



SEND Policy 2023-2024

Unity Academy is a fully inclusive provision. We pride ourselves on creating a caring and positive atmosphere in which every individual is valued and their efforts and achievements recognised and celebrated. Through our curriculum we aim to provide a wide variety of learning opportunities that will inspire, excite and challenge all our children.

The Code of Practice (September 2014) states that '*teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of **all** the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.*'

This policy complies with guidance given in –

- SEND Code of Practice September 2014 (which takes into account the SEND provisions of the SEND and Disability Act 2001)
- Education Act 1996
- Worcestershire LA Policy
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014

Definition of Special Educational Needs

At Unity Academy we adopt the definition of SEND as found in the SEND and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 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 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 of the same age in mainstream schools.

- **For children aged two or more, special educational 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.**

- **A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).**

Many children and young people who have SEND 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 provides a relatively low-threshold description 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’. 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 SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

Where a child or young person is covered by SEND and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as a part of SEND planning and review.

Throughout the Code of Practice 2014, it is important to note that the term ‘parent’ includes all those with parental responsibility, including parents and those who care for the child.

School Context

Unity Academy is an Appropriate Provision for Primary aged children who have either been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion. We also offer assessment places for those children who may need to be placed in a more specialist provision. We assess the needs of the children, put in place relevant strategies and work with the pupils to give them the skills to return successfully to their mainstream school or an appropriate provision.

Children work in small classes with a high adult ratio to provide a calm, inclusive learning environment with a positive ethos. All children who attend are recognised as having difficulties with Social, Emotional and Mental Health areas of development and require a specialised approach to re-engage with learning.

We create a high quality, supportive and safe environment to deliver a curriculum that enables us all to be safe, happy and learn. The children are at the heart of all we do and we aim to promote and develop a positive attitude towards learning, where all children feel valued and respected.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to provide every child with access to a broad balanced education. This includes the delivery of the National Curriculum (2014) and Rivers Curriculum, in line with the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 Guidance (2014).

The aims of our SEND policy and practice at Unity Academy are:

- To ensure that the needs of *all* pupils are met
- To raise the aspirations and expectations of all pupils with SEND
- To promote the early identification of pupils needs and provide appropriate early intervention to support them.

- To carefully map provision for all vulnerable learners to ensure effective staffing deployment, resource allocation and choice of intervention, thus leading to good learning outcomes.
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need, through well targeted continuing professional development.
- To work in a co-operative and productive partnership with the Local Authority, Rivers Trust Academy and other relevant outside agencies to ensure there is a multi-agency approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
- To acknowledge the importance of the pupil, and their parents in decision making and provide them with the information and support necessary to do this.
- To closely monitor and review the progress of all pupils, through daily, weekly and termly assessment and liaison.
- To 'promote children's self-esteem and emotional well-being and help them to form and maintain worthwhile relationships based on respect for themselves and others.' (National Curriculum 2014)
- To manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment.
- To make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage.
- To ensure that *all* teaching staff adapt their teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of *all* pupils

'High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014'

SEND Code of Practice (2014:Para 1.24)

Early Identification of Pupil Needs

Pupils with SEND may have needs in one or more of the following areas:

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

Some children within our school may be underachieving but will not necessarily have a special educational need. It is our responsibility to identify this quickly and ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to help these pupils make accelerated progress to catch up.

Other pupils will genuinely have special educational needs and this may lead to lower attainment (though not necessarily to under-achievement). It is our responsibility to ensure that these pupils have the maximum opportunity to attain and make progress in line with their peers. Accurate assessment of need and carefully planned programmes, which address the root causes of any learning difficulty, are essential ingredients of success for these pupils. This will be provided, initially through additional support funded from the devolved school's budget.

