



Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

December 2025

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 At Watling Academy we believe that all students are entitled to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. Students are valued equally regardless of ability and encouraged to achieve their full potential. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all students are important to us and practical steps are taken to account for students' varied life experiences and needs. Watling Academy complies with 'The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2014' which sets out the legislation for the identification and provision for children/young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). As set out in the 2015 Act, Watling Academy has regard to the SEND Code of Practice, 2015 when deciding how to support students with SEND.
- 1.2 The Head of School and the Local School Board have delegated the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Academy's Special Needs Co-ordinator known as the SENDCo. There is a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team and a member of the Local School Board with responsibility for SEND. The contact details for the SEND team and the names of the Senior Leadership Team member and Local School Board member are set out in Appendix 1.

Section 2: Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 This Policy is in keeping with Watling Academy's ethos, aims, teaching and learning and equality policies. The Academy is committed to a policy of inclusion: one in which the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of all students matter – including those identified as having SEND. The culture, practice, management and deployment of the Academy's resources are designed to ensure all students' needs are met.
- 2.2 The Local School Board believes that all students, regardless of ability and behaviour, should be valued equally at Watling Academy. SEND children are not viewed as a separate entity but are part of the whole Academy approach, and different students' needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision throughout the curriculum.
- 2.3 **Objectives**

- 2.3.1 To ensure that all students, whether or not they have SEND, have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which is differentiated to meet their individual needs.
- 2.3.2 To ensure early identification, assessment and provision for any student who may have special educational needs or a disability.
- 2.3.3 To help every student realise their full potential and optimise their self-esteem.
- 2.3.4 To enable all staff to play a part in identifying SEND students and to take responsibility for recognising and addressing their individual needs.
- 2.3.5 To encourage the whole Academy community to demonstrate a positive attitude towards SEND.
- 2.3.6 To encourage an effective parent partnership in developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and at the Academy.
- 2.3.7 To encourage and support students to participate in all decision-making processes that relate to their education to ensure that their views are sought and taken into account.

- 2.3.8 To follow the SEND Code of Practice, 2015 which recommends a graduated approach, whereby appropriate actions are matched to the individual student's needs.
- 2.3.9 To comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Section 3: Identifying Special Educational Needs

- 3.1 The SEND Code of Practice (2015) explains that a child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. This could be because they have greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others.

The four main broad areas of SEND are as detailed below:

- 3.1.1 Communication and Interaction, including:
 - 3.1.1.1 SLCN (Speech, Language and Communication Needs)
 - 3.1.1.2 ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition)
- 3.1.2 Cognition and Learning, including:
 - 3.1.2.1 MLD (Moderate Learning Difficulties)
 - 3.1.2.2 SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties which affect one or more specific aspects of learning and encompasses conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.)
 - 3.1.2.3 SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties, where students are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum, as well as mobility and communication.)
 - 3.1.2.4 PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, where students are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment)
- 3.1.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, including:
 - 3.1.3.1 ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder)
 - 3.1.3.2 ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder)
 - 3.1.3.3 Attachment disorder
 - 3.1.3.4 A wide range of difficulties that manifest themselves in ways such as displaying challenging or disruptive behaviours, or in emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA). This may reflect underlying mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders or other physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.
- 3.1.4 Sensory and /or Physical Needs, including:
 - 3.1.4.1 Visual Impairment
 - 3.1.4.2 Hearing Impairment
 - 3.1.4.3 Multi-sensory Impairment
 - 3.1.4.4 Physical Disability

- 3.2 At Watling Academy, the identification of special educational needs is a thorough process, involving the views of teachers, parents, carers, SEND team and in some cases, as appropriate, external specialists. This ensures that all areas are considered in order to determine if the student has special educational needs or whether the impact on progress and attainment is as a result of other factors.
- 3.3 A child will only be formally placed on the SEND Register through consultation with parents

and carers if they require additional and different educational provision to have their needs met within school. Many students with an identified SEND can have their needs met through reasonable adjustments and do not need to be on the SEND register.

Section 4: Code of Practice Graduated Response

- 4.1 Watling Academy adopts the levels of intervention as described in the SEND Code of Practice, (2015). The Code of Practice advocates a graduated response to meeting students' needs.
- 4.2 Within our Academy, every teacher is a teacher of those with SEND. We believe it is essential to create an inclusive environment for all students within the educational setting. All teachers are therefore responsible for the progress and development of students in their class.
- 4.3 Watling Academy regularly assesses the progress of all students and uses this data to identify students making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by:
 - 4.3.1 Progress which is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
 - 4.3.2 Failing to match or better a young persons' previous rate of progress in a specific area
 - 4.3.3 Failing to close the attainment gap between the young person and their peers.
 - 4.3.4 Widening the attainment gap between the young person and their peers
- 4.4 Limited progress or attainment in individual subjects does not in itself indicate a Special Educational Need.
- 4.5 The first response to such progress concerns will be high quality first teaching targeted at their areas of weakness by subject teachers and supported by the Head of Department through the 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review' system used at Watling Academy.
- 4.6 The four key actions of the 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review' system used in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 are:
 - 4.6.1 **Assess:** Teaching staff in co-operation with the SENDCo should clearly analyse a student's needs before identifying a student as needing SEND support
 - 4.6.2 **Plan:** Parents/Carers must be notified whenever it is decided that a student is to be provided with SEND support, and the plan of support to be put in place.
 - 4.6.3 **Do:** Subject teachers retain responsibility for a student's learning, even when a SEND support plan has been identified and possible interventions have been put in place. This may include some support from an additional adult, in or out of the classroom.
 - 4.6.4 **Review:** The effectiveness of the support and provisions in place is reviewed regularly, and further provisions planned based on their success.
- 4.7 As outlined within the Graduated Response, all students with identified SEND are supported by Quality First Teaching and adaptive teaching strategies within the classroom. Identified students may access targeted or personalised provision in addition to this to support their individual progress and development. These provisions and interventions are tracked and monitored using Provision Map software.
- 4.8 **Special Educational Needs Descriptors (M and K)**

 - 4.8.1 **'M' (Monitoring)** – At this stage students may receive short term additional support, and

progress is monitored by the SENDCo and class teachers. Intervention can be triggered through concern, supplemented by evidence that despite receiving differentiated teaching a student continues to make little or no progress over a sustained period.

