

drb Ignite Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs Policy Covid-19 Addendum

Introduction

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, this policy addendum is intended to support children with special educational needs for whom provision may need to be reviewed and adapted to ensure all safeguarding and educational needs are met as fully as possible under the current circumstances.

It sets out the core principles by which all Trust schools will work. It may be adapted by schools in order to reflect specific contexts and to meet the needs of learners. For example, situations may arise where provision needs to be urgently adapted linked to reduced staffing capacity or as a direct result of staff or pupil absence due to illness or self-isolation.

The health, safety and wellbeing of children, staff and families is the Trust's first consideration and may, at times, limit the extent of provision for all of our children. Any statutory provision which is affected by the impact of the pandemic will be reported to the Trust Executive Team and local authority SEND team.

Wherever possible, all Trust schools will make every reasonable adjustment to ensure continuity of provision and will always aim for consistently highest standards of teaching. Trust schools will follow Department for Education guidelines and advice to meet the needs of learners with SEND where it is safe to do so.

Regular and ongoing formative pupil assessment will determine gaps in learning and support effective target setting for all children with SEND. Progress will be measured summatively every half term to support teachers to plan and deliver an appropriate and challenging curriculum.

Identifying children with additional needs

Throughout the pandemic all Trust schools will continue to work within existing policies to sensitively identify children with SEN using the following criteria. Children who:

- have communication and interaction difficulties. This may include children with speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties and autism spectrum disorder e.g. aspergers syndrome.
- have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, e.g. children who demonstrate

- features of moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties and/or specific learning difficulties and require bespoke provision to aid progression in cognition and learning.
- have a disability such as a visual or hearing impairment which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities. Children may have physical impairments which require them to have specific equipment.
 - have emotional or behavioural difficulties which may cause them to be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive or disturbing, hyperactive and lacking concentration,
 - present with immature social and relational skills and/or challenging behaviours.
 - are gifted and talented or exceptionally able and, as such, need additional provision to reach their potential.

Aims and objectives

The aim of this policy is to ensure children with SEND are effectively safeguarded throughout the period of the pandemic and their learning, social and emotional needs are met as fully as possible although a range of restrictions may limit the usual arrangements in Trust schools. Trust schools will achieve this by:

- creating a learning environment that meets the special educational needs of each child in order that they can achieve their learning potential and engage in activities alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- requesting, monitoring and responding to parents/carers and pupils' views in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership throughout the period of the pandemic.
- making clear the Trust's expectations to all partners working with pupils in Trust schools.
- ensuring a high level of staff expertise to meet unique pupil needs, through well-targeted and continuing professional development opportunities and experiences.
- ensuring support for pupils with medical conditions to engage in and be engaged in the full range of school activities by ensuring consultation with parents/carers, health and social care professionals.
- identifying the roles and responsibilities of all staff in Trust schools in providing for children with special educational needs

- making reasonable adjustments to enable children with special educational needs to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum.
- working in co-operation and productive partnerships with the local authority and other external agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all children with special educational needs.

Core principles

1. Safeguarding

All Trust schools will maintain effective safeguarding procedures and processes throughout the period of the pandemic and in full compliance with KCSIE 2020. This includes arrangements for child protection for those children who are at risk of serious harm or have been seriously harmed.

2. Meeting individual needs

The Trust and its schools believe that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to achieve their full potential. Throughout the pandemic, all Trust schools will use their best endeavours to secure special educational provision for children requiring support that is *additional and different from* that provided within the differentiated curriculum. This will continue to be planned to respond to the four areas of need identified in the ***DfE Code of Practice (2015)***:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and Learning
- social, emotional and mental Health
- sensory and physical

3. Mental Health and Wellbeing

All Trust schools will have particular regard to the mental health and wellbeing of children, particularly when returning to school after closure, partial closures, self-isolation and school holidays.

