



Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

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INTRODUCTION

At Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies (HMFA) we aim to provide the best possible education for all our children. All children, whatever their learning needs, have the right to enjoy every opportunity to fulfil their potential both at school and in the wider community.

HMFA is dedicated to this statement and will work with children, their families and professionals from education, health and social services to provide an education which is inclusive to all.

Every child has equal opportunities to learn, regardless of his/her special educational need, and will be supported in order to prevent disaffection or failure in our schools. We will endeavour to identify any need as early as possible and take measures to support the child. We will be both open and flexible in our support when it is needed. We will seek advice and support from outside agencies as soon as we feel it is necessary.

Parents, and those with parental responsibility, have the major role in the care and education of their child. We will be open and seek to consult parents on all issues concerning their child. No intervention, beyond normal classroom practice, will take place without the endorsement of parents.

Above all, HMFA will use its resources and high levels of professionalism among the staff to enable every child to progress and succeed.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Children will be deemed to have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for provision to be made for them which is outside the everyday classroom practice of the school.

According to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice: 0-25 (2014), a pupil has SEN where *“their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.”*

In HMFA we believe in supporting both the children as described above AND the children with less significant difficulties who we aim to ‘boost’ and support in order to fulfil their potential.

DEFINITION OF A DISABILITY

According to the Equality Act (2010) a person has a disability if he or she *“has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”*

We are committed to including all pupils within our schools, regardless of their disabilities or special educational needs. Our broad curriculum is open to all.

- Please refer to the Admission Policy in each school for further details.

AIMS

HMFA aims to include all children, no matter how significant or minor their special educational needs. All pupils will be regularly reviewed and assessed to ensure the most appropriate support available at that time. We will use our staff and their professionalism to fulfil this aim within the budget provided.

OBJECTIVES

- The SENCo will report to the school governors annually, providing details of the number of children currently receiving support for their disability or special educational need.
- Reviews of pupil progress and attainment will be on-going, in line with the schools' assessment policies.
- The SEN and Disability Policy will be reviewed every three years by the SENCo and approved by the governors.

THE GOVERNORS' ROLE

The governing body must:

- do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs.
- ensure that where the `responsible person` has been informed by the local authority that a pupil has SEN, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those pupils who have a SEN
- ensure that a pupil with SEN joins in the activities of the school with pupils who do not have SEN, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible.
- report to parents on the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs
- Have regard for The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 (2014)
- Ensure that parents are notified about any provision for their child.

The quality of SEN provision in the schools will be continually monitored to ensure that it is an integral part of the school development plan and that the governors are knowledgeable about the provision, funding, equipment and personal resources.

THE RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)

The Head Teachers: Mr Peter Box, Mr Paul Whitcombe, Ms Maggi Newton (Marden Primary Academy & St Weonards Primary School)

THE DESIGNATED GOVERNORS FOR SEN

Lord Scudamore Academy: Patricia Rusher

Kings Cagle Primary Academy: Sarah Elwine

Llangrove CE Academy: Roberta Woodcock

St Weonards Primary School: To be appointed

Marden Primary Academy: Heather King

Canon Pyon CE Academy: Hugh Patterson

Sutton Primary Academy: Gaynor Corrick

FUNDING FOR SEN

HMFA employs the SENCo as part of a federation-wide agreement, therefore the SENCo is responsible for the co-ordination of provision in all six schools. This enables the SENCo to draw upon a wider range of resources and expertise and share good practice among the staff at HMFA. The SENCo or the SENCo Assistant (Kate Higgins) endeavour to visit each school regularly but they are also available at other times upon request.

Throughout the week teaching assistants work with small groups or individuals on a weekly basis to support the delivery of the children's specific needs.

Resources and materials are purchased as and when needed or as advised.

Courses are funded when they are appropriate – see school's improvement plan.

SEN funding is evaluated when SEN is highlighted in the school improvement plan for each individual school.

