



# STEP Academy Trust

## SEND Policy

**Date of Policy:**           **October 2015**

### **Rationale**

This SEND policy is a key document to support the finest inclusive practice in our Academies. It outlines our statutory responsibilities and approaches to ensure that all pupils including those with SEND can achieve their potential and engage successfully in all aspects of the wider school community.

This policy was developed through consultation with Inclusion Managers and Senior Leadership Teams across STEP as well as guidance from Croydon. This has involved close scrutiny of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and its implications on practice.

It complies with the statutory requirements and guidance set out in relevant legislation and documents.

The policy is available on our website or hard copies are available from each Academy office.

Our Inclusion Manager also has the role of Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who takes overall responsibility for the operation of this policy and coordinating specific provision for pupils receiving SEN support. Our SENCO also contributes to the strategic development of SEN provision.

**Our SENCO is Juan Gemio-Sanchez and he can be contacted through the school office.**

**The SENCO is a qualified teacher and experienced in this role and is attaining the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination.**

**He is a member of the senior leadership team.**

## **Section 1: Our values and vision in relation to SEND provision**

STEP Academy Trust values the abilities and achievements of all its pupils, and is committed to providing for each pupil the best possible environment for learning. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and/or participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our Academies.

The first expectation is quality first teaching for all children. Although all classes are mixed ability, class teachers have the flexibility to set smaller ability groups and differentiate work accordingly. Some year groups are set according to ability for maths and/or Literacy depending on the needs of the cohort.

When determining provision for children with SEND, the Academy works hard to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person and the child's parents. It is of great importance that all participants - the child or young person and the child's parents, teacher and SENCO - participate as fully as possible in decisions, and are provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

The ultimate aim is to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational outcomes and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

Additional in-class support provided by Teaching Assistants is available in all classes, including delivery of targeted group and individual support when appropriate. This additional support is usually targeted at children who are catching up on their basic literacy, numeracy and communication skills. It may take place in the classroom or children may be withdrawn for short periods during appropriate times. Computers and interactive whiteboards are available in every class and are used regularly to provide additional support and challenge.

Please also refer to the other relevant STEP Academy Trust policies, in particular the Teaching and Learning Policy, the Inclusion Policy and the STEP Academy Trust policy on equality of opportunity.

### **Aims of this policy:**

STEP Academies aim:

- To value everyone equally in an inclusive environment;
- To ensure that responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND remains an integral part of the whole school provision;
- To ensure that children and young people with SEND can engage successfully in all school activities alongside pupils who do not have SEND, including making reasonable adjustments for those pupils with a disability so that they have good access to the curriculum and wider school learning environment;
- To work in close partnership with parents, Local Authorities and other key agencies so that the needs and strengths of each pupil with SEND are fully understood and there is a collaborative and coordinated approach to planning and reviewing any provision;
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupils' need through universal and targeted training/continued profession development;

- To promote independence and resilience in pupils with SEND so that they are well prepared for transition to adulthood.

## **Section 2: Admission arrangements for pupils with SEND**

The Academy's admission arrangements are set out in the Academy prospectus and make it clear that the school will not discriminate or disadvantage pupils with a disability or SEND.

The Code of Practice requires a school to admit all pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education Health and Care Plan where it is has been requested by parents as their school preference and named by the Local Authority (LA).

The LA must comply with this request and name the school in the Statement/EHC plan unless:

- it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEND of the child; or
- the attendance of the inclusion of the child would be incompatible with the efficient education of others at the school or the efficient use of resources.

The LA will work closely with the Academy so that any decisions on placement for a pupil with a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan reflect the individual circumstances of each child and the Academy. This will include guidance on making any reasonable adjustments and signposting to training and guidance available, including support from **the Local Authority**.

The SENCO in collaboration with parents and other key agencies will ensure appropriate provision is in place to support pupils with SEND entering the school (See Section 6: Transition).

## **Section 3: Identifying Special Educational Needs**

STEP Academy Trust uses the definition of SEND and disability as set out in the SEND Code of Practice and Equality Act 2010 (Appendix 2).

We recognise the importance of early identification and aim to ensure that robust measures are in place to highlight children who are falling behind or who are facing difficulties with any aspect of learning or social development at the earliest opportunity.

This process of early identification is supported by:

- Review of skills and attainment when pupils join the Academy, taking into account information from any previous settings or agencies as appropriate;
- Termly tracking of all pupils to monitor rates of progress and attainment;
- Concerns raised directly by parents or other agencies.

As well as progress in core subject areas, progress in other areas will also be considered such as social development and communication skills.

In determining whether a pupil may have SEND, consideration will also be given to other factors which may be affecting achievement including:

- Attendance;
- English as an additional language;
- Family circumstances;
- Economic disadvantage.