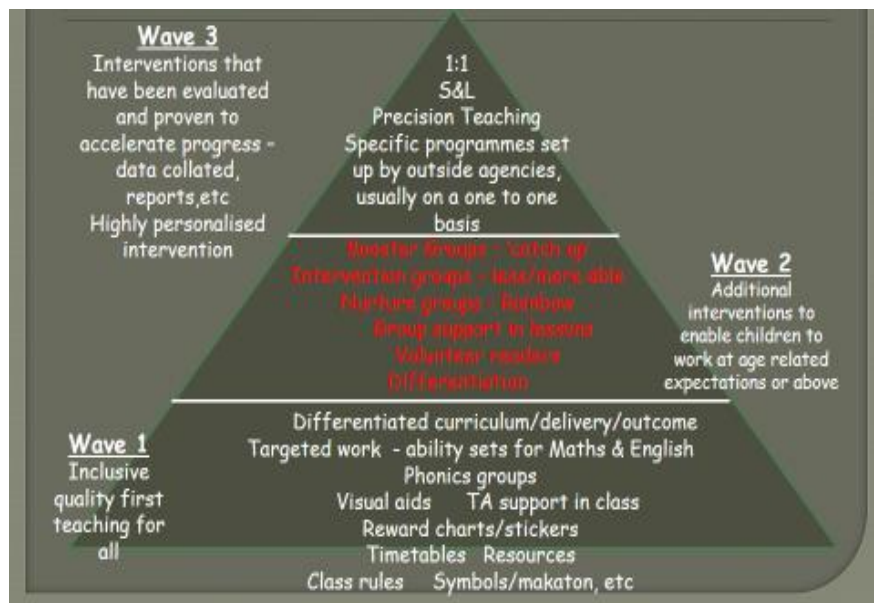
The Graduated Approach

Within school, pupils with SEND are identified on the school SEND record so that provision to meet their needs can be routinely planned for. Children's progress is reviewed regularly to determine the continued level of support required.

As a school we measure children's progress in learning against national expectations and age related expectations.

The class teacher continually assesses each child and notes areas where they are improving and where further support is needed. As a school, we track children's progress, including behaviour, from entry, using a variety of different methods including National Curriculum expectations, Boxall profiles and reading and spelling ages, to ensure we remove any barriers to learning.

Children who are not making expected progress are picked up through data analysis and regular meetings with the class teacher and senior leaders, including the SENDCo. In this meeting a discussion takes place concerning why individual children are experiencing difficulty and what further support or reasonable adjustment can be given to aid their progression.



Assess

This involves clearly analysing the pupil's needs using the class teacher's assessment and experience of working with the pupil, details of previous progress and attainment, comparisons with peers and national data, as well as the views and experience of parents. The pupil's views and where relevant, advice from external support services will also be considered. Any parental concerns will be noted and compared with the school's information and assessment data on how the pupil is progressing.

This analysis will require regular review to ensure that support and intervention is matched to need, that barriers to learning are clearly identified and being overcome and that the interventions being used are developing and evolving as required. Where external support is already involved their work will help inform the assessment of need. Where they are not

involved they may be contacted, if this is felt appropriate, following discussion and agreement from parents.

Plan

Planning will involve consultation between the teacher, SENDCo and parents to agree the adjustments, interventions and support that are required; the impact on progress, development and or behaviour that is expected along with a clear date for review. Parental involvement may be sought, where appropriate, to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

All those working with the pupil, including support staff will be informed of their individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies or approaches that are being employed and the outcomes that are being sought. This is also recorded on the school's Provision Map.

Do

The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a day-to-day basis. They will retain responsibility even where the interventions may involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class teacher. They will work closely with teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and identify links with classroom teaching. Support with further assessments of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses, problem solving and advising of the implementation of effective support will be provided by the SENDCo.

Review

Reviews of a pupil's progress will be made regularly. The review process will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. It also takes account of the views of the pupil and where necessary their parents. The class teacher, in conjunction with the SENDCo will revise the support and outcomes based on the pupil's progress and development, making any necessary amendments going forward in consultation with parents and the pupil.

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, we will consider requesting an Education Health Care Plan assessment.

When a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority reviews the plan as a minimum every twelve months. We co-operate with the local authority SEND team in the review process and, as part of the review, the local authority can require schools to convene and hold annual review meetings on their behalf.

Quality First Teaching (Stage One)

'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils with SEND.'

At Unity Academy all teachers are expected to demonstrate high quality teaching methods that are differentiated and personalised to meet the individual needs of all the children. They are responsible for setting high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils.

