



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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This document applies to all schools and operations of the Vale Academy Trust: [www.vale-academy.org](http://www.vale-academy.org)

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## 1. Definition

A child of compulsory school age or a young person (collectively referred to as Children & Young People, or C&YP) 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;
- 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. Reference: [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#).

This may mean that a C&YP has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people (C&YP) of the same age in Oxfordshire schools, or a disability that makes it hard for them to access facilities within the school.

Special educational provision means provision that is additional to or otherwise different from that which is made generally for C&YP of the same age in other schools. ([Education Act 1996](#)).

## 2. Aims

This policy applies to all schools within the Vale Academy Trust (the 'Trust').

The Trust believes that each C&YP has individual and unique needs. However, some C&YP require more support than others. If these C&YP are to achieve their full potential, we must recognise this and plan accordingly. We acknowledge that a significant proportion of C&YP will have special educational needs at some time in their school career. Some of these C&YP may require help throughout their time in school, whilst others may need a little extra support for a short period to help overcome more temporary needs.

Our aim is to ensure that all C&YP (including those with special educational needs) receive a meaningful access to the National Curriculum. We promote the tenets of the SEND Code of Practice (2014); C&YP and parents are fully involved in the decision making processes, *high quality classroom teaching* is the primary intervention, inclusion is defined by *making reasonable adjustments* and *strategic planning* based around *pupil aspirations* and *high expectations* are essential.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for C&YP with SEND is a matter for the Trust as a whole. The Head of Inclusion for the Trust has a strategic overview of SEND across the Trust and will

support and challenge schools at the leadership and strategic level to ensure high quality provision for and progress of C&YP with SEND.

### **3.1 Local Governing Body**

Each school's local governing body (LGB), in co-operation with the Headteacher, has a legal responsibility to ensure that the policy regarding provision for C&YP with special educational needs is applied within their school through regular monitoring of their SEND provision. Each LGB will have a named governor who takes a particular interest in this aspect.

LGBs must ensure that:

- the necessary provision is made for any C&YP with SEND;
- C&YP with SEND join in school activities alongside other C&YP, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of other C&YP;
- they adhere to the requirements of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs (2014) and the Children and Families Act (2014);
- governors play a major part in their school's self-review. In relation to SEND, members of the LGB will ensure that they are involved in the development and monitoring of the SEND policy;
- governors will ensure that Inclusion is an integral part of the School Development Plan.

### **3.2 Headteacher**

The Headteacher of each school has responsibility for:

- the management of all aspects of their school's work, including provision for C&YP with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities;
- the deployment of all resources relating to SEND within their school.

### **3.3 Leader of Inclusion**

The leader of Inclusion for the Trust has responsibility for:

- keeping Directors and Governors up to date with matters relating to SEND policy;
- maintaining a strategic overview of the provision for SEND for the C&YP within the Trust;
- refining the provision on an ongoing basis;
- supporting and challenging the work of those within the Inclusion team of each school;
- overseeing resources relating to SEND within each school;
- supporting and challenging the work of the SENCO (SEND Coordinator) in each school.

### **3.4 The SEND Coordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO of each school has responsibility for:

- ensuring that SEND C&YP are correctly identified;
- monitoring the progress of C&YP with SEND, ensuring that detailed assessments and observations of C&YP with specific learning problems are conducted;
- ensuring that SEND Pupil Profiles are written and updated for SEND C&YP;
- ensuring that Annual Reviews are held for C&YP who are Statemented or have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP);
- managing the specialist provision for SEND C&YP and ensuring that intervention work is of a high quality;
- co-ordinating the input of Outside Agencies appropriate to SEND Provision;
- maintaining the school's SEND register and SEND records;
- training and supporting school staff to work with SEND C&YP;
- maintaining an up to date knowledge of National and Local initiatives which may impact on SEND Policy and Practice.

### 3.5 Teaching Staff

Teaching staff:

- should be fully aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for C&YP with SEND. The procedures are laid out in the Primary and Secondary versions of "[Identifying and supporting Special Educational Needs in Oxfordshire schools and settings](#)";
- must be aware of which C&YP within their classes have SEND and fully understand the impact of these needs within the classroom;
- have a responsibility to support and develop SEND C&YP within the mainstream lesson by providing differentiated work and support;
- have a responsibility to provide resources to support Teaching Assistants in delivering strategies and supporting C&YP with work out of the classroom;
- must provide assessment information and progress feedback when requested for review meetings on a timely basis within the set deadlines.

