

SEND Framework - 2021

Aims

Our over-arching aim is for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to experience the very best of our educational offer. This paper provides practical guidance so that leaders across the trust can support each other in delivering this aim. It is underpinned by the following principles:

- We seek to reduce any variation between the outcomes of SEND vs Non-SEND students.
- Our academies will be fully inclusive accepting communities where the *best in everyone* is fostered and facilitated.
- We will provide access to, and delivery of a broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum that builds upon *powerful knowledge*, in order to prepare students for future education and employment.
- We will ensure that SEND students experience *education with character* by taking as full a part as possible in the broader aspects of school life.
- All of our staff, and particularly our school leaders, will challenge any stereotypes or low expectations which limit the progress and success of United Learning students .

SEND Code of Practice

DfE- Code of Practice (2014)

- The statutory SEND requirements for mainstream schools and academies are outlined in the DfE Code of Practice, Chapter 6 (2014), following the most recent Government SEND reforms. The Code of Practice provides a clear picture of the strategic and operational processes settings should follow to identify students with potential additional needs, assessing needs and providing efficient provision.
- The new reforms on SEND within schools place great emphasis on parental involvement and communication, teacher accountability and the importance of high quality teaching, as the first and most effective provision for students with SEND.
- The legal requirements also include producing an annual SEND report on your setting's website, in addition to recommending appointing a dedicated member of the Governing Body who is responsible for the oversight of SEND provision.
- The Code produces a clear and succinct definition of what constitutes a student being identified as SEN and therefore being included on the Inclusion/SEND Register, which all settings should produce and review regularly.

“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 them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

*have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.”*

- A key strand within the quality of provision for any student with SEND, that is highlighted throughout all chapters of the Code of Practice, is the need for high aspirations and expectations from staff. This powerful culture sets the foundation for excellent provision and outcomes. The Code of Practice



recommends the SENDCo to be part of the Senior Leadership Team within a school to ensure there is a strategic element with SEND provision at whole school level.

- A school's SEND vision should include being continually 'person centred' as outlined in Chapter 1 of the Code of Practice, particularly at a secondary school level, the pupil should be encouraged to contribute to the evaluation of their provision and be integral to decision making.
- As part of the statutory requirements within the Code of Practice, settings must follow the Graduated response in considering provision, evaluating its success and future planning. The diagram indicates the cycle that SENDCo's should complete for each student with SEND and their planned provision.



Guidance – Based on EEF Report

EEF – Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools

The recently published 2020 EEF guidance report on 'special educational needs in mainstream schools' provides a comprehensive overview on how, at a whole school level, SEND provision can be improved. It provides 5 recommendations based on extensive research and evidence from case studies. Through adopting each of the 5 recommendations within a setting, all areas of a student's educational development can be met.

Recommendation 1: Create a positive and supportive environment for all students, without exception

- *Inclusive environment, accepting diversity*
- High standards and expectations
- *Promote positive relationships and active engagement for all pupils*
- Encourage engagement in all aspects of the school community including extra-curricular and student leadership
- *Include all pupils in the best teaching you can offer*
- *Proactive and positive approach to behaviour for learning, following advice in the [EEF Improving behaviour report](#)*

Examples and Good Practice

- The use of praise and public recognition for students' achievements.
- No excuses culture for all students, with necessary adjustments if required for students to meet the expectations.
- The behaviour system supports all students, including those with SEND.
- Staff do not lower their expectations for students with SEND – The sky is the limit.



Recommendation 2: Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your students and their needs

- Understand individual *students' needs/diagnoses* and strategies to overcome these via the implementation of the graduated approach
- Regular and meaningful assessment that *includes parents/carers* and input from specialists to build up a clear picture of a student and their needs
- Teacher assessment provides knowledge for further tailored learning opportunities for students to move onto the next steps in their learning

Examples and Good Practice

- Utilisation of a wide range of diagnostic tests and screeners to investigate and identify underlying needs and track progress of students with SEND.
- Circle of communication between parents, SEN team and external agencies with clear dissemination of relevant information to classroom teachers.
- Collaboration between the Pastoral and SEND team to ensure a full understanding of a student's needs and background- this can include joint meetings and training.
- The effective teamwork between pastoral, parents and the SEN team will allow the detection of non-academic intervention, such as life skills or social stories to be carried out.
- Effective use of in-class assessments to determine if students are progressing in line with their ability or whether further intervention is required. Intervention should be based on communication between classroom teachers to address any gaps.