At our School children are identified as having SEND through a variety of ways including the following:-

- Liaison with previous or current school
- Child performing below age expected levels
- Classroom based assessment and monitoring arrangements (cycle of assess, plan, do, review)
- Concerns raised by parent
- Concerns raised by teacher – behaviour or self-esteem is affecting performance
- Liaison with external agencies

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of our provision is carried out in the following ways:

- Classroom observations by Senior leaders
- On-going assessment of progress made by individuals and groups
- Regular scrutiny of pupils work
- Professional dialogue with teachers
- Pupil interviews
- Pupil progress tracking
- Behaviour trackers
- Attendance and exclusion records
- Monitoring visits and meeting with School Improvement Team

SEND Support (Stage Two)

Individuals or groups of children who are under-achieving will be identified by the class teacher and senior leaders so that they can be further challenged and supported to make accelerated progress in order to catch up.

They will have access to carefully differentiated activities or approaches directly related to the school curriculum, which are part of our good practice in making teaching and learning accessible to pupils learning at different rates.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and effectiveness of any group intervention seen in SEND support is carried out in the following ways:

- Observations by co-ordinators and senior leaders
- On-going assessment of progress made by individuals and groups
- Scrutiny of books
- Professional dialogue with teachers and teaching assistants
- Pupil progress tracking assessment
- Attendance and exclusion records
- Parent's meetings (as and when needed)
- Monitoring visits

SEND Support Plus (Stage Three)

Where a child has not made significant progress following on from intervention work, it can be determined that the pupil has SEND and the SENDCo/Inclusion Manager will formally advise parents. The school will then ensure that effective provision is put in place to remove any barriers to learning. The pupil will receive appropriate support in the form of small group

work or one to one targeted work for English and Maths or behaviour and social skills as directed by the SENDCo/Inclusion Manager.

In identifying a pupil as needing SEND support the SENDCo/Inclusion Manager will seek advice from appropriate outside agencies to carry out a clear analysis of their needs. Targets will be set and relevant teachers and support staff will be advised of these also.

This cycle of SEND support takes the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent reviews and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the needs of the pupils with SEND.

Referral for an Education Health Care Plan

If a child has lifelong or significant difficulties, they may need to undergo a Statutory Assessment process, which is usually requested by the school – with parents knowledge and agreement. At Unity Academy advice is sought from the previous or current school and paperwork is collated together to achieve the most beneficial support for the individual child. An EHCP referral is required when the complexity of need of the child is such that a multi-agency approach to assessing appropriate support and resources is required.

The decision to make a referral for an Education Health Care Plan will be taken at a progress review.

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points taken and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made at panel to decide whether the child is eligible for an EHC plan.

If the child is awarded an EHC plan it will be reviewed annually to look at progress and further resources available. A plan can be made available up until the age of 25 years if it is deemed appropriate.

Funding

The school's notional special needs budget is for school leaders to use in ways they consider to be most appropriate in achieving outcomes for pupils. It can be aligned with other funding (such as Pupil Premium) to optimise impact. We ensure that funding is allocated to provide high quality provision for all children with SEND, whether or not they have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Pupil Premium – (Free School Meals and EVER 6)

Pupil Premium funding is allocated to schools for the specific purpose of boosting attainment of pupils from low-income families. Funding is available for pupils registered for a free school meal, or those who have been registered in the last six years.

The Government believes that this premium, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address any underlying inequalities between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers. Schools are required to publish online information about how this premium has been used and its impact.

Transition

At Unity Academy we encourage all parents and new children to visit the school prior to starting, where they will have the opportunity to meet either the Inclusion Manager or SENDCo to discuss any extra transition needs.

It is also important for the previous or current school to visit us to discuss the individual needs and circumstances of the child and family to allow relevant targets and support to be put into place from the outset and ensure a smooth transition. The school will need to bring examples of books and work completed by the child, behaviour logs and any safeguarding information or reports from outside agencies.

Children will begin their time at Unity Academy on a part time timetable to assist with the acclimatisation of their new surroundings. This will quickly be increased so they are ideally attending full time by the end of the first week.

When children are preparing to leave us for a new school, we arrange additional visits and the Inclusion Manager/SENDCo liaises regularly with the feeder school prior to transition. If a child is on a behaviour course, we liaise regularly with the current school and towards the end of the placement request that support staff come into Unity Academy to work alongside us to learn about strategies to use with the child when they return to their setting.

If a child has complex needs then a transition review will take place and staff from both schools and parents are invited to attend.

We liaise closely with staff when receiving and transferring children to different schools ensuring all relevant paperwork is passed on and all needs are discussed and understood.

