



# MacIntyre Academies Venture Academy

## Special Education Needs & Disability

### (SEND) Policy

Version Number	Purpose/ Change	Resp.	Date
2	Added DfE white paper Added use principles of quality first teaching in our provision Added we give due regard to current pedagogy and research such as metacognition principles to identify methodology that better supports our learners to learn Added work in line with our drive to be attachment aware and trauma informed all staff are expected to undertake training on the Solihull Approach for TIAA practice to support our pupils. Added appendix A and Contents Table	EP	Feb 23
3	Review of policy, no substantive changes required at this time. Addition of 'or Acting Principal' where Executive Principal is referenced	EP	Dec 24

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## 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the procedures governing the action to be taken in respect of Children and Young People with SEND at Venture Academy.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Venture Academy employees, including volunteers as well as Local Advisory Board and Trust Board Members. It is also expected that visitors and contractors on our site have due regard for the principles outlined in this policy. For the purpose of this policy's wording 'Family' or 'Families' include carers, foster carers and those in special guardianship arrangements.

## 3. Introduction

This policy is written in accordance with:

- Children and Families Act, 2014
- The Equalities Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations for 2014
- SEN Code of Practice from January 2015
- DfE White Paper "Opportunities for All" March 2022

The policy should be read alongside Venture Academy:

- SEND Information Report
- Admissions Guidance
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Disability Access Plan
- Curriculum Policy

### Definition of SEND

Children have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) if they have a difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their:

- Behaviour
- Ability to socialise
- Ability to communicate
- Reading and writing
- Ability to understand things e.g. maps, sequences of instructions, implied meaning (jokes) etc.

- Concentration levels
- Physical ability

#### 4. Underlying Principles

We believe that all children and young people should be equally valued and will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop environments where all children and young people can feel safe, be happy and reach their potential. Our belief is that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, faith, ability, attainment and background.

We pay attention to the provision for and the achievement of individuals and different groups of students. Our aim is to respond to children and their family's circumstances in ways which take account of a variety of life experiences and needs. We recognise that for our cohort of learners, outcomes at early adulthood are often poor and do not set them up for later success (lack of economic activity, criminal justice system involvement etc.). We will work with our pupils, their families, community groups, healthcare professionals, the police and other stakeholders to build support and shift aspirations so that children can achieve a better, more productive future.

Our approach is based on the following principles:

- All children, regardless of their needs deserve nurture and support to enable them to be safe, happy and have purpose now and in the future.
- All children and young people, regardless of difficulty or disability, have the same right to maximise their personal potential through the free access to great education.
- Education can and should be a way of maximising equality of opportunity for all children and young people.
- All students, regardless of the severity of their circumstance, difficulty or disability, are encouraged to be ambitious for themselves and to be aspirational about their future hopes and dreams.
- The learning experience for children will be high quality: stimulating, engaging and highly tailored to individual students.
- Working with students and families as partners, all academies will focus on good, child-centred outcomes to create the best foundation on which to build adult life.

#### 5. Aims

Venture Academy is fully committed to the inclusion of all and success for all. We use person centred approaches to ensure that young people are fully included in all aspects of school life, to realise their potential and to feel valued. We are fully committed to the following aims:

- Students receive the provision set out in their Education Health and Care Plan.
- We use principles of quality first teaching in our provision
- Students have full access to a high-quality education with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- We identify and respond to the changing needs of students.
- There are rigorous procedures for tracking and monitoring students' progress.

- We enable provision to evolve to support these changing needs so that students can further develop their potential as individuals.
- We inspire and support children to attend school and value their education in the same way that often comes naturally to children in other circumstances.
- We fully involve young people in their education, taking account of their views and working with them in any planning and decision making which that affects them.
- We strive to improve behavioural and educational outcomes and life chances for children and young people.
- We involve families in plans to meet their child's additional needs.
- We raise aspirations of children and families, matched by high staff aspirations for students.
- We work with partners to ensure better transitions, destinations and opportunities after school.
- We refer to and work co-operatively with a wide range of agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people.
- We ensure that an inclusive environment is created and fostered where all members of the school community respect and care for each other.
- We give due regard to current pedagogy and research such as metacognition principles to identify methodology that better supports our learners to learn