STEP Academy Trust acknowledges that consideration of these factors will be particularly important when a child is displaying challenging behaviour or becoming isolated and withdrawn. Such behaviours can often mask an unmet need and further assessments will be undertaken to determine any underlying factors affecting behaviour which may not be SEND.

Before deciding that a pupil requires additional SEND support, the SENCO and class teacher will review current arrangements to meet the child's needs within daily class teaching and consider any further modifications and adaptations that should be put in place to support good progress.

#### **Section 4: Meeting the needs of pupils with SEND**

When it is evident that a pupil will require higher levels and more tailored support than is available from everyday teaching we will offer Additional SEND Support.

Parents will be formally notified that their child will receive this additional support and placed on the SEND Register where his/her progress and provision can be monitored more closely.

##### **The SEND Register**

The Register provides an updated record of all pupils receiving additional SEND support so that:

- progress and achievements of pupils with SEND can be more closely monitored;
- there is an overview of the range and level of need across the Academy;
- school provision reflects and is responsive to the current profile of need.

Close monitoring of this register also provides evidence to show impact of the Academy provision for pupils with additional needs.

Once identified as requiring additional SEND support, pupils will receive an enhanced package of support to remove barriers to learning and put in effective special educational provision. This will be managed through a four part cycle of assessment, planning, intervention and review. This cycle is known as the **Graduated Response** and follows the model described in the SEND Code of Practice. It will enable a growing understanding of the pupils' needs and the nature of support the pupil will need to make good progress and secure positive outcomes. Depending on the need of each pupil, successive cycles will draw on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise.

## **The Graduated Response:**

### **ASSESS:**

Once identified as requiring additional SEND support a more detailed assessment of the pupil's needs will be carried out. This will include discussions with parents and, when appropriate, the pupil. It may draw on assessments and reports from external agencies involved with the pupil such as speech and language therapist. The SENCO may also carry out more diagnostic assessments of needs in key areas of difficulties.

Each pupil's difficulties will be considered against the four broad areas of needs:

- Communication and interaction;
- Cognition and learning;
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

STEP Academy Trust recognises that it is highly likely that the needs of individual pupils will overlap across one or more of these areas of need or that needs may change over time.

This comprehensive assessment will give a detailed picture of each child's strengths and their primary and secondary special needs.

### **PLAN:**

The Academy will use the information from the assessment to draw up a plan to show the support that will be offered. The plan will:

- Be outcome focused with the desired benefit or difference from any intervention clearly identified and support the evaluation of any impact of any provision;
- Outline a range of additional interventions and approaches that will be made available to support progress towards these outcomes;
- Highlight the ways parents can be involved to reinforce and contribute to progress outside of the Academy;
- Give details of the role and input of external agencies when they are involved with a pupil;
- Be recorded on individual support plans and on class/school provision maps;
- Be shared with all key teachers and support staff so that they are fully aware of the outcomes sought, the support on offer and any particular teaching strategies and approaches that have been agreed.

Parents will be invited to contribute to the individual support plan and receive a copy. This will then be reviewed at least three times a year.

### **DO:**

Class/subject teachers, with the support of the SENCO will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan. This will ensure that the additional support offered is linked closely to the general curriculum offered and maximise the opportunities to reinforce and consolidate key skills within the context of the class.

This will be particularly important when the intervention takes place outside of the classroom. There will be regularly liaison and feedback with staff delivering interventions so that any required refinement of the support can be managed promptly.

**Review:**

The impact of any additional support offered will be reviewed at least termly. Parents will be invited to attend along with pupils when this is appropriate.

Depending on the level and complexity of need this review may be included in the general Academy cycle of parental consultation meetings.

Where the pupils' needs are more complex and they receive support from a range of specialist agencies a separate review meeting will be arranged so that all key parties can contribute.

At the review the following will be considered:

- Impact of each element of the intervention towards the identified outcomes;
- Pupils' response to the support and view of their progress where this is applicable;
- Views of parents and specialist agencies;
- Next steps with refinement and adjustments to the support offered as required.

Where progress has been limited, further analysis and assessments will be made to ensure the provision offered matches the nature and level of needs. If not already involved and with the agreement of parents, the SENCO will make a referral to specialist agency.

A full list of external agencies the school uses to support the progress and welfare of pupils with SEND is included in Appendix 3.

**Removal from the SEND Register**

If a pupil makes good progress and achieves the outcomes set they will no longer require additional SEND support and his/her name will be removed from the register. Parents will be formally notified of this decision. Progress will continued to be monitored regularly as part of the termly tracking for all pupils.

