



**The EDGE ACADEMY
AP FREE SCHOOL**

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS POLICY**

April 2015

Special Educational Needs Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) assessment and provision is currently under review. ***The Government Green Paper - Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability*** makes wide-ranging proposals to respond to the frustrations of young people, their families and the professionals who work with them.
- The vision set out in the Green Paper is informed by the views and expertise of families, teachers, local authorities, health professionals and national and local organisations working with them and proposes;
- A new approach to identifying SEN through a single Early Years setting-based category and school-based category of SEN
- A new single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan by 2014
- Local authorities and other services will set out a local offer of all services available
- The option of a personal budget by 2014 for all families of young people with a statement of SEN or a new Education, Health and Care Plan
- Giving parents a real choice of school, either a mainstream or special school
- Introducing greater independence to the assessment of young people's needs
- This policy is written according to current legislation and guidance and follows the SEN Code of Practice 2001. It will be reviewed and updated when any new legislation is published.
- This policy is also informed by knowledge of the new Alternative Provision (AP) Funding Agreement Annex C (Arrangements for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), which was published in May 2012. This regards agreement to follow paragraphs 1-4 (***'duties'***) and the section relating to ***'admissions'*** (paragraphs 5-12). This policy should also be read in conjunction with The Edge Academy Admissions Policy.

2. RATIONALE

- The Edge Academy is committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all the young people it serves. We believe that all young people, including those identified as having special educational needs, have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them and enables them to be fully included in all aspects of school life. We will manage SEN provision in liaison with other external services, including Educational Psychologists and Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Pupil and school specialists to support pupils presenting Emotional and Behavioural difficulties.
- Children with Special Educational Needs are and will continue to be supported by the academy in the following ways:
- The wholly individual and personalised approach at The Edge Academy will guarantee an appropriate and relevant curriculum which takes into consideration any particular learning needs that a pupil may have

- The academy will have a skilled practitioner to manage and lead on SEN issues. This person will assume the duties of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). He/she will be a qualified member of staff. The SENCO will ensure that all guidelines and statutory requirements are followed.
- Additional resources, for example laptops/tablets will be provided as appropriate for those diagnosed with literacy, language or communication based difficulties and we will draw upon the most effective teaching and learning approaches to enable them to successfully communicate their ideas and learning.
- Regular and targeted training sessions with staff which relate to specific needs that pupils present with are provided.
- The academy as a learning community is committed to ensuring success for all. This means that in all work with young people we will aim to ensure that they;
 - Achieve their potential and enjoy their learning
 - Stay safe and healthy
 - Can make a positive contribution to the academy, the community and the wider world.
- We believe that all young people should be equally valued in the academy. We will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all young people can flourish and feel safe.
- The Edge Academy is committed to inclusion. Part of the academy's strategic planning for improvement is to develop cultures, policies and practices that include all learners. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties.
- This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.
- We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, difficulty, disability, attainment levels and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners;
 - Girls and boys
 - Minority ethnic and faith groups, travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
 - Learners who need support to learn English as another language (ESOL)
 - Learners with special educational needs (SEN)
 - Learners who are identified as having a disability
 - Those who are gifted and talented
 - Those who are looked after by the local authority (LACES)
 - Others such as those who are sick, those who are young carers, those who are in families under stress, pregnant pupils and teenage mothers
 - Any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- This policy describes the way we meet the needs of young people who experience barriers to their learning and the steps we take to remove those.
- We recognise that pupils learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and maturity. We are particularly aware of the needs of our younger pupils, for

whom maturity is a crucial factor in terms of readiness to learn. We believe that many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning and behaviour, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

- At The Edge Academy we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts, which enable every young person to achieve his or her full potential.
- The academy sees the inclusion of young people identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue. We also aim to model inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community.
- The SENCO will also take the lead role in relation to inclusion and reports half-termly to the Senior Leadership Team on this area.
- The SEN member of the trust will also act as the Governor with an Equal Opportunities/Educational Inclusion brief.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the SEN Code of Practice, the Equality Act and the guidance in Removing Barriers to Achievement are implemented effectively across the academy.
- To ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against young people with special educational needs.
- To continually monitor the progress of all pupils, to identify needs as they arise and to provide support as early as possible.
- To provide full access to the curriculum through differentiated planning and provision by class teachers, SENCO, and support staff as appropriate.
- To provide specific input, matched to individual needs, in addition to differentiated classroom provision, for those pupils recorded as having SEN or EHC plan – whilst awaiting specialist provision.
- To ensure that pupils with SEN are perceived positively by all members of The Edge Academy community, and that SEN and inclusive provision is positively valued and supported by staff and parents/carers.
- To enable young people to move on from us well equipped in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and social and emotional independence.
- To involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's special educational needs.
- To involve the young people themselves in planning and in any decision making that affects them.

4. DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- The Edge Academy recognises that all young people have learning and/or behavioural needs and that for some, these individual needs become special educational needs.
- Whilst it is recognised that young people with SEN are not a readily defined and discrete group, for the purposes of its policy the academy adopts the legal definition provided by the 1996 Education Act:

- “A child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.”
- The SEN Code of Practice says a child has a learning difficulty if he or she;
 - Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of young people of the same age
 - Has a disability, which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for young people of the same age in schools within the area.
- Special educational provision means;
 - For a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for the child’s age in maintained schools, other than special schools, in the area
 - For a child under two, educational provision of any kind.
- The Edge Academy recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs, which should be reflected in a continuum of provision, and that good practice in special needs goes to the very core of excellent learning and teaching.
- For pupils who do not respond to structured support, the Senco will intervene with School Action or School Action Plus. (See Section 10)
- The 1996 Education Act (Section 32) says:
 - ‘A child is not to be taken as having a learning difficulty solely because the language (or form of language) in which he is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which has at any time been spoken in his/her home.’
- Similarly, a talented or gifted child does not fall into the remit of special educational needs. The academy recognises that these young people have their own needs, which are addressed separately (see the Gifted and Talented Policy).
- We also recognise that young people may have special educational needs in some areas of their learning can be identified as gifted and talented in others.

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- This policy applies to all young people at The Edge Academy who have special educational needs. The policy applies equally to all pupils and their families whatever their gender, ethnic origin, home language, religion, disability or social circumstances.
- This policy also has implications for all our partners in the SEN process, e.g. partner schools, governing bodies, parents/carers and statutory/voluntary agencies.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Trust will use its best endeavours to ensure high quality education and support for all.
- The academy recognises that all staff will work with young people with SEN and that all teachers are teachers of those with special needs. The work is led by a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

- The role of the SENCO within the academy is to be responsible for;
- The day to day operation of the academy's SEN policy
- Coordinating and facilitating the EHC plan and ensuring a suitable placement for pupils.
- Liaising with and advising academy staff giving clear guidelines for procedure when needs are identified.
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN
- Maintaining the academy's SEN register , providing updates , and overseeing records of all young people with SEN
- Liaising with parents of young people with SEN
- Contributing to in-service training of staff
- Liaising with external agencies including the Educational Psychology Service and other SEN support services, medical and social services and voluntary bodies
- Consulting with SENCOs from other academies to ensure effective use of resources and the dissemination of good practice
- Managing a range of resources, human and material, including Individual and Group Education plans linked to young people with special educational needs
- Providing support and advice to colleagues
- Monitoring and evaluating the special needs provision and reporting to the Governing Body on the progress of pupils with SEN.
- The Principal has the responsibility for the overall management of all aspects of The Edge Academy's work including provision for young people with special educational needs. The SENCO is responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of this policy.

7. THE EDGE ACADEMY PUPILS WORKING IN OTHER SETTINGS.

- Some pupils who are admitted into The Edge Academy (via our commissioning process – please see Admissions Policy) may well be spending some of their time in other settings, studying for academic and other vocational qualifications and completing work experience/work related learning.
- The SENCO will ensure the key information with regards to their SEN is passed to the appropriate people so that the planning for their behaviour and learning support is consistent and appropriate.
- The SENCO will also ensure there is liaison with any external Pupil Support Services again to ensure there is consistency of approach and expectations are managed.

8. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- The principles and values within The Edge Academy's SEN policy are underpinned by the following broad aims;
- To promote high standards of education for young people with SEN
- To encourage young people with SEN to participate fully in their academy's community and take part in decisions about their education.
- To work with other statutory and voluntary bodies to provide support for young people with SEN.

- For young people with special educational needs, the key principles underpinning this vision and through which the above aims are to be met are;
 - Early intervention
 - Promoting inclusive education
 - Partnership with parents/carers
 - Promoting high expectations
 - Equality of opportunity
 - Sharing responsibility
 - Continuum of high quality provision
 - High quality trained staff
 - Procedures, which are clear and effective
 - Monitoring, review and evaluation
 - Partnership with young people.

9. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

- The Edge Academy recognises that the early identification of a young person's Special Educational Needs together with appropriate multi-disciplinary intervention should reduce the need for more intensive support later in the young person's school life. In working towards this principle the academy will ensure the following;
 - The earlier action is taken, the quicker appropriate help can be provided without unduly disrupting the organisation of the academy and the more responsive the pupil is likely to be.
- The staff will work closely with predecessor school colleagues on transition, concerning any pupils entering the nurture unit from KS2.
- There will be clear referral routes for staff who wish to bring to the notice of the SENCO a young person who may be experiencing SEN.
- If the pupil's difficulties prove to be temporary their rate of progress may be temporarily different although the pupil will be able to learn and progress alongside their peers.
- If the difficulties are less responsive to the intervention provided, then an early start can be made in considering the kinds of additional help that might be required.
- To help with the identification of pupils who may have special educational needs, progress will be measured by:
 - Evidence from teacher observation and assessment
 - Their performance against the level descriptions within the National Curriculum at the end of a key stage
 - Standardised screening or assessment tools

- Every consideration will be given to the views of parents/carers in the assessment and decision making process. Young people with special educational needs will also be consulted whenever possible
- Procedures for inter-service and cross-agency referrals will be actively used and reviewed regularly.

10. PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- The Edge Academy believes that inclusive education is a human right, is good education and makes good social sense. It is recognised that inclusion is a process requiring collaborative input from schools, parents/carers, support services, other agencies and the broader community.

11. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS

- The best results are achieved where parents/carers, schools and LAs work in partnership. In working towards this principle the academy will do the following;
- Assist parents/carers in their understanding of Special Educational Needs procedures, school-based provision, and other support available for their child and additional sources of help and information, for example, voluntary organisations and childcare information services.
- Provide opportunities for mediation and discussion where necessary.
- Meet parental/carer preference for school placement subject to the requirement that the individual child's special educational needs can be met; that the education of other young people will not be adversely affected and that resources are efficiently used.
- Ensure that assessment and review processes seek and take account of the parents'/carers' and young person's views wherever possible.
- Provide clear and informative written advice for parents/carers about all aspects of the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of young people with special educational needs and the range of different disabilities.
- Provide clear written descriptions of the support services available for young people with special educational needs within the academy and the local area.
- Provide information in a variety of formats about the range of voluntary and statutory agencies, which may be able to assist parents/carers of young people with special educational needs.
- Value families as the prime educators of their children.
- Recognise that families have valuable knowledge of their child which service providers should encourage them to share.
- Encourage families to be actively involved in relevant training/planning appropriate to their child's needs.
- Promote mutual respect as the basis for communication between the academy and families. This should include sensitivity to families' needs, desires and understanding.
- Develop and promote open, honest and effective means of communication about the needs of young people who have SEN/disabilities.
- Deliver information in an appropriate and accessible form.

12. PROMOTING HIGH EXPECTATIONS

- As stated above, The Edge Academy will set high standards for young people with special educational needs with an expectation that they will achieve their full potential. In working towards this principle, the academy will ensure that:
- Every pupil experiencing Special Educational Needs will have the barriers to achieving their potential identified and removed.
- Young people with SEN have equal access to extracurricular and extended activities.
- The use of assessments and the value added data will provide effective measures of the performance of young people with special educational needs.
- All young people develop high self-esteem. Through this it is anticipated that young people will contribute to the setting of challenging personal goals.

13. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

- Young people with SEN are entitled to equality of opportunity in all aspects of educational provision and access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum.
- In working towards this principle the academy will ensure that:
 - All young people are valued equally and treated fairly
 - Special educational needs will not be considered a barrier in achieving a place at the academy
 - The building will be DDA compliant
 - All young people will be expected to make progress regardless of gender, disability, race, faith and culture.
- All young people will have access to a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum including the core National Curriculum. The main aim of additional and specialist resources are to enable young people to access this curriculum.
- Additional resources will be allocated to those young people with the greatest need. This will be achieved through adherence to the Code of Practice and to the staged approach to the identification and assessment of special educational needs.

14. SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

- The Edge Academy recognises that parents/carers are their child's first educators. Meeting young people's special educational needs is a shared responsibility. Working towards this principle the academy will share responsibility with a range of other partners and agencies.