THE ROLE OF THE SEN CO-ORDINATOR

The SEN Co-ordinator is Mrs Zayla Beecham. She is assisted by Kate Higgins.

The SENCo will:

- oversee the day-to-day operation of the federation's SEN policy
- co-ordinate the provision for children with special educational needs
- liaise with fellow teachers
- oversee records of pupils with SEN
- monitor the provision being made for children with SEN through the use of Group Provision Maps and Individual Provision Maps
- provide advice and guidance to staff when writing Group or Individual Provision Maps for children on the SEN register
- liaise with parents of children with SEN
- contribute to the in-service training of staff
- liaise with external agencies, including local authority support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies
- organise and conduct annual reviews for children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- maintain whole school records of SEN for children who have been identified as having SEN or those with Statements or EHC Plans.

Class teachers are responsible for ensuring the needs of all the pupils in their class are being appropriately met and this is accomplished in partnership with the teaching assistants and with support from the SENCo. Their expertise is fundamental to the quality of provision within the school. The SENCo has an administrative role with no time allocated for the teaching of pupils with SEN, beyond the responsibilities of a classroom teacher. The SENCo or the SENCo Assistant may administer and carry out screening assessments where concerns have been raised either by the class teacher or the parents.

The Head Teachers support the SENCo in administrative tasks if necessary; they also attend annual reviews of children with EHC Plans or Statements of SEN, when deemed appropriate. The Head Teachers liaise with pyramid schools and the feeder high schools.

The SENCo applies for Top-Up Funding when needed and ensures the funding is used to support the child in the best way possible. This is also the case for children with medical needs, where extra support is needed to allow them to access the curriculum successfully.

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

All teachers build strong and positive relationships within their class and beyond, therefore they are in the best possible position to identify any gaps in children's learning or raise concerns regarding levels of attainment. As a federation, we have a wealth of expertise when identifying children who may have a special educational need.

The Early Years teachers liaise closely with the on-site nurseries and other nurseries in the local area, as appropriate. As a result of this, they are often aware of any needs that may arise when a new intake starts in the reception class. Their concerns are supported by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile which is completed throughout the reception year.

All schools in HMFA use an on-going, rigorous and consistent approach to assessment with all children. As part of this process, children in Year One and beyond may be identified as requiring a 'boost' to their learning in order to enable them to close gaps in understanding or catch up with their peers. This is considered part of good quality classroom teaching practice and children who participate in such activities will not necessarily be identified as having a special educational need.

Children who are not deemed suitable for such booster groups will be provided with alternative SEN support. This may be provided through the use of additional learning resources, small group or individual activities or, in rare cases, individual support from a teaching assistant.

The schools are also dedicated to the support of speaking and listening skills as well as social development. The teaching assistants play a major role in supporting these children with the use of purchased programmes.

These language skills and social skills are highlighted as a particular and increasing need within our school setting. Without these *basic skills*, our pupils cannot fulfil their potential. We are dedicated to supporting these pupils before they have the opportunity to become disaffected and unsuccessful learners.

PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

SEN Provision is an integrated part of the school improvement plan for each of the schools within the federation.

All children will have the opportunity to access all areas of the National Curriculum. All planning will reflect the needs of all the children in the class. All lessons will be differentiated to provide for the needs of all the pupils.

We will provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils within our daily lessons and will provide for the inclusion of all using the three key principles as stated by the National Curriculum (2014). These principles are:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

For more information, please refer to subject policies for each individual school.

SEN is primarily met by quality first teaching. We use teaching assistants increasingly to provide support for children with SEN and to enable even greater differentiation in our schools. Small group intervention programmes are used to increase the quality of the provision in small groups and on an individual basis. Our teaching assistants have a good working knowledge of intervention materials and good quality training and support is also available for teaching assistants to ensure quality intervention for our children.

Parental involvement and support is also paramount to the success of every child's educational progress. Parents/carers will be encouraged to support their child's learning at home and suitable 'homework' materials will be provided. We currently have a range of ICT-based learning opportunities for use within the home environment.