**Education Health and Care Plans:**

The additional needs of most of the pupils with SEND at STEP Academy Trust will be met by interventions and resources from the Academy.

In a few cases the pupils with the most significant needs will require a more comprehensive and individualised package of support to help them achieve their outcomes and remove barriers to learning. Where this is the case the SENCO, in consultation and agreement with parents and other specialist agencies will make a request to the Local Authority for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan).

Full details of the process for requesting an EHC plan can be found on the LA SEND offer web site (details in Appendix 3).

The EHC plan will be reviewed annually. Any additional support offered will continue to be reviewed and modified termly, taking into account the views and contributions of parents, pupils and external agencies.

Children currently with a Statement of Educational Need will transfer to an Education, Health and Care Plan at times pre-determined by the Local Authority. This will involve a transition process with up to date reports from each agency involved. These will be completed for all children in the next three years.

### **Section 5: Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions**

In compliance with revised statutory guidance, arrangements are in place to ensure that any pupil with a medical condition is able, as far as possible, to participate in all aspects of school life and achieve their academic potential.

These arrangements are set out in an Individual Health Care Plans (IHC).

The IHC plans will detail the type and nature of support that will be available. The plans will also be:

- Produced through collaboration with parents, pupil as appropriate, and health professionals;
- Shared with all relevant staff;
- Reviewed at least termly or sooner to reflect changing needs and support.

Where a pupil with a medical condition also has a disability or SEND the IHC plan will be closely linked to provision to support accessibility and additional educational needs so that there is a coordinated approach.

Staff who have responsibility to support a pupil with medical needs, including the administration and supervision of medication, will receive appropriate, ongoing training and support so that they are competent and confident about their duties.

Full details on the arrangements to meet the needs of pupils with medical conditions are set out in a separate policy which can be found on the Academy's website.

### **Section 6: Transition Arrangements**

These are the arrangements to support pupils with SEND moving into the Academy or moving to a different school.

The Academy is proactive in seeking to ensure that there is a successful transition between phases of education and this is a key responsibility of the SENCO.

For pupils joining the school in our Reception/Nursery classes the SENCO and/or EYFS Leader will seek information about the nature and level of needs for pupils identified with SEND and the provision that has already been offered to overcome these barriers.

Where there is a high level of need this may involve visits to pre-school settings and information sharing meetings with the child's family and other key agencies supporting the child. This may involve setting up a detailed 'Transition Plan' which sets out clearly how the move will be managed. This is likely to be the case where the child has a Statement or EHC Plan.

For pupils moving to secondary school or to a different school, the SENCO will make contact with the new school to share relevant information. As above, where the child has significant needs or has a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan, there will be a formal transition meeting when parents, pupils, representatives from the new school and other key professionals to ensure there is continuity in the range and level of support offered.

If it is felt that the child needs more support to ensure a smooth transition, visits to and by the school can be arranged to increase the familiarity of the new school and also the key adults in the new school.

### **Section 7: Funding and Resources**

The Academy receives additional funding from the Local Authority each year to facilitate the needs of pupils requiring additional SEND support. The value of this funding is based on a range of indicators relating to prior attainment of pupils entering the Academy and levels of deprivation.

The school leadership through consultation with the SENCO and Local Governing Body decide on how this funding will be deployed to meet the range and level of need for pupils with SEND across the whole Academy. This is a finite sum and is not adjusted through the year to take into account of any changes in the cohort of pupils with SEND.

### **Section 8: Training**

There is an ongoing programme of training and support in place to ensure that teachers and support staff have the understanding and skills to differentiate and scaffold learning for the pupils with a range of SEND within everyday teaching.

We also have teams of staff with more specialist skills to support and deliver interventions for pupils with more complex needs. They have access to additional training to update their knowledge and skills and to respond to the needs of individual or groups of pupils with specific needs.

Induction arrangements are in place for new staff and newly qualified teachers so that they are familiar with the schools' approach to supporting pupils with SEND.

The SENCO attends the Local Authority briefing sessions to keep abreast of local and national policy and initiatives to enhance SEND provision. He/she is also an active member of the local cluster network.



## Section 9: Roles and Responsibilities

Please also see the SEND Information Report on the Academy website.

### The SENCO:

The SENCO has the day to day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the provision in school. This includes the line management of teaching assistants who give support to individual and groups of pupil with SEND. The SENCO provides guidance and support to all staff in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. The SENCO has a key role in developing positive partnerships with parents and other external agencies in order to fully address the needs and support progress for pupils with SEND. The SENCO will also take a key role in supporting the transition of pupils with SEND to different settings.

### The Strategic Governing Body

The Code of Practice states that there should be a member of the Strategic Governing Body or a subcommittee with specific oversight of the Academy's arrangements for SEND.

