



# MARY ELLIOT ACADEMY

## Special Educational Needs Policy

Version: **2**

Ratified by the Board of Trustees

**July 2025**

Signed by the Board of Trustees

**July 2025**

To be reviewed annually

**July 2026**

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## 1. Our Mission

- 1.1. At Mary Elliot Academy, our vision is to inspire all who work and learn with us to strive for excellence and become the best possible version of themselves. We are committed to ensuring that all of our students receive the educational support required to meet their individual needs, encouraging independence and developing all students to their fullest potential.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. Students who attend Mary Elliot Academy have a range of learning difficulties, which means they have been assessed in accordance with current legislation, the SEN Code of Practice and LA guidelines and have an Education, Health and Care plan in place. The board of directors and staff of Mary Elliot Academy will ensure that the academy provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, which is differentiated to meet individual needs and abilities.
- 2.2. Students at Mary Elliot Academy have Special Educational Needs (SEN) throughout their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment takes into account the type and extent of the difficulties experienced by the learner.
- 2.3. Teachers' planning caters for the individual SEN needs of each student and the provision made therefore enables all learners to engage effectively in all curriculum activities, in addition to broader aspects of academy life.
- 2.4. **Aims and Objectives** -The aims and objectives of our special needs provision are:
- To ensure that all students with SEND are accurately assessed and that their needs are reflected in the objectives of their EHC plan.
  - To create a learning environment that meets the SEND needs of each student.
  - To ensure all students have equal access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.
  - To maintain effective relationships with representatives from the National Health Service, Social Services, Careers service and other agencies who have an involvement in the educational process of the students.
  - To enable students to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning where appropriate.

- To make clear the expectations of all partners in the process and provision of education for special needs students.
- To actively seek ways of helping and involving parents, carers and guardians in the care, development and education of their child.
- To ensure parents, carers and guardians are kept fully informed and are engaged in effective communication about their child's SEN.
- To support the professional development aspirations of all staff and board of directors in relation to SEN training.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

- 3.1. At Mary Elliot Academy educational provision for students with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of staff.
- 3.2. The SENCO team and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) under the direction of the Headteacher, are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the SEN provision. The key responsibilities as outlined in the Code of Practice are:
  - Liaising with and advising colleagues.
  - Managing the teams and departments.
  - Coordinating the provision for students with SEN.
  - Maintaining records on students with SEN.
  - Communicating with parents, guardians and carers of students with SEN.
  - Liaising with external support agencies.
- 3.3. The board of directors aim to secure the appropriate provision for any identified student with special educational needs. The board of directors ensure all teachers and support staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards students with SEN. They consult with Local Authorities and other schools when appropriate and report annually to parents through the academy profile.
- 3.4. The board of directors through its admissions policy ensure that students with SEN are not discriminated against. The board of directors has due regard for the guidance in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and SEN Code of Practice (2014) in its equal opportunities commitment. The board of directors have an Accessibility Plan in place for improving access to the school and its facilities.

## 4. Inclusion

4.1. At Mary Elliot Academy we recognise and respect the fact that students:

- Have different educational, medical, physical, social and emotional needs and aspirations.
- Require different approaches to learning.
- Learn at different rates.
- Require a range of different teaching strategies and experiences, including inclusion in other settings such as mainstream schools and colleges.

4.2. Teachers respond to students needs by:

- Providing personalised support in all curriculum areas.
- Planning to meet individual needs through setting personalised targets which directly link to each students' Educational Health Care Plan.
- Developing each students' understanding through a variety of learning experiences.
- Planning for full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities.
- Providing positive behaviour support to enable students to participate effectively and safely in learning.
- Monitoring and reviewing progress on a termly basis.
- Ensuring that all students regardless of ability and need have full access to all aspects of the school curriculum. They will have the same opportunities to be involved in the broad range of enhanced learning opportunities presented by the school in terms of inclusion, school visits, residential activities and curriculum enrichment activities.
- This policy ensures that teaching arrangements are fully inclusive. Students will have their needs met through a balanced curriculum with appropriate differentiation, which may include support from other professionals where appropriate.
- All students at the appropriate stage in their school careers will have access to a realistic range of opportunities without any form of discrimination. The academy actively tracks students' progress to ensure all learners achieve their full potential.

## **5. Specialist provision**

5.1. The academy has a range of specialist resources and facilities designed to cater for the needs of all students:

- Staff training in a wide variety of subjects and special needs provision including Complex Needs (PMLD and ASC), sensory impairment and communication (Makaton and PECS) and Positive Behaviour Support (Team Teach)
- Specialist facilities including a Hydrotherapy Pool, adapted changing facilities, Sports Hall, Multi-Sensory rooms, ICT suite, Food Technology Classroom and school flat located in the local community.
- Access to all parts of the academy with ramps and lifts where required.
- Additional services as required including assistant practitioners, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, specialist teachers for vision and hearing impairment, sensory integration support and behavioural analysts to assist in the care and support of students within the school.
- Clinics delivered within the academy including CAMHS LD, Paediatricians/Adult Consultant, Dietician and Epilepsy.

## **6. Review of Students with Special Educational Needs**

6.1. Members of the SLT and Extended leadership team (ELT) will work with all staff to ensure that students requiring additional or alternative support, to that found within the classroom, are identified as soon as possible.

6.2. Progress made by all students is regularly monitored and reviewed. Students identified as giving cause for concern due to their rate of progress will have evidence gathered to ensure strategies and planning are appropriate to students' needs and abilities, and when appropriate alternative interventions put in place.

