

Manchester Communication Academy



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This document has been approved for operation within	Manchester Communication Academy
Date of last review	October 2025
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Status	
Person Responsible for Policy	Head of School
Owner	Manchester Communication Academy
Signature of Approval	

Revision History

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom
November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format of the policy changed Equalities statement added Review dates changed 	AW
October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and Responsibilities information updated. 	KC
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 3 - word 'disability removed' Page 4 and 6 - Quality First Teaching' changed to 'High Quality Teaching' Page 4 and 5 - 'Pupil Profile' changed to Learning Plan' 	KC and BT
October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 5 - Information about SEN referral triage meetings added. Page 7 - updated information added regarding CPD for SEND. 	KC

Aim and Purpose

Manchester Communication Academy recognises that students have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Students have a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age,
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the school's educational facilities

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act. That is:

'...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

This definition also includes students with long-term medical conditions. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) but, where a child requires special educational provision over and above the adjustments, aids and services required by the Equality Act 2010, they will additionally be covered by the SEND definition.

Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014 defines a child as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) if he or she "has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him or her".

General Principles of SEND Policy

Manchester Communication Academy's SEND Policy has the principles outlined in the Code of Practice at its core:

- To secure access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all students.
- To secure the highest quality of education for students with SEND through staff training and support for staff and students.
- To raise the esteem, contribution to school life and social awareness of students with SEND, with a strong focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- To establish a partnership between staff, students, parents and support agencies. Develop joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care, education and training settings on taking a graduated approach to identifying and supporting students with SEND.
- To focus on support that enables students with SEND to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood.

Key objectives are:

- To identify, assess, monitor and review the special educational needs of students.
- To identify strategies and develop programmes of study for students with SEND.
- To assist curriculum areas in the development and use of differentiated and flexible schemes of learning; to support within the classroom.
- To teach basic skills to students and groups of students; to train and organise staff, students and parents as assistants in the teaching of reading.
- To provide CPD for the training and development of good practice in the education of students with SEND.
- To inform parents and engage them as partners.
- To liaise with primary school staff to ensure continuity and successful change of school; also with colleges and training agencies for school-leavers with SEND.
- To liaise with external agencies - medical, social, psychological, educational welfare and other services, and act upon professional advice.
- To co-ordinate and record Special Educational Needs Assessment, to monitor and arrange Annual Reviews
- To continue development of SEND policy and to report to governors

Special Educational Needs at Manchester Communication Academy

The four areas of need identified in the Code of Practice are:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and / or physical needs

In addition to the four areas we will also consider what is not SEND but may impact on progress and attainment (including, attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, multilingual students, pupil premium and children who are looked after.

Circumstances that may affect progress and attainment, but are not considered as constituting 'SEND':

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a student has SEND, although negative behaviour may be an underlying response to a special educational need.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND and will therefore not automatically lead to a student being recorded as having SEND. However, they may be indicators of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. Equally it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

Also, difficulties related solely to limitations in English for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL), are not SEND.

Difficulties with attendance, punctuality, health and welfare do not constitute SEND, neither does being identified as a child for whom the Pupil Premium grant is paid, being a Looked After Child or being a child of service personnel.

School, and other providers, regularly review the appropriateness of their whole provision, including all their policies, when planning their support and provision for students.

Identification and Assessment

If a student is known to have special educational needs when they arrive at Manchester Communication Academy the responsible staff will, as appropriate:

- Use information from the primary school to provide an appropriate curriculum and support.
- Ensure that ongoing observation and assessment provides feedback about achievements to inform future planning of the student's learning.
- Ensure opportunities for the student to show what they know, understand and can do.
- Involve the student in planning and agreeing targets to meet needs.

Information about a student's needs are made known to staff, including information about the child's strengths, areas of difficulty and suggested strategies for meeting needs.

Educational advice to staff can be based on:

- History e.g. of illness where this has delayed progress, school attendance and extended periods of time off school, relevant home circumstances (with reference to named person if information is sensitive)
- Educational advice, initially from primary school, based on completion of transition forms, primary school records and discussion with staff
- Professional advice from Educational professionals, where relevant.
- Services that support the child.
- Discussion with parents
- Advice from teaching, pastoral and special needs staff.