The key duties of the Strategic Governing Body are to ensure that the SEND policy is implemented and that it is effective in ensuring that pupils with SEND have the same opportunities to make good progress and play an active and fulfilling role in the life of the school alongside pupils with no SEND.

The Strategic Governing Body will ensure that the Academy meets all its statutory duties, ensure that additional funding is deployed effectively and the views of parents and pupils are fully considered.

**The lead governor for SEND at Angel Oak Academy is Mark Deacon.**

The lead SEND governor will meet at least termly with the SENCO to review and evaluate effectiveness of the schools' SEND provision and contribute to discussions about plans to develop and enhance this provision.

The lead SEND governor will also ensure that updates on the quality and impact of SEND provision are regular items on the Local Governing Body cycle of meetings.

Other key staff who are actively involved in supporting and coordinating SEND provision and part of our wider inclusion team include:

- SENCOs/SENTAs/Intervention TAs;
- Attendance Officer;
- Learning Mentor.

## Section 10: Monitoring and evaluating SEND Provision

STEP Academy Trust undergoes an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils, including pupils with SEND.

In evaluating the quality of the SEND provision the Academy will take into account a range of evidence including looking at the level of achievement of pupils with SEND compared to standards

achieved by this group nationally, case studies for groups and individual pupils, monitoring of interventions and views and feedback of parents and pupils.

### **Section 11: Dealing with Complaints**

Parents are encouraged to share any concerns they have at the earliest possible opportunity. In the first instance parents should speak to the class teacher with further discussions with the SENCO as required.

Where these initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful parents will be encouraged to seek advice and support from the local parent SEND Information, Advice and Support service (SENDIAS). This is an independent and impartial service. Parents will also be encouraged to discuss concerns with other key professionals supporting their child. This might be the educational psychologist.

If issues remain unresolved parents can choose to seek the support of the local 'Disagreement Resolution Service'. This service is commissioned by Croydon LA but operates independently. They can provide a quick and non-adversarial way of resolving disagreements.

If concerns are still unresolved parents will be asked to make a formal complaint and directed to the STEP Academy Trust Complaints Procedures.

Where the parental complaint is directly related to decisions around an EHC plan assessment of needs or provision this will be managed directly by the Croydon SEND team. Parents will be contacted directly to receive information about the mediation services available.

### **Section 12: Anti Bullying**

We recognise that pupils with SEND are vulnerable to bullying and the impact that bullying can have on emotional health and wellbeing. All pupils are aware of the adults within the school that they can report bullying to. Through careful monitoring of bullying incidents and regular review of anti-bullying policies and practices with the school community we ensure our effectiveness in reducing and responding to bullying.

### **Section 13: Disability Access Arrangements**

In compliance with the duties set out in the Equalities Act 2010 the school has an accessibility plan which outlines the actions we will take overtime to increase the accessibility of pupils.

This includes action to:

- Increase participation in the curriculum
- Make improvements in the environment to enable pupils with disabilities to benefit from all school facilities and extracurricular opportunities
- Improve access to a range of information.

## Appendix 1: Compliance with Statutory Duties

This policy meets requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. It is written with reference to the following legislation and documents:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
- Equalities Act 2010
- School Admissions Code of practice
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (June 2014)
- Schools Complaint Toolkit 2014
- The National Curriculum
- Teachers Standards 2012
- Working together to safeguard Children (2013)

**Southwark's local offer for SEND:**

<http://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/>

## **Appendix 2: Definition of Special Educational Needs**

### **SEND Code of Practice 2014**

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 has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other pupils of the same age;  
or
- 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 of post 16 institutions.

### **Equality Act 2010**

A disability 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 and hearing;
- Long term health issues such as asthma, epilepsy and cancer.

### Appendix 3: Links with Local and National services and organisations to support implementation of the SEND policy

SOUTHWARK LOCAL OFFER	<a href="mailto:localoffer@southwark.gov.uk">localoffer@southwark.gov.uk</a> <b>0207 5253104</b>
SOUTHWARK Early Help Services	<b>020 7525 2714</b> earlyhelpdutyofficer@southwark.gov.uk
Autism Support Team	<b>0207 5251000</b>
Hearing Impairment team	<b>020 3049 8206</b>
SENDIAS (SEND support for parents and carers)	020 3131 3150 <a href="mailto:parentssupportherts@familylives.org.uk">parentssupportherts@familylives.org.uk</a>
Contact a Family	0808 808 3555 <a href="http://www.cafamily.org.uk/advice-and-support/">www.cafamily.org.uk/advice-and-support/</a>
Council for Disabled Children	0207 843 1900 <a href="http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/">www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/</a>