Recommendation 3: Ensure all students have access to high quality teaching

- Ensure high quality teaching for those with SEND
- Small adjustments to high quality teaching will have great impact on meeting students' needs rather than time-intensive or radical changes to teaching
- *Flexible grouping, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, explicit instruction, use of technology and scaffolding* are all high-impact strategies for students with additional needs.



Examples and Good Practice

- The SEND team should work alongside the Teaching and Learning team within a setting to mirror effective pedagogical strategies that support students' learning.
- Teach Like A Champion strategies and Rosenshine's Principles work in harmony for students with SEND, as they raise the quality of delivery, modelling and provide clear routines for behaviour. These strategies are well placed to ensure students with additional learning needs can access and learn a broad curriculum.
- Teaching staff should be aware of the Cognitive Load Theory and implement the key principles on limiting the risk of overloading students' working memory and teaching in small achievable steps.
- Accessible and continuous SEND CPD to train staff in complex needs and in meeting students' needs within the lesson. Training should not be a one-off INSET session, but rather drip-fed throughout the year to keep SEND on the radar of all staff. Arduous or long whole-school training sessions will not meet the needs of all staff development, SEND CPD can be undertaken through a range of media such as newsletters, pre-recorded videos or drop-in sessions.
- Careful planning and consideration with the timetable and teacher allocation for those students and groups with a large proportion of SEND and/or complex needs.
- Blended learning and remote access to learning should replicate the offer to students with SEND in the physical classroom. Consideration should be given to wait time, dual coding and cognitive load to ensure live lessons are accessible. Please see Remote Learning guidance for SEND students [here](#).

- The T&L Framework is also a key reference document and can be found [here](#).

Recommendation 4: Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions

- Planning and implementing of *tiers of support* should allow a range of interventions to be carried out as well as ensuring all those who require interventions have access to them.
- Careful consideration and forward-thinking planning must be carried out to ensure small group and one-to-one *targeted intervention* is purposeful and appropriate to the context of students' needs.
- High-quality teaching should limit the requirement for intervention however, if intervention is required, it needs to be structured and targeted on specific gaps in knowledge or skills transferable to in-class learning.
- Those students who take part in intervention should be identified via the graduated approach and assessment of need.
- Interventions should build upon and support in-class learning, and content should be communicated to classroom teachers.
- *Seeking of specialist support* will be determined and necessary when students are not progressing as expected.
- Interventions should take on the recommendations found in the [EEF Putting Evidence to work report](#).



Examples and Good Practice

- All interventions should have a start and end point to ensure clear tracking and evaluation of their impact.
- Direct Instruction provides a robust systematic numeracy and literacy programme to build students' understanding. A reminder that the United Learning Direct Instruction support and training continues through the Southern Hub: [The Team - The Direct Instruction Hub](#).
- The '[Thinking Reading Programme](#)' addresses the literacy gap between students with SEND and their peers, especially targeting those students with significantly lower reading ages.
- Another evidence-based intervention that has proven successful with numerous UL schools, following Daisy Christodoulou's writing project, is [Home - The Writing Revolution](#). It breaks writing down into simple, basic methods.
- The [Bedrock platform](#) is a successful intervention aimed at tackling the gaps in Tier 2 vocabulary that affects many students in our schools.
- Ensure intervention does not replace specialist teaching and attendance within mainstream lessons, otherwise a vicious cycle of missing out on curriculum content, knowledge, and skills will develop.
- Those carrying out interventions needs to be suitably trained in the intervention, including relevant teaching and learning support.
- As previously mentioned, effective intervention will build bridges between the classroom through the content and skills. Using Knowledge Organiser content to build the basis of the content of the intervention is strongly recommended.
- Feedback on intervention progress and objective should be shared with subject teachers so they can monitor the impact within the classroom and offer guidance on other areas of focus.

Recommendation 5: Work effectively with teaching assistants (SEND Staff)

- All SEND staffing, including teaching assistants should be *adopted using an evidence based approach*.
- Leaders, including the SENDCo, should continually reflect on the value added by teaching assistants and other SEN support staff, to ensure their deployment is effective and improving outcomes for students with SEND.
- Advice, recommendations and *additional resources* from the [EEF MITA report](#) should be implemented to ensure the role of the teaching assistant is not limiting peer interaction or devolving classroom teachers of accountability for students with SEND. The notion that *teaching assistants, should supplement not replace the teacher* should be at the forefront of the operational and strategic deployment of teaching assistants.
- Teaching assistants should have regular training on how to lead on effective interventions and see this part of their role as a significant cog in the graduated response.
- Teaching assistants should have continual support in developing their pedagogical understanding of what constitutes good, teacher-led interventions.