### 3.6 Support staff

Teaching Assistants / Learning Mentors:

- should be fully aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for C&YP with SEND;
- support the work of the class teacher in supporting the inclusion of those with SEND within the mainstream classroom;
- support C&YP on an individual and small group basis through delivering intervention strategies and supporting C&YP with Overlearning and Pre-learning;
- take on a 'Key Worker' role for a number of named C&YP, including the relevant links with parents.

## 4. Admission Arrangements

Schools within the Trust strive to be fully inclusive. All C&YP are welcome, including those with SEND, in accordance with each school's admissions policy. If a parent wishes to have mainstream provision for a C&YP with a statement or EHCP the school will provide a place unless the needs of the C&YP cannot be met or if the placement will not be compatible with the efficient education of other C&YP

## 5. Funding

The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) and the governors of each school regularly monitor the needs of C&YP with SEND. Resources are allocated according to need. The resources available include training for staff, ancillary help, teacher time, teaching assistant time and materials, and these are dependent on the school's SEND budget. Each school has a continuing commitment to purchase appropriate resources for C&YP with SEND to ensure that all C&YP's needs are appropriately met.

## 6. Identification

Oxfordshire County Council's publications for primary and secondary schools "[Identifying and supporting Special Educational Needs in Oxfordshire schools and settings](#)" clearly describe the process of identification for those with potential SEND. The SEND Code of Practice (2014) puts class teachers at the heart of pupil progress and identification of need through a diagnostic approach (knowing the pupils, knowing what is working and what is not working). Class teachers are expected to work along with the SENCO in this process.

Tools such as the Early Help Assessment and Pastoral Support Plans are used to support the coordination of pupils' support. Parents are included at all stages of the process.

The document "[Identifying and Supporting Special Educational Needs in Oxfordshire Schools and Settings](#)" also contains the criteria for entry to the SEND register. The Trust uses these criteria to moderate the SEND register and decide whether the level of provision should be at SEND Support or Statement / EHCP. An application to Panel at Oxfordshire County Council is made when seeking an EHCP. A Pupil Profile will be completed for all pupils on the SEND register setting out the aspirations, strengths, needs and strategies to meet the learner's needs. It also contains monitoring and review arrangements. During the identification of potential SEND and the regular monitoring of those pupils on the SEND register, due regard to is paid to the guidance given in the DfE's [Keeping children safe in education](#).

## 7. Categories of SEND

[The DfE's SEND Code of Practice](#) recognises four categories of need:

### 1. Cognition and Learning Needs

- Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)
- Learning Difficulty (LD)

## 2. Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH)

## 3. Communication and Interaction Needs

- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

## 4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

- Visual Impairment (VI)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)
- Physical Disability (PD)

The Code recognises two levels of provision within the continuum: SEND Support and Statement (S) / EHCP

The criteria for each level is described in [“Identifying and Supporting Special Educational Needs in Oxfordshire Schools and Settings”](#). Only a very small proportion of C&YP require a Statement of SEND. These C&YP are likely to have severe or complex needs that require more specialist advice and support.

## 8. SEND Curriculum and Inclusion

### 8.1 Mainstream Provision

C&YP are grouped in classes according to age and/or ability depending on subject and key stage. In mixed ability classes where there is a wide range of ability, all staff provide a differentiated curriculum suitable for all the C&YP, to ensure access at all levels. Any C&YP with specific needs is fully included into the normal classroom environment and, where appropriate, the curriculum is adjusted.

### 8.2 Personalised Provision

In addition to this C&YP with SEND may have a personalised and individualised programme which will meet their individual needs. Where necessary, C&YP may be removed from one or more curriculum subjects to enable them scope within their timetable to work individually or in a small group with Teaching Assistants and other professionals. This work is overseen by class teachers and the SENCo. This may involve one or more of the following initiatives:

#### 8.2.1 Skills Based Courses

Where appropriate, a range of specialised courses will be delivered to SEND C&YP. These courses will develop long term skills to encourage independent learning. Teaching Assistants will deliver a range of courses such as Literacy, Numeracy, Dyslexia Skills, Speech and Communication, Fine Motor Skills (including handwriting) and Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

### 8.2.2 Academic Support

Teaching Assistants will support SEND C&YP with their studies and life in Trust schools. 'Overlearning' sessions will check the C&YP's understanding of key ideas, concepts and vocabulary. 'Pre-Learning' sessions will introduce new topics. Support is also given with understanding homework, exam revision and understanding the events and activities that take place.