## 6. Objectives

Our aims will be achieved through:

- Building positive and supportive relationships between pupils and staff, which help them to feel safe and secure
- High quality teaching developed through up to date and relevant information about the needs of students.
- Providing staff with regular opportunities to discuss students' needs.
- Providing staff with professional development opportunities to expand their SEN pedagogy.
- Providing a structure within which information on students can be collected, provided and processed systematically.
- Offering a personalised learning programme which offers academic and vocational learning pathways, underpinned by a foundation of social and emotional awareness and skills development.
- Embracing the role of parents and carers as integral to the school's life-blood and culture.
- Working alongside Warwickshire County Council (and other sponsoring authorities) staff and other stakeholders to ensure that each student has access to the support that they need to grow and achieve.

## 7. Responsibilities

**The Trust Board:** Through the school's budget, the board makes available the funds necessary to ensure the appropriate provision is made to meet the identified needs of the students. The board has strategic responsibility for setting the SEN Policy.

**The Local Advisory Board:** The Local Advisory Board monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the policy and provision, in line with the Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference. It ensures that the policy for SEN is communicated to parents, is non-discriminatory and is reviewed annually.

There is a delegated LAB member for Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

**The Executive Principal or Acting Principal:** The Executive Principal (or Acting Principal) is responsible for the implementation, management and support of the policy and procedures and will report regularly to the Local Advisory Board. The Executive Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring that the school delivers an appropriate education, based on individual needs
- implementing the admissions policy to ensure that we can meet need for pupils who are admitted to Venture Academy
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively
- overseeing the timetabling of extra support
- ensuring appropriate child centred documents and plans are in place
- initiating the process of statutory assessment when deemed appropriate
- ensuring annual reviews are organised
- ensuring that the school keeps up to date records on achievement
- with the leadership team, co-ordinating day to day provision
- with the leadership team, analysing data
- monitoring and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of support programmes and differentiation in the classroom
- liaising with outside agencies such as the educational psychology service, health, social care etc.
- working to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

**Teaching Staff:** Must deliver quality education and support by:

- Reflecting personalisation in their planning based on sound and effective systems of assessment.
- Identifying how they intend to provide for the student's specific learning needs.
- Working closely with all support staff and other agencies to provide appropriate resources and learning material for their students, adjusting and modifying teaching

materials within individual lessons to ensure students are able to access the learning and meet the lesson objectives and their own.

- Setting appropriate targets and keeping records to monitor progress of their students and communicate regularly with their families.

**Teaching Assistants and other frontline staff:** Teaching Assistants work with individuals and small groups within the classroom to offer consistent learning support. Teaching assistants work under the direction of teachers, but have an important role to play with supporting planning and preparation.

**All Staff:** Every member of staff is responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures for supporting students with SEN are followed and that they are treated fairly and offered appropriate and consistent support.

Through appropriate record keeping and assessment they ensure that evidence is available to judge the success of identification and assessment and the effectiveness of the provision made for students in terms of their progress.

## 8. Procedures

### 8.1 Identification and Assessment

Venture Academy is a special school which provides up to 50 places for children of both sexes aged 9 – 16 years who have social, emotional and mental health needs and/or an autistic spectrum condition (ASC). For a child to be admitted, the school must be named, by a local authority, in the child's education health and care plan ('EHCP').

Many of our students will have previously found going to school a challenge and may have had difficulties in coping within a mainstream environment and therefore accessing an appropriate curriculum. We support the young person to overcome these difficulties by designing an individualised curriculum based on a good understanding of their needs and preferences. We meet with the young person, their family and previous school placement to complete a needs assessment that is both educational and holistic. Our Family Footings facilitator uses a range of tools to explore the things that are most important to a child and their family, often in a fun way. With this information we plan their curriculum and transition to school life.

Identification and assessment are ongoing, particularly as a student's behaviour and engagement may change when entering a new environment. Regular observation and review of students by teaching and non-teaching staff will be used to inform the identification of any ongoing additional needs.