All Trust staff will receive ongoing training to support children's mental health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic. They will ensure that the school day is balanced between carefully planned learning, relational and wellbeing activities such as PE, circle time, the arts and relationships education. Children with SEND may be

set appropriate targets for social, emotional and behavioural targets as appropriate. These will be kept under review to ensure any new needs, as a result of the developing pandemic, are met.

For note:

The Trust and its schools will use the Department for Education (DFE) guidance for parents to support their children's mental health and wellbeing and the designated parental helplines developed by the Trust's local authorities of Dudley and Birmingham

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

4. Equal opportunities and inclusion

It is important that the Trust meets the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that pupils with SEND continue to be supported to engage and participate in a diverse and multi-ethnic society. Through differentiated curricular provision Trust schools will respect that children:

- may have changing needs as the pandemic continues.
- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations.
- require different strategies for learning and engagement.
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates.
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

5. Access to a broad curriculum

Through all curriculum subjects the Trust will ensure that Trust schools meet the needs of all children with SEND. This will appropriately take account of:

- gender
- ethnicity
- culture
- religion
- language
- age
- disability
- other behavioural, social and emotional circumstances.

6. Alignment with Trust Covid-19 Strategy and Risk Assessment

All Trust schools have designated and clear staff roles and responsibilities for the support of children with SEND. These staff will ensure that throughout the pandemic, schools continue to work within the:

- associated Trust policies and procedures
- Trust's Covid-19 Strategy and risk assessments
- DfE SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Section 69(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014
- Regulation 51 and schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulation 2014

Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the pandemic, all Trust schools will ensure the following roles and responsibilities in relation to SEND are met:

- overseeing the day to day operation of the SEND policy and addendum
- ensuring an appropriate budget allocation to meet policy requirements
- co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating provision including interventions for individual children
- monitoring the progress of children with SEND alongside class teachers
- liaising with, advising and supporting teachers as required
- updating and overseeing SEND records of children on SENS List (SENS Register), in conjunction with class teachers
- maintaining the SEND database
- liaising with parents and carers
- organising and delivering training and professional development in order to meet the needs of all staff
- ensuring that relevant background information is collected, recorded and updated according to GDPR regulations
- overseeing the Pupil Profile, IEP and review process
- monitoring the work allocation and training of teaching support assistants
- liaising with external partners and agencies
- liaising with and informing the Trust Board and SEND Lead Trustee
- liaising with and reporting to the Trust Inclusion Lead
- liaising with SENCOs of secondary schools on transfer to KS3
- organising the assessment of children joining the school

Parent/carer participation

Throughout the pandemic, partnership with parents/carers will continue to play a key role in enabling children with SEN to achieve their potential. Parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs. All parents of children with SEN will continue to be treated as partners, given support to play an active and valued role in their child's education

Effective governance - the Trust Board

The Trust Board will continue to challenge all Trust schools to maintain necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. This will be overseen through the Trustee Inclusion Lead, the Trust Improvement Board and the Achievement, Support and Scrutiny Sub Committee.

Links with other agencies

The Trust and its schools will continue to work closely with professionals who will continue to visit schools (as restrictions permit) to offer support to pupils, parents and staff. These agencies will include:

- Educational psychology service
- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Autism Outreach Teams
- Hearing Impairment Teams
- Visual Impairment Teams
- Learning Support Service
- School Health Advisers
- School Nurse teams

Monitoring and review

This Addendum will be monitored as part of the Trust's Covid Strategy and associated risk assessments.

Change management

Monitoring and review	CEO Trust Board Trust Improvement Board
Links	Safeguarding and Child Protection Equalities Health and Safety SEND Policy Covid-19 Strategy and Risk Management
Staff responsible	CEO, Executive Director Governance and Strategy, Director of School Improvement, Headteachers
Committee responsible	Trust Improvement Board Achievement Support and Scrutiny Sub-committee
Date	April 2021
Next review	April 2022
Sign off by Chair of Trust	 Date: April 2021

Change Management

Issue No.:	Change date:	Change description:
1.0	April'21	Initial release