- There should be strong collaborative communication between classroom teachers and teaching assistants to support curriculum understanding and place accountability on the classroom teacher.

Examples and Good Practice

- All SEND support staff should be included in the whole school CPD programmes, in addition to having the opportunities to attend their own relevant CPD whether this is internal or external.
- Staff within the setting should be aware of the role of SEND support staff and their strategic roles.
- Acceptance of SEND support staff and understanding of their expertise on SEND and individual students should be promoted to ensure SEND support staff are part of the school community.
- Those carrying out interventions need to be suitably trained in the intervention, including relevant teaching and learning support.
- As previously mentioned, effective intervention will build bridges between the classroom through the content and skills. Using Knowledge Organiser content to build the basis of the content of the intervention is recommended.
- Feedback on intervention progress and objective should be shared with subject teachers so they can monitor the impact within the classroom and offer guidance on other areas of focus.

SEND and Ofsted

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook>
- The new Ofsted handbook places greater emphasis on whether the quality of education meets the needs of students with SEND and allows them to make expected progress, this includes an appropriately challenging curriculum that does not limit future opportunities for students with SEND.
- Ofsted will seek to identify whether leaders within the setting have high expectations and are ambitious towards students with SEND.
- Each subject should have sufficient plans to ensure students with SEND acquire the knowledge to succeed within that subject, including gaining cultural capital through learning a knowledge-rich curriculum.
- There should be a robust and clear process of identifying and assessing students with SEND within a setting, to determine their specific needs and subsequent provision.
- In line with the DfE Code of Practice, Ofsted will make enquiries as to whether students with SEND have appropriate transitions into further education and be prepared with skills and knowledge for a successful adulthood.
- Parental/carer input and communication is expected to be strong and united to ensure all stakeholders are fully involved/heard and included in the decision-making process with regards to their child's education and provision.
- Within the four broad areas of need, outcomes will be reviewed to determine whether assessment and planning is developed to improve outcomes for students with SEND. This will be carried out to determine the effectiveness of the provision.
- Conversations with SEND members of staff, including the SENDCo will be a part of an inspection, alongside observations of students with SEND in lessons and participating in interventions. Specific SEND work/book scrutinies will be carried out alongside department, year group or key stage reviews to access the evidence for high expectations and an ambitious curriculum.



- Subject and year leaders are likely to be questioned on whether the quality of education meets the needs of students with SEND and whether it suitably challenges them.

Examples and Good Practice

- Have evidence of how students with SEND are supported with life skills and are prepared for education/training post-16.
- Consider the link between your school's careers programme and whether any further amendments or provision need to be offered for students with SEND to raise aspirations and provide understanding on job opportunities in the future.
- Have evidence of your transition programme to bridge the gap between KS2 and support students with the movement up to your school. Within this include reference to information sharing and preparation for classroom teachers on complex individual needs.
- Use a range of well written case studies to demonstrate your school's systems, processes and impact of support/provision.
- Ensure SEND staff are aware of the curriculum within your school and how it is suited to learners with SEND.
- Prior to any Ofsted meeting, compare your school's data to the national picture.

Case Study 1 – SEND a Whole School Responsibility

- At Glenmoor and Winton Academies, SEND, as well as other vulnerable groups are at the forefront in many aspects of the school's day-to-day operation, but also its strategic processes. Accountability is pushed at all levels, in terms of identification of students with additional needs, but also responsibility for their progress. This is done via dialogue with middle leaders. Subject team leaders are questioned on the progress and support of students with additional needs at a senior level through line management and the raising standards cycle, accompanied by spotlight students. The accountability at all levels ensures there is not a culture whereby the SENDCo and SEND support staff alone are responsible for the progress and support of SEND students. This level of accountability can only be successful if there is continuous training and development of staff's understanding of SEND barriers and how to overcome them. At the Academies, the motto of 'knowledge is power' is not just applicable to students, but to staff on their understanding of SEND and teaching strategies to allow accessibility to all students, alongside high expectations and aspirations for all students, no matter their background or 'label'.

Conclusion

There is no quick fix here. By considering SEND students in everything we do, and by investing in the things that we know make a difference for all students, we can support each other in providing SEND students with the best that we have.



Further Reading

- [Natalie Packer – The Perfect SENDCo](#)
- [Natalie Packer – The Teachers guide to SEN](#)
- [David Bartram – Great Expectations](#)
- [Rita Cheminas – Handbook for SENDCos](#)
- NASEN - [National Association for Special Educational Needs](#)