### 8.2.3 Life Skills

Where appropriate, SEND C&YP will be supported with developing life skills, structured within an appropriate life-skills programme.

## 9. Monitoring and Reviewing SEN Progress

SEND C&YP have Pupil Profiles containing aspirations and strategies. This may include:

- What special or additional help is being given
- Who will provide the help and how often
- What help can be provided for the C&YP at home
- The C&YP's aspirations
- How and when progress will be checked.

A review meeting will be held to review progress and parents are encouraged to play a full part in this process.

In addition to this, Statemented / EHCP C&YP have an Annual Review Meeting. At this meeting, consideration is given to whether the Statement /EHCP should continue, and whether provision/strategies should be maintained or amended. New long-term objectives and aspirations should then be set. All relevant professionals are invited to attend or submit a written report.

## 10. The Partnership with Parents

Each school works closely with parents to forge home/school links and encourage parents to be partners in the education process.

Parents are involved from the outset and encouraged to discuss any concerns with their C&YP's class teacher or tutor as they arise. They are always encouraged to take part in the process of reviewing and monitoring provision and progress.

Parents will receive accurate information when they meet with teachers, so that they have a full picture of their C&YP's skills and abilities, at whatever level, as well as their C&YP's behaviour at school.

Parents are consulted before outside agencies are involved and are included as far as possible in strategies instigated.

Parents have the right to access any records of their C&YP's progress and are encouraged to contribute to these records.

Parent consultation meetings are offered regularly, but parents are welcome to visit the school or arrange meetings at other times to discuss any aspect of their C&YP's progress with the C&YP's class teacher, tutor or the LS team leader.

## 11. Links with Agencies

The Trust and its schools access a wide range of Education, Health and Social Services professionals available in Oxfordshire. This includes outreach teachers from Language Resource Bases, the Service for Autism, Service for Pupils with Physical Disabilities, Sensory Support Service, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists and others. It also includes the Educational Psychology Service and the Advisory Team for Inclusion (SEND). We are committed to using the expertise and advice provided by other professionals.

## 12. Transition

The Trust has a Transition Programme in place for all C&YP. Those with SEND are given additional support within the Transition Programme.

Foundation staff will visit C&YP with SEND in a preschool setting, prior to them starting mainstream education. Additional visits can also be made for those C&YP with SEND to familiarise them with staff and their classroom.

A transition programme is in place to support C&YP transferring into a new class or new key stage. In term 6, all C&YP visit their new classroom and new teacher(s). Additionally, staff will share information about C&YP with SEND to ensure a smooth transition at the start of the new school year.

Information is shared between primary and secondary staff for all SEND C&YP to ensure a smooth transfer. Where possible the appropriate member of secondary staff will attend the final annual review of Year 6 C&YP with Statements/EHCPs due to join

the secondary stage. Secondary representatives visit feeder primary schools to meet parents and C&YP before transfer.

C&YP with SEND are given additional visits, if required, so that they will become more confident in the new situation.

Statements of Educational needs are currently being converted to EHCPs at the point of transition.

### 13. Staff Development

The Trust is committed to developing knowledge in SEND through Whole School Continuous Professional Development and the Teaching School Programme.

Additional and more specific training is provided to Teaching Assistants.

The Inclusion Lead and Senior Staff attend National and Oxfordshire training and conferences.

### 14. Evaluating Success

The success of each school's SEND policy and provision is evaluated through:

- monitoring the availability of Pupil Profiles and teachers enacting the strategies;
- monitoring of classroom practice through lesson observations;
- monitoring of academic progress through the Work Scrutiny Process;
- analysis of a C&YP's tracking data for SEND and Vulnerable C&YP;
- monitoring of procedures and practice by the SEND Governor;
- school Self Evaluation;
- the school Development Plan;
- OFSTED inspection arrangements.