Admissions

The school's admissions criteria does not discriminate against pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and in its admissions policy has due regard for the guidance in the Code of Practice alongside the SEND and Disability Act.

Unity Academy is fully inclusive and all children will be admitted whatever their learning ability. We are informed about children who will be attending by the exclusions team as soon as possible and meetings are arranged with relevant schools and families to ensure a smooth transition process for all involved and ensure that the individual child remains in an educational setting.

Supporting Children with Medical Conditions

At Unity Academy we recognise that pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to the curriculum, including school trips and physical education.

Some children with a medical condition may be registered as disabled and where this is the case, the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Parents are required to contact the school, if medication is prescribed by health professionals that is needed to be taken during the school day.

As a staff we have regular training and updates of conditions and medication affecting individual children so that all staff can manage medical situations.

We have a wide range of support staff who are fully trained in administering first aid.

Behaviour and Attendance

As a school we have a very positive approach to all types of behaviour with a clear reward system that is followed by all staff and pupils.

After any behaviour incident we expect the child to reflect on their behaviour with an adult. This helps to identify why the incident happened and what the child needs to do differently next time to change and improve their behaviour.

Attendance of every child is monitored on a daily basis by the Admin department. Lateness and absence are recorded and any issues or concerns will be addressed with the relevant parties involved. Support is given through an incentive scheme where good attendance is actively encouraged throughout the school.

Specialist Services and expertise available

As a school we work closely with any external agencies that we feel are relevant to individual children's needs within our setting including:

- Educational Psychology
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Speech and Language Therapy
- School Health Advisor
- Health Visitors
- Hearing/Visual Impaired Service
- Looked After Children Education Service (LACES)
- Virtual School for Looked After Pupils
- Attendance Consultant
- Education Investigation Service
- Social Services
- Learning Support Service
- Play therapists
- Counselling Services
- Community Police Officers
- Regular liaison with local mainstream and special provision schools

Referrals to these services will be made by the SENDCo in discussion with class teachers and will always be shared and agreed with parents/carers.

In-Service Training and Continued Professional Development

At Unity Academy we aim to keep all staff up to date with relevant training and developments in teaching practice in relation to the needs of pupils with SEND.

The Inclusion Manager and SENDCo are fully qualified teachers who have the recognised SENDCo award qualification.

The SENDCo keeps up to date with local and national updates in SEND.

Arrangements for co-ordinating SEND provision

SEND records linked to the Assess – Plan – Do – Review cycle are maintained for individual pupils.

All appropriate staff can access:

- SEND Policy
- Guidance on identification of SEND in the Code of Practice 2014
- Information on individual pupil's Special Educational Needs(for those in their class or group)
- The whole school provision map
- Practical advice, teaching strategies and information about types of SEND

- Worcestershire's Local Offer www.worcestershire.gov.uk/send-local-offer-0
- In this way, every staff member will have access to relevant up-to-date information about pupils in their care with SEND and their requirements which will enable them to provide for the individual needs of all pupils.

This policy is made accessible to all staff and parents in order to aid the effective co-ordination of the school's SEND provision, alongside the school's behaviour policy.

Roles and responsibilities

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

In line with the recommendations in the SEND Code of Practice 2014, the SENDCo will oversee the day-to-day operation of this policy in the following ways-

- Development of a whole school provision map and identifying those in receipt of additional SEND support from the schools delegated budget and those with Education Health Care Plans
- Maintenance and analysis of whole-school provision
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEND
- Liaising and advising teachers and support staff within school
- Managing support staff involved in supporting vulnerable learners
- Overseeing the records on all children with SEND
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Implementing a programme of Annual Review for all pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Care Plan.
- Carrying out referral procedures to the Local Authority to request an Educational Health Care Plan when it is suspected, on strong evidence arising from previous intervention, that a pupil may have a special educational need which will require significant support
- Overseeing the smooth running of transition arrangements and transfer of information for all pupils with SEND
- Regularly evaluating the impact and effectiveness of all additional interventions for all vulnerable learners (including those with SEND)
- Regularly meeting with each teacher to review and revise learning objectives for all vulnerable learners in their class.
- Liaising and consulting sensitively with parents and families of pupils with SEND, keeping them informed of progress and listening to their views, in conjunction with class teachers
- Attending area SENDCo network meetings and training as appropriate
- Liaising closely with a range of outside agencies to support vulnerable learners

