



Victoria Academies Trust

SEND & INCLUSION POLICY v1.0

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1. Introduction and Legislative Compliance

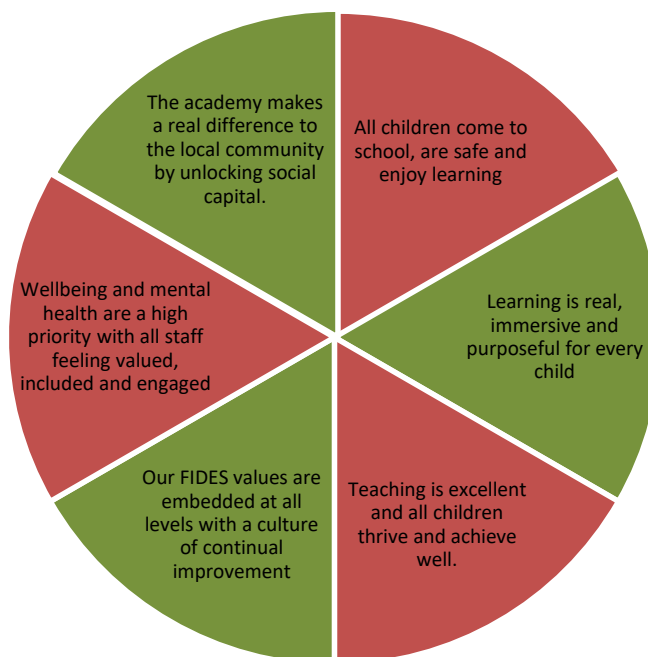
- 1.1. This policy sets out our expectations for all our schools and those regularly joint working with parents, local authorities and social care partners. These expectations will ensure we are compliant with both the requirements and the ethos of the SEND reforms and serve to improve outcomes for all learners.
- 1.2. "Inclusion is a journey with a clear direction and purpose: equality of opportunity for all children and young people." (Council for Disabled Children, 2008)
- 1.3. Inclusion is a term used to describe the process of ensuring equity of learning opportunities for all children and young people. It is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. Inclusion is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school.
- 1.4. Inclusion focuses particularly on those groups of children who have historically been marginalised or who have underachieved. Inclusion does not mean that all learners necessarily learn in the same way or together, but that practices are adapted to take account of all learners' needs – this is equity in learning.
- 1.5. Educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. All children, including those identified as having special educational needs and / or disabilities have the same common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and enables them to be fully included in all aspects of school life.
- 1.6. All schools must operate in accordance with the law as set out in the following:
 - Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
 - The Special Educational Needs and Disability regulations 2014
 - The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) regulations 2014
 - The Equality Act 2010
- 1.7. All schools in England **must** have regard to the Code of Practice (2014) as it provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. Schools must fulfil their statutory duties towards children and young people with SEN or disabilities in light of the guidance set out.
- 1.8. Under the Equality Act (2010) all schools have duties towards individual disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services required by disabled children and young people to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage.
- 1.9. The Teachers' Standards (2012) makes clear the expectation for all *teachers* to "adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils". Teachers must "have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them." (Standard 5)

2. Equality and Inclusion

- 2.1 All learners should be equally valued in school. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) states that “avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progression for all pupils. Good education and skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of a successful life. In addition, in England, equality and diversity are specified factors that must be taken into account in Ofsted inspections.
- 2.2 Schools also have wider duties to prevent discrimination, to promote equality and to foster good relations for “an equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be.” (EHRC, 2014)

3. Vision: OUR BIG 6

- 3.1 Our goal is to create a family of pioneering standout schools. Schools that stand out have flipped the concept of Ofsted ‘outstanding’ on its head. Schools that are standing out have redefined excellence in a way that is wholesome, transformational and sustainable. We measure only what we value ensuring that our values and vision drive all that we do.
- 3.2 To this end, we have our ‘Big 6’. They very much reflect our model of school improvement and are central to the way we operate. As a scorecard it helps us come to a shared and common understanding of what a high-performing school looks like.



4. The MAT Model

4.1 The model is based on the five core Value Partners of:

Focus on family
Insist on excellence
Do good as you go
Embrace innovation
Seize success



5. Learners with SEND

5.1 There is a clear distinction between ‘underachievement’, often caused by a poor early experience of learning, and ‘special educational needs’. Some pupils may be underachieving but will not necessarily have a special educational need; it is our responsibility to identify this quickly and ensure that appropriate support is put in place to help these pupils ‘catch up’.

