



## [SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY]

### [AVANTI SCHOOLS TRUST]

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# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

## 1. Aims

Our SEN policy and information report aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEN
- Working parameter (assessment of SEND)

## 2. Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013

SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2015)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

Schools' SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)

Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions April 2014

The National Curriculum in England Sept 2013

Safeguarding Policy

Accessibility Plan

Teachers Standards 2012

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Introduction – The Avanti Way

Avanti School's support each person's life journey along three parallel paths: Educational Excellence; Character formation; and Spiritual insight. Avanti exists to help each person become a well-rounded human being through intellectual, moral and spiritual growth and so make the world a better place. The Avanti Trust Schools are inclusive schools where we value the abilities and achievements of all our learners. We believe and ensure all learners are entitled to have access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum to support their individual needs. We recognise that some learners will require additional support in order to overcome barriers to achievement and that learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are such a group. The focus is on outcomes for students.

## 4. Definitions

The Avanti Schools Trust defines SEND in the following way:

- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of learners of the same age or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for learners of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority

Where a learner has a disability or health condition that requires special educational provision to be made, they will be covered by the SEND definition.

Learners 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.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 defines disability as ‘a person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’ Therefore, the legal definition of disability is not the same as the definition of special educational needs.

Consequently, it is possible to be disabled under the DDA and not have SEN, and vice versa. It is also possible to be both disabled under the DDA and have SEN. As advised in the SEN Code of Practice (2015), Avanti Schools Trust accepts that a medical diagnosis may mean that a learner is disabled but is not necessarily SEN. We will always consider the learner’s educational needs rather than specifically relying on just a medical diagnosis/disability.

Learners with SEN and/or disabilities admitted to Avanti Trust Schools could have difficulties with one or more of the following:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognitive and learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory and/Physical

The Revised Code of Practice (2015) sets very clear expectations that:

- Special Needs is integral to the workings of a school and not an additional afterthought
- All teachers are teachers of special educational needs

At Avanti Trust Schools teaching such learners is, therefore, a ‘whole-school’ responsibility and requires a ‘whole-school’ response.

## **5. Roles and responsibilities**

### **Governance & Accountability in relation to SEND**

The Board of Directors is the legal Governing Body of every Avanti school and has ultimate accountability and legal responsibility for all Avanti Schools, including statutory responsibilities of governors and accountability for the quality of educational provision and school effectiveness. The Board has appointed School Stakeholder Committees (SSCs) for each Avanti School. SSCs provide perspectives from various stakeholder groups (staff, parents and wider community) on a day to day functioning of the school in order to support the school’s work. Currently, in the South West Hub schools a temporary committee called a Governance Board is in operation. Governing Boards, School Stakeholder Committee and proprietors should ensure that the Trust and each school designates an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for SEND. This person should have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting or directing other staff. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

Senior MAT officers (Education Director and MAT Lead for SEND and Safeguarding) are responsible for the strategy for SEND across the Trust and its implementation across its schools. A designated member of the Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight of all matters related to SEND. They provide strategic support and will delegate to the Principal and SENDCo in each school to ensure that this policy is followed.

Any serious issues related to SEND/Inclusion in any of the schools within the Avanti Schools Trust should be shared with the Education Director and the MAT Lead for SEND and Safeguarding. The MAT Lead for SEND and Safeguarding will provide strategic and operational support for all school SENDCos and will coordinate and when appropriate lead a planned programme of training and development. They will hold network meetings each term. Minutes will be disseminated to the Director of Education and Primary Head of School Improvement.

#### **The SSC will:**

- Appoint an SEND SSC representative
- Ensure that the school uses its best endeavours, making reasonable adjustments when necessary, to meet the needs of students with SEND ;
- Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) when carrying out its duties in relation to students with special educational needs;
- Have a written SEND policy containing the information as set out in the SEND Code of Practice; ☑ Report to parents/carers on the implementation of the school's policy for SEND on the school website through the SEND information report ;
- Ensure that all members are up to date and knowledgeable about the school's SEND provision, including how funding, equipment and personnel are deployed;
- Ensure the appointment of an appropriately qualified SENDCo.