### 8.2 Provision and Curriculum

At Venture Academy we strive to promote the development of our children and young people in a safe and accessible environment; supported by communication and engagement between home, school, other agencies and the wider community.

The school offers the national curriculum which is differentiated to meet the needs of each individual student. Our students benefit from a curriculum that focuses on developing

academic potential, social, vocational and life skills and learning that is practical where possible and often outside the classroom.

Our balanced and broad curriculum meets the specific needs of the student through:

- Small teaching groups – between 6 and 8 students
- Advice, support and sessions from outside specialists or agencies (e.g. SALT, OT, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Curriculum teaching programmes incorporating social skills, co-operation, reflection and confidence building
- Engagement activities focused upon the interests and motivation of the learner
- Practical learning that builds on young people's strengths
- Learning in the wider community to help generalize skills
- Personalised sensory profiles and programs to ensure that they are calm enough to access development learning opportunities
- Literacy needs (both reading and writing). English and Maths intervention specialists work with subject teachers to build necessary interventions into MPPs (My Personal Plan) with the intention of improving academic performance. Understanding communication and overcoming language, linguistic or communication barriers.

Venture Academy support young people to improve their own well-being, focusing on their communication, social, emotional and mental health as central to the delivery of the school curriculum. We include learning to build positive relationships and learning that will help children and young people understand and shape their own emotions. We have a holistic and non-judgemental approach to supporting behaviour that empowers the child or young person to engage in education. We support children and young people to recognise their challenges and barriers to learning and teach them alternative ways of responding to difficult situations. The school aims to support students to become socially responsible, polite and caring young adults, who value the lives of others and the environment in which they live.

Resources are allocated to students according to their assessed need. The school has high staffing levels to ensure the safety of students and to facilitate the optimum learning environment. Staffing is allocated to classes flexibly with some individual students receiving more support than others. Some students have individualised equipment that will enable them to access the curriculum and social environment of the school (such as; weighted jackets, ear defenders, portable communication modes).

The school is fully accessible to all children and young people. Specialist facilities include a science lab and food technology room. All students have access to the relevant communication and therapy devices to best meet their needs (such as; weighted jackets, ear defenders, proprioceptive and vestibular equipment). The school has a fully equipped accessible toilet allowing students full independence.

### **8.3 Progress, Review and Monitoring**

The school has a robust and relevant assessment document that outlines all of the assessments used with the children and young people. Concern about a students' progress is identified through classroom observation, and the termly assessment cycle. Referrals are made by the Executive Principal for additional support from outside services.

Each student has an MPP. The targets are based on individual learning needs, overcoming barriers to learning and improving readiness for learning. MPPs are reviewed on a termly basis. Parents have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to the MPP, they are given

clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided through the MPP, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.

The impact and quality of our education, support and interventions are evaluated, along with the views of the student and their families, which we gain through regular, informal day-to-day discussions, person centred reviews and professional meetings. The leadership team and teachers revise the support in light of the student's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the MPP through consultation with the student and their family.

Students' Educational Health and Care Plans (or statements of special educational needs) are reviewed at least annually

Termly reports on student achievement are made by the Executive Principal to the Local Advisory Board.

#### **8.4 Staff training and induction**

Venture Academy highly values training and a robust induction and CPD training program is available for all staff. We ensure that all of our staff have a thorough knowledge of autism and conditions relating to SEMH (e.g., attachment disorder, anxiety and depression) and how our students best learn. This is carried out by a combination of strong in-house training by an experienced and well qualified senior management team and external agencies. We also ensure that all staff have appropriate training and qualifications in their relevant field, be it teaching, curriculum, health and social care or therapy qualifications. These are sought through the recruitment procedures and all relevant qualifications are checked and copies kept on file.

Staff access to training is through a balance between the needs of the school as expressed in the school training plan and an individual's needs, highlighted in performance management as well as emerging needs related to the changing needs of the students.

#### **8.5 Families and transition**

At Venture Academy all that we do is about offering the best all round educational, social, communication and emotional development to our children and young people. We believe that this can best be achieved by involving all relevant stakeholders in the planning and delivery of our curriculum, education and therapy. Involvement of parents and carers is crucial in securing best outcomes for our students and we work very hard at ensuring parents are involved in their child's progress. We also believe that our students should be involved in planning and reviewing their learning and aim that they can be fully included where possible.