Students will also be entered onto the SEND register if:

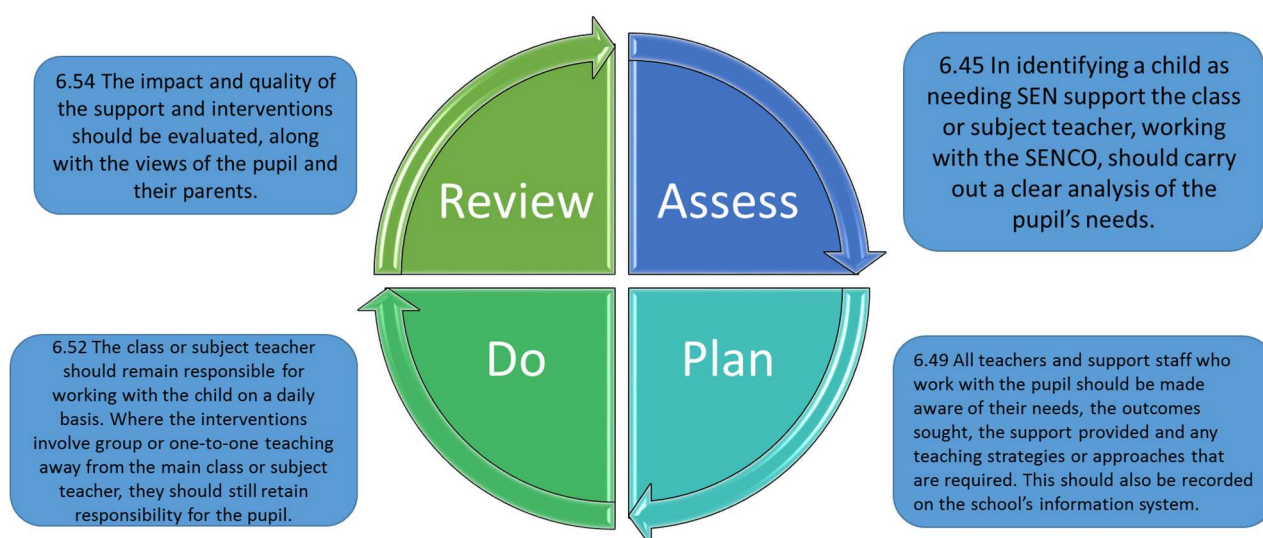
1. Our High Quality teaching and personalised learning approach is not enabling the student to make progress and subsequent testing confirms SEND
2. Following transition from another school (either primary or an in year admission) we have been advised that a student has SEND

Once SEND has been confirmed for a student, their parents/carers will be consulted and a learning plan will be created, if advised, taking into account the views and outcomes for the student.

Managing the Needs of the Students on the SEND Register

SEN support at Manchester Communication Academy is implemented and regularly reviewed assessed using the 'graduated approach':

We follow the '**Assess, Plan, Do, Review**' cycle as recommended in the Code of Practice. Where a student is identified as having SEND, Manchester Communication Academy take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs.



If any member of staff is concerned about a pupil, they can make an internal referral to the SEN Team. The SEND Team who have an SEN triage referral process and meet fortnightly to review referrals and decide on the next steps. Any actions put in place are done so following a '**Assess-Plan-Do-Review**' principle:

Assess: If a pupil's progress is a concern and they have a barrier to learning, staff complete a cause for concern/SEND referral form, or speak to the SENCO. An individual monitoring plan, including observations of teaching, assessment of pupils learning, testing, progress checks are completed.

Plan: If there is a cause for concern, a parental meeting takes place and the pupil's targets, views and support is discussed.

Do: A Learning Plan is created for the student and support strategies are shared with staff.

Review: Progress is checked and monitored by the SENCO. There are further assessments if they are needed.