Class Teachers

The class teacher will liaise regularly with the SENDCo to agree:

- Which pupils in the class are more vulnerable learners
- Which pupils are underachieving and need to have additional interventions
- Which pupils require additional support because of a special educational need
- Share targets and advice given from outside agencies to support the children in their class

The class teacher needs to secure good provision and outcomes for all groups of vulnerable learners by:

- Providing differentiated teaching and learning opportunities
- Ensuring there is adequate opportunity for pupils with SEND to work on agreed targets
- Liaising regularly with support staff who work closely with any vulnerable learners in their class

Support Staff

At Unity Academy a HLTA completes a baseline assessment, as a child joins the school, to understand the levels of need and identify any areas of support that may be required through intervention and within the classroom.

The support team consists of teaching assistants with a range of roles, responsibilities and expertise. If there is an identified need for greater support in a particular cohort, then the staff will be redistributed accordingly. The role of the support staff is, under the direction of the teaching team, to work with pupils in identified groups (whether that is small group, intervention or 1:1) in order to make rapid and sustained progress in line with expectations and intervention and individual targets set by teaching staff and SLT.

Under their guidance pupils feel confident to tackle new challenges facing them in a safe environment where they are able to take risks and responsibility for their own learning and progress.

Where support staff are working with pupils with SEND the teacher still has overall responsibility and should work closely with them to ensure progress. The new Code of Practice makes this clear through its advocacy of the SEND Support in Schools graduated approach (p87-93, paras 6.40-6.72)

Children

We are a school that values and celebrates each child being able to express their views on all aspects of school life.

Pastoral systems ensure there are strategies in place to ensure pupils are able to speak to an adult if they have a worry.

Where appropriate, if a child has SEND their views will be sought before any review meeting and they will be made aware of any targets set to help them make progress.

Pastoral Support

Unity Academy is an inclusive school where we welcome and celebrate diversity. All staff believe that children having high self-esteem is crucial to a child's well-being.

The class teacher has overall responsibility for the pastoral, medical and social care of every child in their class. If further support is required the class teacher liaises with the SENDCo for further advice and support. This may involve working alongside outside agencies as appropriate.

Parents

Parents are viewed as partners in their child's education and are kept fully informed. The staff at Unity Academy work to assist parents to –

- Understand the Special Educational Needs Framework
- Be fully informed of the school based response to their child's Special Educational Needs
- Have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the Special Educational Needs Framework
- Make their views known
- Have access to information, advice and support
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities

In our school we endeavour to communicate positively with parents by-

- Using parental knowledge
- Focusing on the child's strengths as well as weaknesses
- Recognising the personal and emotional investment of parents
- Ensuring parents understand procedures
- Respecting differing perspectives and seeking constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints
- Respecting the differing needs parents themselves may have
- Recognising the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings

Unity Academy will always seek parental permission before making a referral to other agencies for support for their child. Where parents do not wish to have their details passed on to third parties their wishes will be respected.

Close links with parents are acknowledged and valued at Unity Academy and the school operates an open door policy where parents are encouraged to request the opportunity for informal discussion or a more organised meeting.

Evaluating the success of the SEND Policy

The SEND Policy will be evaluated according to a range of criteria. These include:

- The progress rates of SEND pupils as individuals.
- The impact of planned programmes of intervention – accelerated progress against targets set.
- Clear evidence in teachers' records which show evidence of differentiation for pupils with SEND
- The impact of INSET time allocated to staff development with reference to SEND
- Parental engagement attending or contributing to reviews or consultations
- Recommendations by external agencies are acted upon and incorporated into the curriculum.
- The pupils are confident and well-motivated and are making measurable progress
- OFSTED reports

Complaints

As a school we believe that the Special Educational Needs of pupils are best met when there is effective collaboration and communication between school, other agencies, families and pupils. We aim to foster good working relations with all of these groups especially parents.

If a parent is not satisfied with the SEND arrangements for their child, the class teacher is consulted in the first instance. The SENDCo will be informed and if a satisfactory outcome is not achieved a meeting between the parent, teacher and SENDCo will be arranged at a mutually convenient time. In extreme cases the parent may be referred to the LA.

SEN Services Email: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk>

Helpline: 01905 765715

Parent Partnership Service Email: ppservice@worcestershire.gov.uk

Helpline: 01905 610858 (24 hour answer service)