MONITORING OF PROVISION

Children who have been identified as having SEN are tracked using a Group Provision Map. Each child who has been identified as having SEN then has their own Individual Provision Map that sets out next steps and assesses how their learning is progressing. This will be shared with the parents on a termly basis. The targets will be linked closely with their class targets so as to minimise the pressure of performance.

At appropriate intervals during the school year the provision for each individual is discussed and decisions regarding intervention groups are made. Children who may need support and haven't yet been formally identified as having SEN are also discussed, as are those who have made good progress and therefore no longer require any additional intervention. This information enables the SENCo to consistently monitor and adapt the provision being made for all children within each school.

The SENCo ensures that Group and Individual Provision Maps are completed and monitors the provision being put in place by teachers. No additional support is begun without the parents' full support. The class teachers are responsible for informing the parents and the SENCo is available for meetings with parents when required.

When evaluating SEN support, the child's needs are paramount. As the child gets older, their input is sought so that they are able to review their own progress. The child remains central to their own learning and, if at any time the child feels unhappy or uncomfortable with the extra support they may be receiving, their support will be reviewed and appropriate changes made.

If a child is deemed to be not making progress they will be reviewed and the decision to seek further support with outside agencies will be discussed. If this is the case, the SENCo will wish to liaise with the parents and seek their opinions before proceeding. We will always seek the full support of the parents and will always follow their wishes. If a parent does not authorise outside involvement, we shall not seek it (unless we feel that there is a child protection issue or concerns about the safety of other children, staff or visitors to the school – see child protection guidelines for further information).

If a child does not make expected progress, despite quality first teaching and access to appropriate intervention programmes, advice will be sought from outside agencies such as Herefordshire Psychology Team (EP), Speech and Language Therapy Service (SaLT), Occupational Therapy Service (OT), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). These children may require a Common Assessment Framework Form (CAF) which will enable them to have quicker access to any outside agencies which may be of help.

The federation pays for the input of an independent Educational Psychologist (Jane Mansfield). Staff may contact the Educational Psychologist and discuss any concerns regarding any child at their discretion however if we require the Educational Psychologist to conduct a more formal assessment or observation, parental consent will always be sought first.

If a child is a concern on health grounds, the school nurse and doctor are our first contacts. This is especially useful when the child is new to the school. When the child already has an additional need that is known to the family and school, we will seek to support and get advice from the child's doctor or consultant. When a speech and language therapist or a physiotherapist is involved, we will seek their advice and try to support any programme that they have been undertaking with the child.

With a child who may be under the care of the local authority, the social worker will be contacted for any background information that we may need. Teachers will make it a priority to attend any meetings held by social services with regards the child in question.

When professionals from outside agencies are involved, the parental involvement becomes even more crucial and, for successful intervention, we must always have the full support of the parents. As mentioned before, we will always respect a parent's wishes and always seek permission before a child is seen by anyone from another agency. We will also endeavour to set up an interview time for the parents to meet with the person concerned, where appropriate. Any reports written about a child will always be circulated to the parents as well as to the classroom teacher and other staff (as deemed necessary). Reports such as this are vital in enabling teaching and non-teaching staff to understand and address the child's needs effectively.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

If we feel that a child's needs are severe, complex and long-term or in-school options for support have been exhausted, we may ask the local authority to carry out a statutory assessment.

If, after the assessment, the local authority agrees with our application they will issue an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan (formerly known as a Statement of SEN). This plan will draw together assessments of the child's education, health and care needs and will state the desired outcomes and provision required to meet the outcomes. This is a legal document and it sets out the child's needs, and the particular arrangements required to support them.

A child who has received an EHC Plan will be reviewed annually, with all professionals involved with the child and his/her provision. The parents and the child will submit reports and monitor the progress of the child. The EHC Plan will be reviewed and adjustments made to it where appropriate.

