Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Meridian Academy
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy

Policy version control

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Author	Wasim Butt, National Director of AP and Special Academies
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	• 5.2 – Addition of '*so far and*' • 17.3 - Addition in light of national policy changes • 17.4 - Updated language

Scope of this policy

This is the Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) SEND policy which complies with all statutory requirements, including those relating to the legislation contained in the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and follows the statutory guidance within the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK

OAT comprises primary, secondary, AP and special academies, as well as several specialist bases/resourced provisions. This policy is relevant to all types of setting.

In addition to the SEND policy, academies publish further details of their local SEND arrangements on their academy website. This information will always include the SEN Information Report, including the contact details of key staff involved in SEND provision, and information on the local offer.

Please see the SEND page on the website for further information.

Where 'parent' is used in this policy, this should be taken to include guardian or carer.

Contents

1. Our values 5
2. Legal framework 5
3. Definition of SEND 6
4. Roles and responsibilities 6
   - 4.1. The SENCO will: 6
   - 4.2. The principal will: 7
   - 4.3. Education Directors will: 8
   - 4.4. Each teacher is responsible for: 8
   - 4.5. The SEND governor will: 8
   - 4.6. The child will: 9
   - 4.7. Parents will: 9
5. Identifying needs 9
6. Provision for special educational needs 9
7. The graduated approach 10
8. Requesting an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment 10
9. Approach to teaching children with SEND 11
10. Transition 11
11. Links with external partners 11
12. Training 11
13. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision 11
14. Enabling children with SEND to engage in activities 12
15. Behaviour and reasonable adjustments 12
16. Complaints about SEND provision 13
17. Monitoring Arrangements 13

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Contacts and Responsibilities 15

1. Our values

1.1. At OAT we have five values:

- **Ambition:** we believe everyone can achieve, and we aspire for excellence in all we do
- **Learning**: we are always learning and see development as the route to improvement
- **Perseverance:** we embrace challenge and learn through doing difficult things
- **Collaboration:** we achieve more through working together
- **Inclusion:** we break down barriers to learning and participation

1.2. We believe that inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We believe that every child, regardless of background deserves the opportunity to thrive in an environment where they feel valued, supported and empowered.

1.3. Inclusion is not just about access – it's about ensuring high expectations, expert teaching and tailored support so that every child can succeed. We are committed to delivering an equitable, high-quality education that recognises and nurtures the unique strengths and potential of every child, removing barriers before they become entrenched.

1.4. Our approach is rooted in collaboration between staff, children, families and external partners to ensure that every child gets the right support at the right time. Together, we build schools where inclusion is not an add-on, but an integral part of how we teach, lead and support every learner. Inclusion is not just a priority; it is at the heart of everything we do.

2. Legal framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and relevant statutory/non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Statutory guidance:
  Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
  Keeping Children Safe in Education
  Working together to improve school attendance

- Legislation:
  Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
  The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
  Equality Act 2010 (section 20)
  Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010)
  Academy Trust Governance Guide
  School Admissions Code

This policy reflects the statutory framework in force at the point of publication. OAT recognises the national direction of travel towards earlier identification, inclusive mainstream practice, improved universal provision and clearer accountability for inclusion. The policy will be reviewed and updated as

required following any new legislation, statutory guidance, National Inclusion Standards or revisions to the SEND Code of Practice.

2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- SEN Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Supporting children with medical needs policy

3. Definition of SEND

3.1. A child has a SEN where their learning difficulty calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to children of the same age.

3.2. A disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, is a physical or mental impairment with a long-term and substantial impact on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

3.3. There are four broad areas of need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Children may have needs that overlap one or more areas and detailed assessments should ensure all needs have been identified. The broad areas of need are:

3.3.1. **Communication and Interaction**: this can include speech, language and communication needs and autism spectrum difficulties

3.3.2. **Cognition and Learning**: this can include moderate, severe, and profound and multiple learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia

3.3.3. **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties**: this can include behaviours that reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or eating disorders. It also includes other disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder.

3.3.4. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs**: this can include visual, hearing, or multi-sensory impairment and physical disabilities.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The SENCO will:

4.1.1. Complete the NPQ for SENCOs, if they have not completed the NASENCO qualification. They must complete training within 3 years of appointment - academies and SENCOs must make sure they enrol on training that will meet this requirement. SENCOs appointed before 1 September 2009 are not required to take the NPQ but will be expected to ensure compliance with the regulations.

4.1.2. Work with and be supported by the principal or appropriate member of the senior leadership team and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy in order to improve outcomes for children with SEND.

4.1.3. Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEND.

4.1.4. Liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where children looked after, or previously looked after, have SEND.

