



Manchester
Communication
Academy

MANCHESTER COMMUNICATION ACADEMY

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY



Approval History

Approved By:	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Comments
DCSF			
PSG			
Academy Trust Board			

Revision History

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Rev	Summary of Changes	Changes Marked	Owner/Editor

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Links with other school policies

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with all other school policies, in particular our policies for Learning and Teaching, Assessment and Behaviour.

Rationale

The Manchester Communication Academy (MCA) is committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all the children living in our local area. We believe that all children, 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.

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
- Achieve economic well being
- Stay healthy
- Stay safe
- Can make a positive contribution to the school, the community and the wider world.

We believe that all children and young people should be equally valued in school. We will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe.

MCA 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 an additional language (EAL)
- Learners with special educational needs
- Learners who are identified as having a disability
- Those who are gifted and talented

- Those who are looked after by the local authority
- Others such as those who are sick; those who are young carers; those who are in families under stress; pregnant school girls and teenage mothers
- Any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

This policy describes the way we meet the needs of children and young people who experience barriers to their learning and the steps we take to remove those.

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

At MCA we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve to his or her full potential.

MCA sees the inclusion of children identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue and we will also aim to model inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community.

The SEN Coordinator is, who also takes the lead role in relation to inclusion, and as a member of the SMT, reports regularly to the group on this area.

The SEN Governor is, andis the Governor with an Equal Opportunities/Educational Inclusion brief.

Objectives

1. To ensure the SEN Code of Practice, the Disability and Discrimination Act and the guidance in Removing Barriers to Achievement are implemented effectively across the school.
2. To ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against children with special educational needs.
3. To continually monitor the progress of all students, to identify needs as they arise and to provide support as early as possible.

4. To provide full access to the curriculum* through differentiated planning and provision by class teachers, SENCO, and support staff as appropriate.
(*Except where disapplication, arising from a Statement occurs. Disapplication is very rare, and we aim to offer the full curriculum to all our students.)
5. To provide specific input, matched to individual needs, in addition to differentiated class room provision, for those students recorded as having SEN at School Action or School Action Plus.
6. To ensure that students with SEN are perceived positively by all members of the Academy community, and that SEN and inclusive provision is positively valued and accessed by staff and parents/carers.
7. To ensure that we are able to meet the needs of as wide a range as possible of children and young people who live in our catchment area.
8. To enable children to move on from us well equipped in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and social and emotional independence.
9. To involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's additional needs.
10. To involve the children and young people themselves in planning and in any decision making that affects them.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

Manchester Communication Academy (MCA) 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 MCA 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:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of young people of the same age
- (b) 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 of the LA

Special educational provision means:

- (a) 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

The MCA 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.

Only in a small minority of cases will a child have special educational needs of a severity or complexity, which require a Statement of SEN.

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.'

Neither does the exceptionally able or gifted child fall into the remit of special educational needs. The Academy recognises that these young people have their own needs which are addressed separately. We also recognise that children and young people may have special educational needs in some areas of their learning and be identified as gifted and talented in others.

Legal Framework

The national framework within which LAs and schools are required to identify assess and provide for the needs of students with SEN has undergone considerable change over the last decade.

In 1993 the general principle that young people with SEN should, where this is what parents/carers want, normally be educated at mainstream schools was enshrined into law

The **Salamanca statement** drawn up by UNESCO and supported in the United Kingdom adopts "as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise".

The 1997 Government Publication **Excellence for All Children** - Meeting Special Educational Needs set out a strategy to improve standards for students with SEN.

In 1998 "**SEN - A Programme for Action**" was published and in conjunction with the 1999 Disability Rights Task Force Report **From Exclusion to Inclusion**, the right of young people to be educated in mainstream schools was strengthened.

The revised **SEN Code of Practice** (January 2002), the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act provide a statutory framework upon which our SEN policy is built.

The **Disability Equality Duty** (Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, inserted by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005) places on **all public authorities (including schools)** a general duty, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as subsequently amended);
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

We recognise that children and young people with certain learning and behaviour needs are classed as experiencing a disability.

This policy will take heed of the DDA 2005 and 2007 guidance which is dealt with in more detail in the Academy's Disability Equality Scheme.

Tackling bullying of children with SEN and disabilities - Guidance for schools on tackling bullying involving children with SEN and disabilities was published in May 2008 and the Academy will follow this guidance when bullying of a child or young person with SEN or a disability is suspected and to minimize the risk of this type of bullying.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all young people in MCA who have additional or special educational needs. The policy applies equally to all students 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.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will use its best endeavours to ensure high quality education and support for all. There is a nominated Governor with specific responsibility for SEN (.....).

MCA 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 Coordinator (SENCo) who will work closely with the nominated Governor and staff.

The role of the SENCO within the Academy is to be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the Academy's SEN policy;
- Liaising with and advising Academy staff, giving clear guidelines for procedure when needs are identified;
- Coordinating provision for students with SEN;
- Maintaining the Academy's SEN register 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 schools and 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; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the special needs provision and reporting to the Governing Body on the progress of students with SEN.