5.2 “A child or young person has SEN 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 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

5.2 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. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

5.3 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).” (Code of Practice, updated January 2015)

5.4 The Code of Practice (2014, updated January 2015) makes clear the four broad areas of Special Education Need, these are:

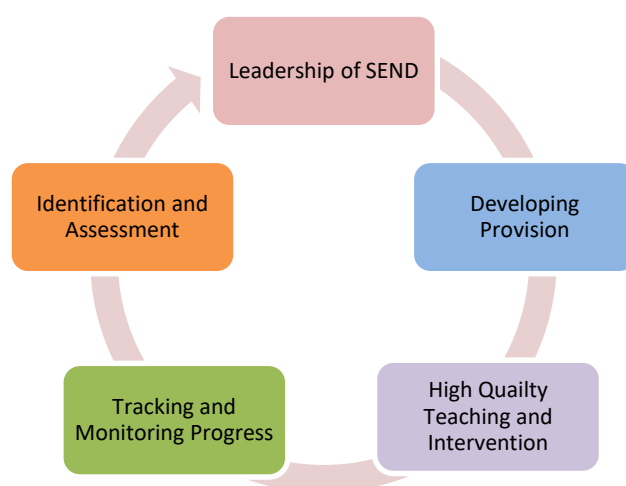
- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

5.5 In line with the Code of Practice, all schools follow the graduated approach to a learners' special educational needs. This support should take 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 and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes."



(The Graduated Approach)

5.6 **The MAT strategic model for SEND is underpinned by the five key areas of effective leadership of SEND provision:**



- 5.7 The Responsibility and leadership of SEND is well evidenced when there is a clear strategic approach to SEND provision across the school, with key personnel identified and recognised, and where continuing professional development (CPD) and performance management are successful in improving outcomes for learners with SEND.
- 5.8 Enjoyment and innovation for learners with SEND is well evidenced through high quality teaching

and intervention, which is targeted and appropriate and which enthuses and engages, resulting in consistently high expectations and aspirations of all and a belief that learning is without limits.

- 5.9 The **Aspiration** and development of learners with SEND is well evidenced through robust tracking and monitoring processes, which ensure levels of achievement and attainment are substantial and sustained, based on individual starting points, and where all learners are well-prepared for the next stages of their educational journey.
- 5.10 Collaboration and inclusion is well evidenced when the provision for learners with SEND is well developed and innovative, with opportunities available for personalisation and flexibility; providing a curriculum offer which is different from and/or additional to that already offered and which secures effective partnership working for all involved – including parents / carers.
- 5.11 **Honesty** and integrity is well evidenced in the appropriate and early identification of learners' needs; where the SEND register is an accurate and regularly updated 'live document' and where specialist support is available 'at the right time'.

6. Working Together across Education, Health and Care

- 6.1 Victoria Academies Trust is committed to joint working arrangements with education, health and care bodies and professionals to secure effective outcomes for all learners in our schools.
- 6.2 Each Trust school will cooperate with the relevant Local Authority in developing and reviewing its local offer.
- 6.3 Victoria Academies Trust will work with our schools, local and national providers to secure the services needed to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. These services could include speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, education psychology, mental health services, other health and social care professionals.

7. Expectations of all Schools

- 10.1 At the heart of educational inclusion is provision which meets the needs of all learners.
- 10.2 All schools are *committed* to providing:
 - Quality First Teaching (QFT) which meets the needs of all learners and which is appropriately differentiated
 - Effective systems for tracking and monitoring progress, so that early intervention can address gaps in learning; this includes, but is not exclusive to, monitoring and evaluation through learning walks and work scrutiny, across all pupil groups
 - Opportunities to extend and challenge all learners, so that they can achieve their potential
 - Effective lines of communication between home and school, so that through collaboration, a shared understanding of 'what success looks like' is achieved for each learner and their family
- 10.3 All schools are *required* to have the following:
 - SEND Information Report.
 - A link to their LA local offer
- 10.4 It is *best practice, but not a requirement*, for all schools to also have the following:

- SEND Action Plan for Improvement
- A coordinated provision map, which identifies additional support / strategies by learners and which can be filtered according to learner characteristics
- Links to disadvantaged, SEND and more-able learners in the whole-school Improvement Plan

8. Responsibilities of the Victoria Academies Trust

11.1 To ensure the expectations of all schools are upheld, the Trust undertakes a variety of Quality Assurance (QA) activities on a minimum of an annual basis, from which strengths and areas of development are identified to inform best practice and priorities for improvement. These may include:

- SEND Review
- Monitoring Visits, as appropriate, for SEND

11.2 All reviews are reported on formally and shared with Trustee Board members / Academy Councils, as appropriate, for further discussion and challenge.

11.3 In addition, a core offer of support is provided to all schools and may include any of the following:

- Network meetings to inform and share best practice
- Staff training, research projects and conferences
- External review preparation and guidance
- Bespoke programmes designed to support each academy's provision

11.4 Where a school is identified to have significant weaknesses or areas for development, supplementary support is provided by the Trust to ensure accelerated improvements are made, leading to effective and consistently good practice to meet the needs of learners.

9. Biography

Council for Disabled Children (2008) *Inclusion Policy* [Online] Available at:

http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/media/59424/inclusion_policy.pdf

Department for Education (2014, Updated January 2015) *Special Education Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice: 0-25 Years* [Online]

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Equality and Human Rights Commission (2014) *What Equality Policy Means for you as an Education Provider: Schools* [Online]

Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/what-equality-lawmeans-you-education-provider-schools>