We are fully committed to working in partnership with families and they are invited to multidisciplinary meetings involving their child. We also welcome more informal visits and chats with parents/carers where they can arrange to meet with the class teacher or therapists or chat on the phone. We also offer home visits to parents and carers. Families are invited to review meetings to discuss progress and to be involved in setting targets with appropriate intervention strategies to help their child at home and at school. Where families are separated e.g. divorced parents, it may be useful to offer separate meetings at times to ensure everyone feels that they can contribute and be listened to. If students find the attendance at a meeting too stressful they can contribute via written/ symbol or by photo or video.

Transition into the school is facilitated by a focused program involving the child or young

person's current placement, parents and other professionals. A transition plan is drawn up involving the child or young person at their level of understanding, whilst being aware of minimising their stress and anxiety. Transition to adult services is facilitated through annual meetings, transition plans, involvement of relevant agencies and visits to colleges, work experience etc.

## 8.6 Internal Expertise

**Communication Support:** All staff have training to understand the communication needs of children with SEMH and ASC, including communication strategies and preferred methods e.g. visual, symbols and written word. They use this learning to understand the most appropriate ways of supporting children to communicate, especially during times when children are anxious.

All students who have been identified through the Statement or EHCP as in need of speech and language therapy will be on the caseload of our school SALT. Speech and language therapy is delivered on an individual basis, in small groups. Sometimes this therapy will not be delivered directly to the student, rather the SALT will work to train staff who will support the student. Speech and Language therapy is monitored and evaluated through the MPP.

**Pastoral/Positive Behaviour Support:** Social and emotional support is also overseen by our AP Pastoral who supports students and families in developing behaviours for learning, strategies for managing feelings and emotions and celebrating success. Support is provided in response to behaviour monitoring, and referral from staff and/or home. Programmes are bespoke to student need, but will be measured against SMART targets as part of the MPP.

**ASC and SEMH Support:** All employees are trained to support young people with ASC and SEMH. Students are supported with whole school teaching strategies, as well as specific resources and programming such to support sensory and social and mental health needs. In line with our drive to be attachment aware and trauma informed all staff are expected to undertake training on the Solihull Approach for TIAA practice to support our pupils.

## 8.7 External Expertise

We are committed to partnership working to best support the needs of our learners and to support our families. The school strives to involve other bodies, as far as is reasonably possible, in meeting the needs of the students. From its development the School has forged positive working relationships with health, social services and local authorities. We liaise closely with all agencies and include relevant professionals in meetings about and with students.

We support full access to a range of services including:

- Social Care
- Educational Psychologist
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Speech and Language Service
- Occupational Therapy
- Youth Offending Team

- PCSO's and the Police

## 8.8 Complaints

Complaints about this policy can be made through our complaints procedure, available on our website.

## 9. Monitoring Compliance and Impact

Monitoring of practice against this policy will be carried out by the Trust, Executive Principal and Local Advisory Board and will include:

- Lesson observations, discussion with students, scrutiny of the progress and feedback in their written work etc.
- Monitoring student progress of SEN students against initial assessments
- Seeking feedback from students/parents and carers at review meetings
- Reviewing the attendance of students
- The SEN policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

## 10. Other Information

The Local Offer for SEND brings together information about education, health and care services for children and young people from 0 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities.

More information can be found on the Warwickshire County Council website: <http://warwickshire.gov.uk/send>

Other local authorities have their own local offer on their websites in order to signpost to provision in their locality as below:

Solihull - [Solihull Local Offer | solihull.gov.uk](http://solihull.gov.uk)

Leicestershire - [What is the Local Offer | Leicestershire County Council](#)

Coventry - [Coventry's Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Local Offer – Coventry City Council](#)

Gloucestershire - [Support for Families with SEND - Gloucestershire's Local Offer | Glosfamilies Directory](#)

## Appendix A

Assistant Principal (AP) Pastoral:

LAB member for Teaching, Learning and Curriculum:

John Anderson

Charlotte Cox (QTS)