After each cycle, targets and progress is assessed and next steps are planned. Next steps may involve escalating pupil up the threshold of need to involve external agencies to support the pupil, if there is a high level of need. In some cases, this **may** result in a full assessment by the Educational Psychologist and an application for statutory assessment to the Local Authority. The progress and attainment of pupils with SEN remains the class teacher's responsibility however their progress will be monitored by the SENCo and Assistant SENCo. The Code of Practice states:

'Teachers are **responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class**, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.'
'They should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to **plan and assess the impact of support and interventions** and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.'

'Working with the SENCO, [they] should revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil.'

(0-25 SEND Code of Practice, sections 6.36, 6.52, 6.54)

This highlights how the first step in supporting all pupils, including those with SEN, is **high-quality teaching, differentiated** for individual pupils, and this is why at Manchester Communication Academy, we strongly believe that all students, including students with SEND, learn and make progress when they are in their lessons, accessing outstanding teaching.

Records and Reviews

On transition to Manchester Communication Academy, primary schools will provide information on those students with SEND. A file will be opened on that child and held within the SEN Team. For students who later emerge as having SEND, new files will be set up. Copies of relevant documentation or reports will be copied to these files.

On leaving the school, the file will be forwarded to the appropriate educational provider upon request.

Arrangements for Annual Review of Students' progress and their Educational Health Care (EHC) Plans

Dates are set early in the year and the Local Authority informed as they may wish to send a representative, particularly to a Transitional Review. Other interested professionals are informed and parents are notified before the due date. Four weeks before the review, teaching staff are asked for written feedback on the student. This will include recent educational progress, relationships with staff and peers, attitude to learning and other matters which relate to the student's EHC Plan.

Those invited to the meeting will depend on the nature of the student's educational difficulty, but a parent/carer will always be present. The student will also be involved in their Annual Review.

Relevant staff are notified of recommendations and observations from the meeting.

Support and Interventions

It is recognised that where a student is unable to benefit fully from access to the curriculum as a result of an identified barrier, steps must be taken to overcome the barrier.

In addition to High Quality Teaching and Differentiation, a student may need additional support outside the classroom in the form of an intervention. When regular withdrawal from lessons is considered necessary, it is to be for a limited period of time and for a particular objective, and parents/carers are informed

All interventions have clear entry and exit criteria. Intended outcomes of interventions are made known to the student, parents and teachers. The impact of interventions is tracked and monitored against the intended outcomes. At the end of the intervention, the student's progress is reviewed and this is used to inform any next steps e.g. further intervention or referral to an external agency such as Educational Psychology or Speech and Language Therapy. The Graduated Approach is always followed.

Details about the support and interventions for students with SEND can be read in the **SEND Information Report 2025-26**.

Support in Formal Examinations

Where a student has a sensory impairment or specific learning difficulty, the examination board will consider requests for special consideration for exams. Requests must be accompanied by recent professional advice and are made by the school's Assessor in consultation with the SEND team.

In setting internal examinations it is important that a range of means of assessment are used in addition to the formal written examination. This particularly benefits students with a specific learning difficulty, enabling them to demonstrate knowledge in the subject. Further details can be found in the **Access Arrangements Policy 2025-26**.

Continued Professional Development for Staff

The need for in-service training of all staff is recognised and Manchester Communication Academy is fully committed to providing CPD for staff

Training may be delivered by members of the SEND team or by external providers such as Health professionals and Educational Psychology Services.

As a Research School, our Teaching Assistants also receive regular training based on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research and guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

SENCo: Miss Kirsty Carvell monitors the identification of students with SEND, and the provision put in place to support them. Miss Carvell is supported by two Assistant SENCo, SEND Admin and a team of Teaching Assistants in the SEND Team in school.

Mrs Thomas is the Assistant Principal for Inclusion who oversees the provision for SEND students.

The Assistant Principal for Inclusion, SENCo and the Assistant SENCo are all qualified teachers and have the 'National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination' qualification.

Governor for SEND: Helen Robinson

Dealing with Complaints

In the first instance, contact the relevant teacher who may refer your concerns to the SENCo or Head of Year. If they cannot resolve your concerns immediately, the school's complaints procedure is available on the school website.

Policy reviewed: October 2025

Responsible: Mrs Thomas, Assistant Principal for Inclusion and Miss Kirsty Carvell, SENCo