6.3. Students will have their EHC plans reviewed annually, which will involve parents, students, academy staff and other agencies. The purpose of the Annual Review is to ascertain whether or not the directives documented in the EHCP are accurate, are being fully met and, in addition, to record progress, together with proposals for future actions to be taken.

## **7. Access to the curriculum**

- 7.1. All Students have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable students to:
- Experience, be engaged in, and/or gain skills and understanding of the purpose of learning activities
  - Experience rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement appropriate to their levels of attainment and understanding.
  - Teachers use a range of strategies to meet students' SEN. Lessons have clear learning objectives and outcomes; differentiated work and use formative assessment to inform the next stage of learning.
  - EHCP's/IEP's contain a small number of specific targets, between three and five, designed to enable students to progress.

## **8. Complaints procedure**

- 8.1. Parents are welcome to discuss any issues relating to their child's placement at Mary Elliot Academy at any time throughout the year, by prior appointment.
- 8.2. Information about the academy complaints procedure is available from the Headteacher and can be accessed on the academy website.
- 8.3. Under the SEN and Disability Act 2001 parents can appeal against decisions made or request a review of placement. The academy can provide information from the LA about this upon request.

## **9. Staffing and partnership**

- 9.1. The academy undertakes an annual audit of staff training needs as part of its performance management cycle. Where SEN issues are identified these needs are accommodated where possible, in conjunction with identified academy priorities contained in the Academy Development Plan (ADP).
- 9.2. The academy, through its communication structure and regular meetings ensures that all staff are kept fully informed of relevant SEN issues and procedures within school. Furthermore, staff are provided with information on training courses for SEN along with participation in a programme of trainings days and INSET.

## **10. Partnership with Parents**

- 10.1. The academy is in regular contact with parents of all students with SEN. Parents have access to 'Class Dojo', parent consultation evenings, and are encouraged to attend formal Annual Reviews. Copies of EHCP/targets, Wellbeing passports, Positive Behaviour plans and any additional support plans are also made available. Parents are kept fully informed throughout the academy's SEN intervention and their wishes taken into account.
- 10.2. The support of parents' guardians and carers is essential if the provision made for their child is to be successful. Parents are encouraged to make an active contribution to their child's education. Parent mornings, events and performances are regularly staged to facilitate parents' involvement in the life of the school and to give them training and support to assist their children. Parents and carers can visit the school should they wish to do so, and frequently attend for school medicals.
- 10.3. A Pastoral team exists with school staff, medical support, Specialist Attendance support input and translators to facilitate communication between home and school if the need arises and to ensure issues can be addressed.
- 10.4. Details of Parent Carer Forums and external agencies providing independent support and advice can be found within the Walsall Local Offer.

## **11. Links with other schools**

- 11.1. The academy liaises with feeder schools and families of new students to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to support students at the time of transfer. This usually takes place for Year 6 students once they have a firm offer of a place at the academy. This is in line with LA practice.
- 11.2. Arrangements are made for new students to visit the academy and to meet staff. Staff from the academy, as well as members of the school's medical team where appropriate will also conduct visits and see students in their school environments. Students are also able to attend a series of taster sessions to support transitions.

## **12. Links with other agencies**

- 12.1. The academy utilises a range of multi professional support so that each student can have access to their curriculum entitlement. The academy works closely with all of the LA's support agencies, when identifying,

assessing and making provision for students with SEN. The academy will source Educational Psychology services or other specialist support services as required to offer advice to staff on specific students, along with staff training in direct learning strategies.

12.2. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Health Authorities provide a range of staff who can work alongside school staff.

- Assistant Practitioners provide immediate health care for students and liaise directly with families and visiting doctors and specialists.
- Speech and Language Therapists assist in the support and delivery of communication programmes and feeding regimes for students.
- Physiotherapists assess students' physical needs and provide equipment, staff training, and management plans for students.
- Occupational Therapists provide advice, assessment, and support for students with a sensory and physical impairment.
- All staff may be involved in home school visits and family liaison, however the academy also has a designated Family liaison and multiagency support worker.

12.3. Social Services are actively engaged in supporting Students throughout the year as part of the Children in Care programme, providing respite care to Students and families, and emergency intervention.

### 13. Success Criteria

13.1. The success of this policy is judged against the aims and objectives set out in Section 2. The policy is reviewed annually, and the board of directors' reports will reflect on its implementation. The academy will set specific targets for end of Key Stages on an annual basis, against which students' progress can be measured. The Academy Development Plan is also evaluated at regular intervals throughout the year.

13.2. The accessibility plan (required under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) covering future policies for increasing access to the school by students with disabilities have been approved by the board of directors. This policy itself is required by the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999.

### 14. Changes

Description	Date	Page	Section
Change of wording 'all of our students'	07.04.2025	3	1.1

Change of wording 'Students who attend Mary Elliot'	07.04.2025	3	2.1 Paragraph 1
Change of wording 'National Health Service'	07.04.2025	3	2.4 Bullet point 4
Added 'Carers'	07.04.2025	4	2.4 Bullet point 7
Replaced term 'Individual Education Plans' with 'targets'	07.04.2025	5	4.2 Bullet point 2
Addition of adult clinic and epilepsy	07.04.2025	6	5.1 Bullet point 5
Changed 'School Dojo' to 'Class Dojo'	07.04.2025	8	10.1
Removal of IEPs, replaced with targets.  Addition of 'and any additional support plans'	07.04.2025	8	10.1
Removal of the word 'clearly'	07.04.2025	8	10.2
Removal of Educational Welfare Officer – to Specialist attendance support	07.04.2025	8	10.3