4.1.5. Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parent/carers, and other agencies to ensure children with SEND receive effective support, provision and high-quality teaching.

4.1.6. Advise on the graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) to providing SEND support.

4.1.7. Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet children' needs effectively and efficiently.

4.1.8. Liaise with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health, and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies in order to inform planning for a child's support.

4.1.9. Work with the Principal and governing board to ensure that the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

4.1.10. Ensure the academy keeps the records of all children with SEND up to date and in line with current GDPR policies and shares information in a timely manner if a child transfers to another school or education institution.

4.1.11. Liaise with previous and potential next providers of education to ensure a child and their parents are informed about options, and a smooth transition is planned.

4.1.12. Monitor the effectiveness of any special educational provision made and when appropriate secure additional services and provision.

4.1.13. Liaise regularly with parents, external agencies, and the local authority to provide information on children's needs, provision, and outcomes.

4.1.14. Prepare and review information required by law to be published in relation to special educational needs provision.

4.2. The principal will:

4.2.1. Ensure that all staff are ambitious for all children with SEND.

4.2.2. Ensure that children with SEND are included in all aspects of academy life.

4.2.3. Work with the SENCO and SEND governor to determine the implementation of the SEND policy and development of provision in the academy.

4.2.4. Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of children with SEND.

4.3. Education Directors will:

4.3.1. Monitor the implementation of this policy across their allocated academies, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and trust-wide expectations, with support from the SEND Lead Practitioner team where appropriate.

4.3.2. Support principals and SENCOs to uphold high standards of SEND provision through regular review, challenge and guidance.

4.4. Each teacher is responsible for:

4.4.1. Setting ambitious but achievable academic expectations and supporting children to achieve positive outcomes.

4.4.2. Delivering high quality teaching and adapting the curriculum so that it is coherently sequenced to meet all children's needs, starting points and aspirations for the future.

4.4.3. The progress and development of every child in their class, including where children access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

4.4.4. Working closely with any additional adults within the setting to assess, plan, do and review support and intervention for each child with SEND in their class.

4.4.5. Working in partnership with parent/carers, health professionals, therapists, social workers and other providers or agencies to secure the best outcomes for children.

4.4.6. Working with the SENCO to review children's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.

4.4.7. Assessing the learning and development of children in line with academy policy.

4.4.8. Making regular assessments of the progress of all children and identify those who need additional support or adjustments.

4.4.9. Undertaking professional development to inform and support their practice

4.5. The SEND governor will:

4.5.1. Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision and report findings to the governing body.

4.5.2. Support the principal and SENCO in promoting ambition and inclusion for all children with SEND.

4.5.3. Seek assurance that SEND remains a priority in academy self-evaluation and improvement planning.

4.5.4. Understand the legal responsibility for compliance rests with the Trust board.

4.5.5. Help to review the academy's SEN information report and provision for children with SEND.

4.6. The child will:

4.6.1. Children will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. We will use our best endeavours to capture their voice/views in a way that is meaningful and accessible to them, ensuring their views help to inform planning and decision-making. This might involve the child:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

4.7. Parents will:

4.7.1. Work in partnership with the academy by sharing insights about their child's strengths, needs, and effective strategies used at home, while also supporting the values, aims, and policies of the academy to promote consistency and shared expectations.

4.7.2. Contribute to setting and reviewing outcomes as part of the graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review).

4.7.3. Engage in open, honest, and constructive communication with the academy to help secure the best possible outcomes for their child.

4.7.4. Participate in meetings and discussions about their child's provision and progress, with support offered where needed to ensure this is accessible and meaningful.

5. Identifying needs

5.1. All academies will seek to identify a child's needs at the earliest opportunity. Academies assess attainment on entry and monitor progress throughout a child's learning journey.

5.2. If a child is not making expected progress, high quality teaching is the first response. If difficulties persist, additional assessments may be carried out, with support from the SENCO and external agencies, where appropriate, to inform any additional support required.

5.3. Parents will be included early in this process.

5.4. Where it is decided that a child does have SEN, this will be recorded in a child's records and the child's parents will be informed that special educational provision is being made and included in regular reviews of provision and progress.

6. Provision for special educational needs

6.1. Where a child is identified as having SEN, all academies will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. When deciding whether additional support or

provision is required, the process will start with the desired outcomes, including expected progress and attainment, and the views and wishes of the child and their parents. SENCOs will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed. If different or additional provision is required, all academies will follow the graduated approach.

7. The graduated approach

7.1. As outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (6.45-6.56), all academies will follow a four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review which is known as the 'graduated approach'.