15. CONTINUUM OF HIGH QUALITY PROVISION

- In working towards this principle The Edge Academy will;
 - In accordance with the Code of Practice and Equality Act ensure that a young person's special educational needs will be met alongside his or her peers and within his or her own community
 - Ensure that a continuum of provision is available to meet a continuum of need
- Actively use systems to secure collaborative working between the schools

and support services

- Keep under regular review Special Educational Provision to ensure there is consistency between policies within the academy.
- Work with the Special Educational Needs support services to improve the quality of provision.
- Have a dedicated area to enable pupils towards independent learning. The SENCO will be responsible for ensuring pupils receive their full educational entitlement and planning intervention strategies. These may include:
 - In-class support for pupils where necessary;
 - 1:1 intervention as appropriate to boost weak literacy/numeracy skills;
 - Strategies for pupils who do not respond to interventions already in place;
 - Differentiated learning materials;
 - 'Delivery of recognised multisensory language programmes;
 - ICT resources including appropriate software and hardware as appropriate;
 - Study support for more able pupils to tap into expert core subject support.

16. HIGH QUALITY TRAINED STAFF

- Young people with SEN, and their families, have a right to be supported by high quality, skilled professionals. The Edge Academy will support this principle through ensuring staff have access to a Professional Development Programme which directly addresses the development of expertise in special educational needs.
- This programme will be a comprehensive and appropriate staff development programme, which addresses the skills and knowledge staff will need to fully support and teach all learners who attend the academy. This will be available not only to teaching staff but also to support staff and all those involved in managing the statutory assessment process.

17. CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES AND MONITORING PROGRESS

- Procedures for identifying young people with special educational needs and for monitoring their progress will be clear, effective and straightforward. Any such procedures will take account of the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs. In working towards this principle, the academy will;
 - Focus on preventative work with young people.
 - Ensure statements of SEN and the new EHC plans are reviewed annually and the appropriate action taken where required.
 - Strategies and individualised learning plans will be reviewed half-termly through a cycle of observation, assessment and discussion. Information will also be provided where a pupil is not making progress even with strategies and differentiation.
 - Ensure procedures for identifying young people with special needs and for monitoring their progress are clear, effective and straightforward and follow published local and national criteria.

- Ensure procedures are in place to ensure the views of parents/carers and young people are sought when the statutory review process as well as those of the professionals involved.
- Monitor and evaluate the academy's performance in relation to young people with special needs using feedback and surveys to gather their views and those of their parents/carers in addition to assessment data.

18. PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- We believe that partnership with young people is essential in relation to SEN and they have the right to have their views incorporated in assessment and review, and to be involved in decision-making about their own SEN.
- Young people have the right to have their views, expectations and needs taken into account in all planning.
- We recognise that effective action for learners with SEN will often depend on close co-operation between the academy, the health services and young people's services. We are committed to implementing such co-operative arrangements so that services for individual young people, families and schools can be as seamless as possible.
- All young people should be encouraged to develop a positive sense of self-image and a pride in their own identity.
- All young people should be encouraged to accept and value differences.

19. MONITORING REVIEW AND EVALUATION

- The Edge Academy will conduct internal reviews of SEN provision at least annually to complement the on-going monitoring and evaluation of provision and outcomes.
- The SENCO will report regularly to the Principal and Trust in relation to SEN.
- Parents/carers also have a role to play though their contribution to reviews of their young people's learning, working with the academy in relation to targets within their child's individual education plans.
- In carrying out its responsibilities towards young people with special educational needs the academy will;
 - Keep its arrangements and provision for SEN under review
 - Review the effective use of its resources
 - Review and evaluate the academy's arrangements for individual education planning and reviewing, including parental and Support Services involvement
 - Internally monitor all SEN arrangements and curricular provision against published criteria. Such monitoring will take account of the academy's Development Plan and SEN policy,
- The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of provision towards meeting the additional needs of young people who have special needs covers a range of important and interrelated areas. In particular:
- Allocation and effective use of resources

- The performance of support services as experienced by academy pupils and staff
- The provision for young people with special needs within the academy including annual review of statements and individual learning plans
- Individual pupil progress as measured against set targets
- Use of delegated funds

20. POLICY REVIEW

- The SENCO will review this policy on an annual basis and any proposed changes will be reported to the Principal, the Trust and The Edge Academy staff.
- This policy for SEN will be made available and accessible to parents/carers, colleagues and all stakeholders.

This Policy was reviewed on:

Ratified by Governors on:

Renewal Date: