SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY ("SEND") POLICY

Summary	SEND Policy
Responsible Person/Author:	Director of SEND & Safeguarding
Applies to: (please check as appropriate)	**Colleagues ☒ Student☒ Community ☐**
Ratifying Committee(s)	Standards Committee
Available On:	**SharePoint/Website/On Demand**
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Owner	Resilience Multi Academy Trust
Version:	4

Document Control

Date	Version	Action	Amendments
24.06.24	2	Policy reformatted	Amended Introduction and Aims, Nomenclature throughout, Definitions, roles and responsibilities, Identification of SEN, Reviewing targets, SEND support and provision, updated references to SEND code of Practice, and Policy links
May 2025	3	Policy amended	Rebranding
September 2025	4	Policy amended	SEN changed to SEND to ensure consistency. Amendment of Aims. 10 – Parents of SEN students changed to students with SEN. 13 – Reference to SEND code of practice rather than guidance for SEN. 18 – Reference to referral to relevant specialist rather than Ed Psych. 25 – Amended to reflect actual processes 32 – Asperger's syndrome omitted EIA updated

Contents

Introduction

1. At RMAT there are a number of key principles that underpin the approach to SEND in our academies. These are being person centred; developing confidence and resilience; encouraging aspiration and achievement; a strong focus on Inclusive Quality First Teaching; high expectations for all; supporting learners to overcome barriers to learning; use of individual support strategies; and a clear graduated approach.

Aims

2. All academies within RMAT share common values and an ethos of aspiration, resilience, and empowerment. Our support for all children within our care extends to those children with additional needs that require assistance to help them fulfil their potential.

3. Each academy within RMAT shall ensure that:

    - Students will not be labelled or disadvantaged by any policy or procedure operated within RMAT.

    - it works in partnership with parents and appropriate external agencies to support students with special educational needs and will use its best endeavours to ensure that appropriate provision is secured for any student with special educational needs in order to achieve agreed outcomes.

    - it has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO will maintain and regularly review the SEND register held in respect of an individual young person and co-ordinate support. However, it will be the responsibility of all staff to support individual young people, to implement strategies suggested by the SENCO and be responsible for ensuring that our young people with SEND receive provision appropriate to their needs and agreed outcomes; and

    - children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside students who do not have SEND.

    - All support provided and decisions taken have regard to these general principles as well as the legal framework set out in the Children & Families Act 2014, the SEND Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

SEND Core Values

4. RMAT has 6 core values for SEND:

    - RMAT emphasises a 'person centred approach' which supports the resilience and well-being of our students. We value student and parental engagement thereby sustaining a welcoming, effective, and inclusive culture.

    - Our Academies aim to provide an inclusive, supportive, and positive learning environment. We aim to support all SEND learners to have the confidence and self-esteem to aim high, achieve their aspirations and maximise their full potential.

    - High quality teaching, differentiated for individual learners is the first step in responding to all learners including those that have SEND. We believe that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of inclusive 'quality first' teaching.

    - Our teachers have high expectations of all learners and aim to be fully equipped with the skills,

enthusiasm and supportive attitude allowing our learners to overcome any barriers to learning. We use individual support strategies outlined on a SEND 'Learner Profile' and provide access to additional, targeted teacher input where needed

- We have a clear SEND referral, identification, and assessment approach to ensure standardised entry and exit criteria is used to identify additional needs at the earliest possible stage. We aim to make effective use of external partnerships including links with primary schools and other specialist professionals.

- Our SENCOs aim to promptly implement effective targeted support and provision for learners identified as SEND to improve the long-term outcomes for all our learners. We aim to use a graduated approach to 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' the support and interventions in place for our SEND Learners.

Definitions

5. Under the Children & Families Act 2014, a child/young person will have SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

6. A Child or Young Person will have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

- A disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities that are provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools in England.

7. Special Educational Provision is education or training that is additional to, or different from, that made for other children/young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

Roles and Responsibilities

8. The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Standards Committee of the RMAT Board and remain under constant review by the Trust SEND lead.

- Each RMAT academy Local Review Board (LRB) will appoint an LRB member with responsibility for SEND. The SEND LRB member will raise SEND issues at LRB meetings; monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the academy and work with designated senior leaders to develop the SEND provision.

- The Principal will work with the SENCO and SEND LRB member to develop the SEND policy and provision within the academy. The Principal has overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND.

- The SENCO will co-ordinate the academy's approach to SEND provision and will undertake those duties set out in chapter 6 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

- Class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of every learner in their class and will work with the SENCO and ISWs to ensure the "assess plan do review" cycle is appropriately implemented to support any student with SEND.

9. The academy will work in partnership with students, teachers, parents and, where appropriate, other external agencies to ensure that individual learning needs are addressed within the context of the academy curriculum.

10. Parents of students with SEND will be able to discuss the needs of their child with their child's tutor, the Head of Year, or the SENCO.

Identification & Assessment of SEN

11. Information about previous special educational needs will usually accompany students upon entry to the academy and this will be used by the SENCO to make sure appropriate provision is continued.

12. This information is collated from the transfer of school files from the previous school or early years setting and during transition meetings which are held with all the feeder schools or early years settings, in the summer term, before students start at the academy. If necessary a strategy sheet will be drawn up for each student with SEND.

13. On entry all to secondary provision, students are assessed and the data from these tests is then analysed by the SENCO to identify any potential areas of need. Students may then be added to the SEND Register in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

14. Subject leads analyse data across all subjects during the reporting process. When a student does not make expected progress, interventions are applied. If their needs exceed normal adaptation, the class teacher sets clear targets and provides extra support. If progress improves, no further action is needed. If not, the SENCO is informed.

15. At this point information will be gathered. The class teacher will inform the parents about the issue and there will be consultation and discussion around the proposed additional support for the student. Parents, and the student where appropriate, will be involved in sharing information and agreeing outcomes. It will be decided whether it is appropriate to further monitor the student. A Learner Profile will be drawn up by the SEND team with copies shared with all staff concerned with the student's progress.

16. If a parent/carer refers their child to the academy as they believe their child has special educational needs they should contact the SENCO, who will undertake investigations and appropriate assessments (with input from the relevant teachers) to see if they are achieving expected levels of progress. If the student is not making appropriate levels of progress then internal support will be implemented in accordance with the paragraphs above.

17. In all cases, where internal support is not effective in supporting the student, a referral to a relevant specialist (e.g. Educational Psychologist) will be completed with the parents' knowledge and information and strategies for support shared with all staff.

18. If there are no concerns regarding the student's academic progress then the academy will ensure appropriate adaptations continues in the classroom and interventions are put in place if appropriate.

19. Whenever special educational provision is being made, parents and students will be involved in developing and reviewing support plans/strategies.

20.   All staff teaching students on the SEND register will be made aware of the individual needs. Subject Leads and the Special Needs team will help teachers when required to develop techniques to support adaptation and ensure that appropriate resources and training are available as part of the academy's Professional Development Programme.

Reviewing

All students regardless of needs are set targets. Data collated during the academy reporting process is analysed and strategies are put in place to support those that that are not achieving as expected. All SEND interventions delivered outside the classroom have Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound Targets (SMART) set to ensure that progress is made. These are recorded using **a provision map a**nd are monitored and reviewed against a time frame, agreed within the plan. If expected progress is not made then the SENCO may refer to specialist services.

21.   Where, despite the academy having taken relevant and purposeful action, as set out above; to meet the student's needs and they have not made expected progress, the academy will consider requesting an Education, Health, and Care needs assessment. Starting a my support plan which could eventually lead to a request for an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) where needs are proven to be significant.

22.   If a student has an EHCP an annual review is held in accordance with legal requirements.

23.   If, as a result of appropriate progress, a student is removed from the SEN register. The student will continue to be monitored through the academy's structured reporting programme by the Subject Leads.

SEND Support and Provision

25.   In line with the SEND Code of Practice 2014 our academies implement a structured 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' model. The 'Graduated Approach' includes the following processes:

- Assess: Identify needs and difficulties through assessment, observations, student, colleague and parent voice

- Plan: Strategic planning of intervention, adaptation and provisions to support Quality First Teaching

- Do: Implement provision and support identified at planning stage, record and track intervention

- Review: Evaluate impact of support and any progress made against identified needs. This informs next steps

26.   A SEND register exists for each Academy and is maintained by the SENCO. Students on the register are categorised as K for SEND support and E for those with an EHC Plan in line with the SEN Code of Practice 2014. The SEND Register is available on Arbor the Academy network and is accessible to all staff. The SEND Register is a fluid document that is constantly updated and the numbers of students on the register and the information contained will be subject to change. The SEND Register details a breakdown of the various needs within the academy and provides generic tendencies as well as suggested strategies to support pupil progress.

27.   All K students on the SEND register have an Individual SEND Provision Overview which includes an

agreed SMART outcome and the specific provision agreed to support their needs.

28.   E students have provision detailed in their EHCP. The EHCP outlines their targets, the support they receive, and the intended outcomes. Every student on the SEND register also has a Learner Profile. This profile provides a summary of their needs and lists recommended strategies to support their progress in the classroom.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015

28.   The **SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)** reflects the aims of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations that applies to children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children and young people. The associated regulations are:

- The **SEND Regulations 2014**
- The **Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014**
- The **SEND (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015**
- The **Children and Families Act 2014 (Transitional and Saving Provisions) (No 2) Order 2014**
- The **Equality Act 2010**

Broad areas of need

29.   There are 4 broad categories of need outlined in the **SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)**

Communication and interaction

30.   Children and young people with speech, language, and communication needs ("SLCN") struggle to communicate effectively. This may involve difficulty expressing themselves, understanding others, or using social rules in conversation.