Annual reviews are a fundamental part of ensuring any child with an EHC Plan is succeeding and thriving within our setting. Great importance is placed on the process and it is valued as a time when quality time can be spent with professionals and parents discussing one child.

RECORDING AND MONITORING OF PROGRESS

All pupils identified as having a special educational need are listed on a register at each individual school to ensure accurate and consistent monitoring procedures. This register is monitored by the SENCo and forms the basis of staff meetings and reviews of children with SEN.

All information on a child regarding SEN, will be held in their SEN file in the office at each individual school.

SEN provision is reviewed by class teachers at the beginning of each term. Results of end of Key Stage or end of year assessments are considered alongside the teacher's on-going assessment results when determining progress and next steps for each pupil. More detailed assessments may be carried out by the SENCo, the SENCo Assistant or the Educational Psychologist, as appropriate.

The results of these assessments are then used to inform progress not only of the individual but of each school as a whole; if there is seen to be a need in any one area, then the need will be addressed by training and inset and highlighted on the school development plan for each individual school.

Special educational needs and the role of the SEN Co-ordinator are reviewed on a regular basis as part of each school's development cycle.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All hard copies of SEN documents and reports will be kept within the safe storage system at each individual school, while electronic copies are stored within a secure section of each school's network. Password protection may be used in some cases and some sensitive data can only be accessed by the SENCo and SENCo Assistant. Copies of reports will be given to the parents of children with SEN and relevant paperwork will be made available to professionals who become involved with any pupil with SEN.

All documentation will remain confidential; information will be retained on the child's record and recorded on SIMS SENCo module on the school's administrative computer.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 (2014) states:

“Parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child’s development.”

Our schools have an ‘open door’ policy towards parents. Parents are in partnership with us in educating their child and the support of the parents will always benefit the child. We will always seek the agreement of parents before intervening or providing their child with additional support. We will also respect parents’ concerns with regards their child and will refer the parents on to the appropriate agency when necessary. Parents of children with SEN will be directed to the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) to ensure they have access to free, confidential and impartial information if required. If there are any concerns about any child, the SENCo will welcome meetings with parents at any point.

ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED

Please refer to the SEN Information Sheet for information relating to access at each individual school. Each school’s Accessibility Plan also details plans for ensuring access for all.

TRAINING AND INSET

Both teaching and non-teaching staff attend relevant training when available and necessary, either as part of a whole-school or federation-wide arrangement. Training is continually being undertaken by staff in the care of children with medical needs.

Inset is undertaken by the staff from each individual school when SEN is highlighted in their school development plan.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Please refer to the school’s complaints procedure available from the administration officer.

TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

When a child with an EHC Plan (or a Statement of SEN) transfers to one of our schools, we will endeavour to meet with the appropriate staff before the child joins the school. This is ideally done at the child's current setting so that we can witness the support and provision in place. It also provides an opportunity for a member of our staff to meet the child and, if possible, parents, before the transfer. We will contact the relevant agencies for support and information also.

When a child with an EHC Plan (or Statement of SEN) transfers from one of our school, we again will endeavour to meet with the new staff (where possible). We would invite the staff to our setting in order to discuss any relevant issues and provisions. This will only be done with the parents' consent. If the parents do not consent, information will be transferred via school files and the Local Authority transfer form.

When a child is transferring onto Key Stage Three, a transfer review will be held. Support will be given to the child and parents in choosing the next school with regards the child's EHC Plan or Statement of SEN.

Children transferring to one of our schools, but already identified as having special educational needs, will continue to be monitored in our setting after consultation with the parents. A 'settling in' period will be given before targets are set and additional support provided within our setting.

Children transferring from one of our schools who have been identified as having special educational needs, will have relevant information forwarded via their school file and transfer form. If possible, the relevant support service will also be informed, by us, of the transfer.

CONSULTATION

This Policy has been written in consultation with:
The Head Teachers
Governors Responsible for SEN

Zayla Beecham
SEN Co-ordinator
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