7.2. **Assess:** A clear analysis of child's needs will be carried out. Regular assessment of a child's progress, appropriate for the child's individual starting point and needs**,** and development will be carefully tracked and compared to their peers and national expectations if appropriate. Assessments will include the views and experiences of parents and the child and if relevant, assessment and advice from external support services. Assessments will be reviewed regularly to ensure interventions are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and support is effective.

7.3. **Plan:** Where SEND support is required the SENCO, with the support of relevant staff, will put together a plan outlining the provision to be put in place for the child as well as the expected impact on progress and outcomes. This will be done in partnership with the child and parents and all staff who work with the child will be made aware of the plan and the outcomes sought.

7.4. **Do:** The class or subject teacher is responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. The teacher will also liaise closely with any teaching assistants or specialists who provide support set out in the plan and monitor the progress being made. The SENCO will provide support and guidance for the teacher.

7.5. **Review:** The impact of the plan will be reviewed regularly by the SENCO, any key staff, parents, and the child. This will inform the planning of next steps and feedback into the analysis of a child's needs.

8. Requesting an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment

8.1. The first stage of additional or different support is called SEN Support. If, under SEN Support, a child has still not made expected progress towards the outcomes that have been agreed through collaborative planning, the academy and/or parents may consider requesting an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) needs assessment. This is coordinated by the local authority.

8.2. Further information on EHC needs assessments and plans can be found at Section 9 of the SEND Code of Practice.

9. Approach to teaching children with SEND

9.1. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the attainment, development and progress of all the children they teach. High quality teaching is the foundation of inclusive education and is always the first step in responding to children who may have SEND.

9.2 Any adaptations should be delivered in a way that, as far as possible, minimises the appearance of difference and maximises participation in class alongside a child's peers. Any removal from a child's regular class or peers for individually tailored intervention should be considered carefully and the benefits weighed against potential feelings of difference and isolation. Academies must also consider what parts of the curriculum are missed in order to deliver intervention and plan for appropriate 'catch up'.

9.3 Further details on teaching children with SEND can be found in an academy's SEN Information Report on each academy website.

10. Transition

10.1 SEN support will include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life. All relevant information about a child's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner.

11. Links with external partners

11.1 Academies may involve specialists to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. This could include educational psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the school nursing service, specialist teachers or support services and therapists. Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists, and all discussions and outcomes will be shared with parents.

12. Training

12.1 The SENCO is expected to attend local, regional and national network meetings to share good practice with colleagues and to keep up to date with national SEND developments.

12.2 The specific training and expertise of other school staff are listed on each academy's SEN Information Report.

12.3 All staff should receive regular training on supporting children with additional needs and this should form part of an academy's programme of continuing professional development (CPD).

13. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

13.1 Within an academy, the effectiveness of SEND provision is evaluated by:

13.1.1 Regularly reviewing children's individual progress and attainment with parents and the child, where appropriate.

13.1.2 Reviewing the impact of interventions.

13.1.3 Using child and parent questionnaires and interviews to gain feedback.

13.2 An academy's overall SEND provision is evaluated by:

13.2.1 Regular monitoring and evaluation by the SEND governor and reporting of findings to the Local Governing Body.

13.2.2 Reporting on key performance indicators at academy Progress Boards.

13.2.3 Regular analysis of key data and performance indicators (including attendance and suspensions data).

13.2.4 Academy monitoring visits and support.

14. Enabling children with SEND to engage in activities

14.1 All academies will ensure that every child can participate in the full life of the academy, including both core and all wider opportunities.

14.2 This includes trips, visits, residentials, and before or after-school clubs. Children will be actively encouraged to participate, and academies are expected to make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to inclusion. Planning for these activities must take into account the diverse needs of all children from the outset.

14.3 The academy publishes an Accessibility Plan on its website, outlining how participation is supported and how physical or organisational barriers are addressed. No child should be excluded from enrichment activities because of additional needs or disabilities - all due regard and reasonable adjustments must be explored. In rare cases where adjustments cannot be made, alternative meaningful opportunities must be provided to ensure the child still benefits from the intended educational experience.

14.4 Risk assessments will be used, not only to identify potential risks, but also to plan and implement proactive, preventative measures that enable safe and inclusive participation for all children. These assessments should reflect a commitment to finding solutions, though, for example, planning, communication, staffing and support.

15. Behaviour and reasonable adjustments

15.1 All children are expected to adhere to the academy's behaviour expectations and routines. Our approach to behaviour is rooted in the belief that consistency, clarity and high expectations benefit all children and that some children may require support to meet these expectations effectively.

15.2 Behaviour will often need to be considered in relation to a child's SEND, although it does not follow that every incident of misbehaviour will be connected to their SEND. Where behaviour is influenced by a child's underlying needs, the academy will adopt a graduated response to support them. Reasonable adjustments and adaptations will be considered. This may include specific strategies, targeted intervention, and/or bespoke support plans. These adaptations aim to reduce barriers, promote positive behaviour and improve engagement.