The Principal has the responsibility for the overall management of all aspects of the 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. He or she will keep the Principal and Governing Body fully informed.

The dedicated budget will be reviewed annually.

Philosophy

The key values and beliefs which underpin MCA's SEN Policy are:

- Equal value and respect for all.
- Equal opportunity for all.
- Recognition of individual differences with special regard for young people with special educational needs.
- The development of skills for life through the provision of appropriate learning opportunities.
- A constant search for improvement in the quality of service.
- Commitment to both the spirit and statutory requirements of legislation, including partnership between students, parents/carers and professionals.

Statement of Principles and Values

The principles and values within MCA's policy are underpinned by the Government's four broad aims for Local Authority policy:

- Promote high standards of education for young people with SEN.
- Encourage young people with SEN to participate fully in the MCA community and take part in decisions about their education.
- 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 and 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.

Early Intervention

MCA recognises that the early identification of a child's Special Educational Needs together with appropriate multi-disciplinary intervention should reduce the need for more intensive support later in the child's life. In working towards this principle the MCA will ensure that:

- MCA staff work closely with primary colleagues on transition.
- 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.

Promoting Inclusive Education

MCA 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 Academies, schools, parents/carers, LA support services, other agencies and the broader community.

MCA will work to the Manchester Inclusion Statement as outlined in the Inclusion policy.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

The best results are achieved where parents/carers, schools, Academies and LAs work in partnership. In working towards this principle the MCA will:

- Assist parents/carers in their understanding of Special Educational Needs procedures, Academy-based provision, 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 an Academy place 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 child'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 MCA 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 MCA 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.

Promoting High Expectations

MCA 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 MCA will ensure that:

Every student experiencing Special Educational Needs will have the barriers to achieving their potential identified and removed

- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and relevant targets will be applied equally to all young people including those with special educational needs.
- The National Strategy Progression Guidance 2009-10 will be used to ascertain expected progression rates for SEN pupils whilst bearing in mind that there are often significant life factors which may make their targets unattainable or not sufficiently challenging.

- Young people with SEN have equal access to extra curricular 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 should develop high self-esteem. Through this it is anticipated that young people will contribute to the setting, assessment and review of personal goals.

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 MCA will ensure that:

- All young people are valued equally.
- Special educational needs will not be considered a barrier in achieving a place at MCA.
- 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 have access to a relevant, broad and balanced curriculum including the National Curriculum. The main aim of additional and specialist resources is 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.

Sharing responsibility

The MCA 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 MCA will share responsibility with a range of other partners and agencies. The LA believes that the interests of the young person can best be served by viewing identified difficulties as a whole. Procedures will recognise the importance of sharing information and collaboratively devising support programmes for young people with special educational needs.

This is especially important at those periods of a child's educational life where transition from one phase of life or education is involved. MCA will adhere to Manchester's protocols for interagency working at:

- Initial Academy entry.
- Planning for post-Academy provision.
- All points where additional needs are identified.

Continuum of high quality provision

In working towards this principle MCA will:

- In accordance with the Code of Practice and Disability Discrimination 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 MCA and special schools and between MCA and LA 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.

High quality trained staff

Young people with SEN, and their families, have a right to be supported by high quality, skilled professionals. MCA 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.

Clear and effective procedures

The detailed procedures to be followed are set out in a separate document along with the complaints procedure.

Procedures for identifying young people with special educational needs and for monitoring their progress should 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, MCA will:

- Focus on preventative work with young people.
- Ensure Statements of SEN and learning plans are reviewed annually and the appropriate action taken where required.
- 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 make sure the views of parents/carers and young people are sought when the statutory review process is taking place as well as those of the professionals involved.
- Ensure procedures are in place to involve parents/carers and students in the setting of targets, assessment of progress and review of Individual Education or Behaviour Plans.
- Monitor and evaluate MCA'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.

Monitoring review and evaluation

MCA will contribute to the LA's policy for monitoring, review and evaluation and will conduct internal reviews at least annually to complement the on-going monitoring and evaluation of provision and outcomes.

The SENCo will report regularly to the Principal and Governing Body in relation to SEN.

Parents/carers also have a role to play though their contribution to reviews of their young people's learning, linking with schools and Academies over their child's individual education plans.

In carrying out its responsibilities towards young people with special educational needs the MCA will:

- Keep its arrangements and provision for SEN under review.
- Review the effective use of its resources.

- Review and evaluate MCA'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 LA's SEN policy and the finance delegated under LMS arrangements.

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 LA support services as experienced by MCA students and staff.
- The performance of Academy support staff as experienced by MCA students and other staff.
- The provision for young people with special needs within MCA including annual review of statements and individual learning plans.
- Individual student progress as measured against set targets.
- Use of delegated funds

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 in order that services for individual young people, families and schools can be as seamless as possible.

- All young people have the right to learn together, develop relationships and prepare for life in the mainstream.
- 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.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

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

**Adopted by the Manchester
Communication Academy on**

Chair of Academies Trust Board

Principal

Review date