#### **The Principal**

Role of the Principal is line managing Inclusion (SEND)

The Principal as line manager for Inclusion is responsible for embedding a culture of research into teaching and learning, to ensure that the high quality teaching is based on what works in the school, across the Trust as well as nationally. They will have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.

#### **The role of the SENDCo in the school is to:**

- Ensure the day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy and the deployment of learning support assistants across the school;
- Provide advice to staff supporting, liaising with them and where necessary supporting the completion of individual plans for students;
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support, for example by working alongside staff to assist them in identifying, assessing and planning for students' needs and monitoring expected progress;
- Liaise with parents/carers of students with SEND and with the Designated Safeguarding Lead Team where a looked after student has SEND;
- Oversee and maintain resources for SEND;
- Liaise with external agencies and being a key point of contact for them, including the local authority and its support services;
- Contribute to discussions about the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively;
- Contribute to, and supporting the continuing professional development for staff;

- Monitor, evaluate and report on the provision for students with SEND to the Principal and Governing Body and work with them to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010);
- Co-ordinate the range of support available to students with SEND and ensuring that the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date;
- Ensure that up-to-date and accurate records are kept including the Student Support Register which includes all students with SEND, and that paperwork and procedures for Annual Review and Personal Learning Plans (if required) in the main school are in place
- Ensure that examination access arrangements are in place as required (if relevant) for students for whom there is evidence of need, and that arrangements are made as necessary for formal assessment as defined by school policies.

### **Class/Subject teachers**

The teacher is responsible for the progress of every student in her/his class through 'Quality First Teaching', including students with learning barriers. All teachers are to have high expectations of all their students and have high aspirations for all. The teacher ensures progress of the students with learning barriers through scaffolding classwork and possibly targeted in class support according to the learning barrier of the student. However, the responsibility for scaffolding learning lies with the subject specialist teacher. The teacher knows the Learning Barriers Support for the students they teach. They are also responsible for providing appropriate subject interventions required to support their students to remove barriers to success and ensuring they are fully aware of a child's needs with an Educational Healthcare plan (EHCP).

In addition each class teacher is responsible for:

- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision

### **Teaching Assistants**

TAs are there to support/reinforce the aspect of the high quality teaching in the classroom. They support the learning of students with learning barriers by delivering the differentiated work prepared by teachers. TAs also deliver many of the interventions such as the homework club at lunchtime and after school.

## **6. SEN information report**

This is prepared and publicised in addition to this report and all Avant Trust Schools will ensure that this is in place, reviewed annually and also included on the individual school websites.

## **7. The kinds of SEN that are provided for**

The Avanti Schools Trust currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- Communication and interaction, for example, autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties
- Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia,

- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD),
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy
- Moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties

### **7.1 Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs**

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

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

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social needs. Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN. When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

### **7.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents**

We will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account the parents' concerns
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents. We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEN support.

### **7.3 A Graduated Approach to SEND Support**

The Avanti Trust Schools follows the guidance contained in the SEND Code of Practice (2015.) This recommends a graduated approach to SEND Support, determined by successive cycles of assess, plan, do, review. The Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Mental and Emotional Health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

An individual student's needs may not fall neatly into any one 'box' and the Code of Practice recognises this. Some students have other medically diagnosed disabilities which may impact upon their learning.

The majority of students have their needs met by, and are able to make good progress with, 'Quality

First Teaching' in the classroom. Some students, working just below the expected level, may need a short booster or faculty/subject catch-up intervention. These are not SEND interventions, and students participating in them do not need to be designated as having SEND. When, over time, booster or additional faculty interventions do not result in expected progress, or when students are known to be performing significantly below expectation over a period of time, they may require additional and different support as their needs may not be fully met from ordinarily available school resources. At this point, in consultation with parents/carers, the School may seek professional advice from external agencies.

The 2015 SEND Code of Practice stipulates a graduated approach to identifying and supporting students and students with SEND Support, which it defines as "a model of action and intervention in early education settings, schools and colleges to help children and young people who have special educational needs. The approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child or young person may be experiencing."

At every level, the aim is to match interventions closely to the needs of the individual student so that he or she overcomes barriers to achievement.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students they teach, including those who access Teaching Assistants or specialist staff. At Avanti Trust Schools the quality of teaching for all students is regularly and carefully reviewed, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and where necessary improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered..

Where a student has an EHCP, the School will carry out an Annual Review which they and their parents/carers, outside agencies, SENDCo and any other school staff as appropriate, will be invited to attend. The meeting will focus on the student's outcomes and update recommendations relating to their provision or placement.

## **8. Admission Arrangements**

The schools in the Avanti Trust are inclusive mainstream schools. Entry to the schools is through normal admission arrangements via the relevant local authority. In line with the Admissions Code students with EHCPs are prioritised for placement provided that their placement is suitable and that there would be no detriment to the efficient education of other students or to the use of school resources if one of the Avanti Trust schools were to be named. All students in Avanti Trust Schools will be treated according to their needs in line with their policy for equality of opportunity.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that all students are included under the terms of the Equality Act (2010.) If a student is transferring into the school with an EHC Plan the continuation of this support will be negotiated with the appropriate officer of the student's home local authority during the consultation process, in order to ensure that their needs can be met. Any variation to the above will need to be agreed by the Principal in conjunction with the SSC.

## **9. Transition Arrangements**

The schools in the Avanti Trust are committed to support students during all transition phases relevant to their settings. Where transition occur from one to school to another schools will work closely together to ensure the transition is as comprehensive as possible. Parents will also be engaged in the process. Where files are required to be forwarded, the schools will commit to send these securely within 5 days of request.

## **10. Working with other agencies**

Close links are maintained with the individual school's 'Local Offer' in order to ensure that the school makes appropriate provision for students with special educational needs. Where it is necessary to contact outside agencies, the SENDCo will usually make the necessary arrangements and discuss with parents/carers accordingly.

## **11. Partnership with Parents/Carers and Students**

The Code is clear that parents/carers of students identified with SEND must be fully involved and engaged in the "assess, plan, do, review" cycle: "Where a student is receiving SEND support, schools should talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the student and the school. Schools should meet parents at least three times each year" (para 6.65.)

Students, young people and parents should always be involved in decision-making. Discussions will need to allow sufficient time to explore the parents' views and to plan effectively. Views of the student could be gathered before or during the meeting.

Avanti Trust School's emphasises the importance of involving students and developing a partnership with parents and carers in order to plan provision and review progress and ensure that students are able to achieve their potential.

## **12. Supporting Students with Medical Conditions**

Avanti Trust Schools recognise that students at their schools with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some students with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

In addition, some students have SEND and may have an Education, Health and Care Plan which brings together health and social needs, as well as their special educational provision and the SEND Code of Practice (2014) is followed.

## **13. Monitoring and evaluation**

All schools in the Avanti School's Trust regularly and carefully monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision offered to students through audits, observations, sampling of parents' and students' views and scrutiny of data relating to progress and attainment.

The school's evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all students.

This SEND policy is reviewed by SSC annually, and the SEND SSC representative regularly monitors the school to help maintain quality standards and offer support. The success of the school's SEND policy will be judged against the objectives set out above.

## **14. Handling Complaints**

The majority of issues raised by parents, the community or students, are concerns rather than complaints. All schools in the Avanti School's Trust are committed to taking concerns seriously, at



the earliest stage, in the hope of keeping the number of formal complaints to a minimum and without needing formal procedures. However, depending on the nature of the complaint, complainants may wish or be asked to follow the individual school's formal complaints procedure which is outlined in our Complaints Policy.

The school works closely with parents of children with special educational needs (SEND) and are able to address the majority of concerns that are raised through our existing processes for communication and liaison. In line with all others, parents of children with SEND are able to raise concerns in accordance with our Complaints Policy.