15.3 Staff are supported by the SENCO and relevant colleagues (e.g. behaviour leads, learning mentors and pastoral teams) to understand the needs of children with SEND and how these may influence behaviour. Where difficulties persist, the academy may involve external professionals such as educational psychologists, CAMHS, or advisory teachers.

15.4 For children with an EHCP and whose behaviour is a significant concern, the academy should consider holding an emergency annual review.

15.5 The principles outlined in this section complement, but do not replace, the OAT Behaviour Policy, which all academies must follow.

16. Complaints about SEND provision

16.1 Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns about their child's SEND provision at the earliest opportunity. In the first instance, parents should raise their concerns with the SENCO, followed by the principal if they feel their concerns have not been addressed.

16.2 If concerns are still unresolved, parents can follow the OAT Complaints Policy https://ormistonmeridianacademy.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2025/03/complaintspolicy-25.pdf

or access the local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) https://ormistonmeridianacademy.co.uk/admin/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2025/09/sen-info-report-25-26.pdf

17. Monitoring Arrangements

17.1 This policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner if required by statutory guidance) by the National Director of AP and Special Academies and approved by the OAT Board.

17.2 The SEN Information Report will be updated at least annually, and the accessibility plan will be reviewed every three years.

17.3 Mainstream academies will also publish an Inclusion Strategy by the required DfE deadline, setting out how they are strengthening inclusive practice, identifying and meeting commonly occurring needs, and using relevant funding, including the Inclusive Mainstream Fund where applicable.

17.4 Implementation and adherence to this policy will be monitored at multiple levels:

- **Academy level:** The principal and SENCO will ensure that the academy has a current and effective overview of provision in place, perhaps through a provision map, evidencing how resources and support are allocated to children with SEND. They will monitor adherence to the policy through routine self-evaluation, quality assurance, and the graduated approach processes.

- **Regional oversight:** Education Directors will monitor how each academy implements and complies with the SEND policy and associated processes (including provision maps) through academy progress boards, data analysis, and regular review meetings.

- **Trust-wide oversight:** The SEND Lead Practitioners and the National Director of AP and Special Academies will support and review SEND provision through the trust's school improvement cycle. This will include reviewing relevant academy data, quality assurance findings, academy progress board discussions and wider evidence from support and review activity. Updates will be provided to the NLG and Trust Board where there are key themes, risks or areas requiring trust-wide action, including in relation to policy implementation and the consistency of provision across academies.

- **Governance:** Local SEND governors will monitor and challenge the quality of provision at academy level, receiving reports, resourcing, and outcomes for children with SEND to provide assurance to the local governing body.

17.5 Through these layers of monitoring, OAT will ensure that all academies are supported to deliver inclusive, evidence-based SEND provision, with clear visibility of where systems are fully in place, and where further improvement is required.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Contacts and Responsibilities

This document should be viewed in conjunction with the SEN Info Report 26-27

Last updated: July 2026

Academy roles		
Role	**Designated person**	**Contact Details**
SENCO	Angela Wootton	awootton@omera.co.uk
Principal	Claire Stanyer	cstanyer@omera.co.uk
SEND Governor	Mr Morgan Inwood	minwood@omera.co.uk
Other senior leader with responsibility for SEND	Amy Vigus: Assistant Principal for Inclusion	avigus@omera.co.uk
Pastoral support lead	Sam Darlington: Deputy Principal	sdarlington@omera.co.uk
Designated safeguarding lead	Sam Darlington: Deputy Principal	sdarlington@omera.co.uk
Designated teacher for looked after children	Ann Berrisfod & Lyn Rowley	aberrisford@omera.co.uk & lrowley@omera.co.uk
Mental Health Lead	Angela Wootton	awootton@omera.co.uk
Other		
External agencies		
Role	**Information**	**Contact Details**
Educational Psychologist	Dr Michelle Perry Springer	Ed.psychlogy.admin@stoke.gov.uk
Local SEND Information & Support Services	SENDIAS	sendias@stoke.gov.uk
Local Authority SEN Team	SENMAS	senmas@stoke.gov.uk
Behaviour Support Team	Rebecca Rawlinson	Rebacca.Rawlinson@stoke.gov.uk
Sensory Impairment Service	Sue Emberson	City of Stoke on Trent, Hazel Trees, Duke Street, Fenton, ST4 3NR

IPSEA	Independent Provider of Special education Advice	https://www.ipsea.org.uk/
Council for Disabled Children	Advice & resources for professionals and parents	https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/