31.   Each child with SLCN has a unique profile. Their needs can change over time. They may face challenges with one or more aspects of speech, language, or social communication at different stages of their development.

32.   Children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, social interaction, and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning

33.   Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties ("MLD"), severe learning difficulties ("SLD"), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties ("PMLD"), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

34.   Specific learning difficulties ("SpLD"), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia ~~and~~ dyspraxia, dysgraphia, developmental language disorder ("DLD") and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ("ADHD").

Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties

35.   Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive, or disturbing behaviour. This behaviour may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

36.   Academies and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour, so it does not adversely affect other students.

Sensory and/or physical needs

37.   Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment ("VI"), hearing impairment ("HI") or a multi-sensory impairment ("MSI") will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties, which makes it even more difficult for them to access the curriculum or study programme than for those with a single sensory impairment. Information on how to provide services for deafblind is available through the Deafblind guidance.

38.   Some children and young people with a physical disability ("PD") may require additional ongoing support, adjustments, and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

The Local Offer

39.   All local authorities must publish a Local Offer setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEND or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health, and Care ("EHC") plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available,' local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available. The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible, and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and

- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEND and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEND, and service providers in its development and review

The Academy SEND Information Report

40.   All academies must publish a SEND Information Report on their website. The information published should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014** and must include information about:

- the kinds of SEND that are provided for
- policies for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the SENCO (mainstream Academies)
- arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEND and involving them in their child's education
- arrangements for consulting young people with SEND and involving them in their education
- arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes. This should include the opportunities available to collaborate with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review
- arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living, and participation in society
- the approach to teaching children and young people with SEND
- how adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with SEND
- the expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEND, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEND
- how children and young people with SEND are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the Academy who do not have SEND
- support for improving emotional and social development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEND and measures to prevent bullying
- how the Academy involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting children and young people's SEND and supporting their families
- arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEND about the provision made at the Academy

Inclusion

40. Where necessary, alternative provision and additional resources (including staffing) may be put in place to ensure students with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of Academy life, including the curriculum, extra- curricular programme, and Academy trips. Any decisions in relation to the above will be taken by the appropriate people, including the Academy Principal and SENCO.

Complaints

41. If a parent has a complaint about a special educational needs matter, they should follow the procedures laid down in RMATs Complaints Policy.

Diversity

42. The Trust is committed to a policy of celebrating diversity, promoting equality of opportunity, providing an inclusive workplace, and eliminating any unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination. This overriding objective applies to all policies and procedures relating to staff and students. The Trust will always comply with the requirements of the **Equality Act 2010** and associated guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Policy Links

43.   This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- SEN Information Report (updated annually)

- Equality Policy & Objectives

- Accessibility Plan

- Positive Discipline Policy

- Supporting students with medical conditions policy

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Policy Title: SEND Policy
Policy Owner: RMAT
Date of Assessment: September 2025
Assessed by: COO
Next Review Date: Summer 2026

Purpose of the Policy:
To set out RMAT's approach to identifying, assessing, and supporting students with special educational needs and disabilities, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and promoting inclusion.

Groups Affected:
- Students
- Parents/Carers
- Colleagues

Protected Characteristics considered:
- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Potential Impacts:

Positive Impacts:

- Commitment to inclusive education and equal access to curriculum and activities.
- Person-centred planning and graduated approach for all students with SEND.
- Partnership with parents and external agencies to secure appropriate provision.
- Clear processes for identification, assessment, and review of needs.

Negative or Unequal Impacts:

- Risk of delays in assessment or provision impacting progress for students with SEND.
- Potential inconsistency in applying reasonable adjustments across academies.
- Barriers for parents with language or literacy challenges in engaging with processes.
- Possible gaps in staff confidence or training to meet diverse needs.

Mitigation Actions:

- Publish clear guidance for parents on SEND processes in accessible formats and languages.
- Set service standards for response times on referrals and adjustments.
- Provide regular staff training on SEND strategies, equality duties, and inclusive practice.
- Monitor SEND outcomes by protected characteristics to identify disparities.

- Ensure reasonable adjustments are embedded in behaviour, assessment, and trip planning.

Monitoring and Review:

- Director of SEND and Safeguarding to monitor implementation and report termly to Standards Committee.
- Annual review of SEND data and parent feedback to assess impact across protected groups.
- Continuous improvement through stakeholder engagement and policy updates.