be made by them to speak to the SENCO.

18. In service Training (CPD)

We aim to keep all Academy staff up to date with relevant training and developments in teaching practice in relation to the needs of students with SEN.

As well as the above, staff also access external courses which are relevant to their subject area, teaching and learning in general, specialist teaching etc.

The SENCO attends relevant courses and facilitates relevant SEND focused training opportunities for all staff.

We recognise the need to train all our staff on SEND issues. The SENCO ensures that the training opportunities are matched to school development priorities and those identified by individuals through the appraisal process.

The Academy operates a CPD Programme for all staff, covering a wide range of areas and topics including inclusive teaching through the development of knowledge and understanding of difficulties faced by individual students. These sessions are designed to improve the teaching and learning within the Academy.

19. Links to Support Services

Support from outside agencies is applied for and arranged as necessary. Regular visits are made by the Sensory Support Service, Education Psychologist, Speech and Language and School Health to name but a few. We provide in-house school counselling service, Academy Educational Welfare Officer along with support from the Trust's School Nurse. These services aid the inclusion of students with SEND or help families deal with the needs of their children at home.

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Sharing knowledge and information with our support services is key to the effective and successful SEND provision within our Academy. Any one of the support services may raise concerns about a student. This will then be brought to the attention of the SENCO and the student's parents/carers. The Academy will instigate early help, through the Single Assessment process and will initiate a Team Around the Family when it is felt appropriate.

20. Working in Partnerships with Parents/Carers

Rye Hills Academy believes that a close working relationship with parents/carers is vital to ensure:

- a) Early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND, leading to the correct intervention and provision
- b) Continuing social and academic progress of students with SEND
- c) Personal and academic targets are set and met effectively

The Academy welcomes feedback from parents/carers all year round and parents/carers can make an appointment to speak to the SENCO throughout the year.

Parents/carers are kept up to date with students' progress through interim reports, parent/carer consultation evenings, progress days, annual reports, and individual contact where necessary.

In cases where more frequent regular contact with parents/carers is necessary, this will be arranged based on the individual student's needs. If necessary, the SENCO can also signpost parents/carers of students with SEND to the Local Authority Parent Partnership Service where specific advice, guidance and support may be required.

If an assessment or referral indicates that a student has additional learning needs, the parents/carers and the student will always be consulted with regards to future provision. Parents/carers are invited to attend any meetings with external agencies regarding their child and are kept up to date and consulted on any points of action drawn up regarding the provision for their child.

21. Links with Other Schools

Rye Hills Academy is part of a Multi- Academy trust. The North East Learning Trust is a family of five Secondary schools (including three Sixth Forms), three Primary schools and our teacher training provider, NELT Institute. This means we can share resources, advice, training and development activities and expertise.

22. Transition

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The Academy has a comprehensive transition programme from KS2 to KS3 and KS4 to FE. Alongside this the SENCO liaises with our primary feeder schools, attends Year 6 reviews where appropriate and gathers information about students prior to transfer in September. Individual transition arrangements/plans are put in place where necessary to facilitate orientation and ensure a smooth transition.

The Academy is also part of the Shotton Hall Teaching Alliance. This consists of thirty partner schools and enables schools to share resources, advice, training and development activities and expertise.

23. Links with Other Agencies and Voluntary Organisations

Rye Hills Academy invites and seeks advice and support from external agencies in the identification and assessment of, and provision for, SEND. The SENCO and the pastoral team are the designated persons responsible for liaising with the following:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Social Services
- Speech and Language Service
- Language and Learning Support Service
- CYPS
- Specialist Outreach Services
- School Health

Representatives from agencies and voluntary organisations are invited to meetings throughout the year to discuss SEND provision and progress, and to keep staff up to date with legislation

In cases where a student is under observation or a cause for concern, focused meetings or a TAF may be arranged with parents/carers and appropriate agencies invited.

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