This also applies to students who qualify for Access Arrangements in examinations.

- 4.8.2 Where students are involved in interventions organised by the SEND department, these are intended as a 'catch up and keep up' programme. Some students who are included in these groups may not have SEND but will benefit from this support to enable them to make appropriate progress.
- 4.8.3 Students who have been identified as having a Special Educational Need but who are making progress in line with or above expectations, and who do not require support in addition to or different from their peers may also be placed on the additional needs register as 'M'.
- 4.8.4 If as an Academy we decide, following consultation with parents, that a student requires additional support to make progress, the SEND team, in collaboration with teachers, will support the assessment of the student and have an input in planning future support. The subject teacher will remain responsible for planning and delivering individualised programmes within subject areas.
- 4.8.5 **'K' (SEND Support /External Agency Involvement)** – Students with significant and persistent needs, which may require longer term additional support from teachers, SEND staff and other specialist staff will be placed on our SEND register at this level. Placement of a student at this level will be made by the SEND team, following full consultation with parents or automatically during phased transfer. Where involved, external support services may advise on outcomes for students and provide specialist inputs to the support process where appropriate. All students at 'SEND Support' will have an 'Academic Profile' identifying strategies and targets.

A student on 'SEND Support' may:

- 4.8.5.1 Make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period despite short term interventions;
- 4.8.5.2 Continue to work at levels considerably lower than expected for a student at a similar age;
- 4.8.5.3 Continue to experience significant difficulty in developing literacy/numeracy skills;
- 4.8.5.4 Have difficulties relating to social, emotional and mental health that substantially impede their learning;
- 4.8.5.5 Have sensory or physical needs requiring additional specialist equipment or visits/advice from specialists;
- 4.8.5.6 Have communication or interaction problems that impede the development of social relationships, thus presenting barriers to learning;
- 4.8.5.7 Have a formally identified Special Educational Need and/or Disability.

4.8.5.8 Parental consent is sought before any external agencies are involved. The recommendations may be implemented by the subject teacher or involve other adults.

4.9 **High Needs Funding**

If after the involvement of specialist external support and the use of Watling's own provision arrangement via its Notional Budget we are still unable to meet the needs of a student, we can apply to the Local Authority for extra funding from the 'High Needs Block'. This will be applied for in full discussion and approval with the students' parents or carers. The application includes details of the student's needs as well as demonstrating how advice given by external agencies has been implemented and the impact this has had.

Application for additional specialist support from the Local Authority may also involve allocation of a Specialist Teacher to work alongside Academy staff to support the ongoing progress of a student. Evidence is also submitted showing the 'Plan, Do, Assess, Review' cycle over a period of two terms and will be recorded on the Academy's individual provision map and the allocated Local Authority paperwork.

4.10 **Request for Statutory Assessment**

Watling Academy will request a Statutory Assessment from the Local Authority when, despite an individualised programme of sustained intervention and use of allocated notional resources, the progress of a student remains a significant cause for concern. Watling Academy will follow the guidelines, expectations and criteria outlined by Milton Keynes Council. A request for a Statutory Assessment will only be made by Watling Academy following consultation with the Local Authority and when it is agreed that there is sufficient evidence to support a successful application. A Statutory Assessment might also be requested by a parent or outside agency. As an Academy we will have the following information available:

- 4.10.1 Previous history of interventions;
- 4.10.2 Records and outcomes of regular reviews undertaken;
- 4.10.3 Information on the student's health and, if relevant, medical history;
- 4.10.4 Current learning levels and individual targets;
- 4.10.5 Other relevant assessments from specialists such as Specialist Teachers and Educational Psychologists;
- 4.10.6 The views of parents;
- 4.10.7 Where possible, the views of the student;
- 4.10.8 Social Care/Educational Welfare Service reports when relevant;
- 4.10.9 Any other involvement by professionals.

4.11 **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)**

An Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is normally provided where, after a Statutory Assessment, the Local Authority considers that the student requires provision beyond what the Academy can offer without additional support. We recognise as an Academy that a request for a Statutory Assessment does not inevitably lead to an EHC Plan being issued.

An EHC Plan will include details of outcomes for the student. These are used to develop outcomes that are:

- 4.11.1 Matched to the short and long term outcomes set in the EHC Plan;
- 4.11.2 Established through parental/student consultation;
- 4.11.3 Implemented in the classroom;
- 4.11.4 Delivered by the class teacher with appropriate additional support where specified.

4.12 **Reviews of Education, Health and Care (EHCs) Plans**

Education, Health and Care Plans must be reviewed annually. The SEND team will organise these reviews and invite or seek contributions from the following people:

- 4.12.1 The student's parent/carers;
- 4.12.2 The student (if appropriate);
- 4.12.3 The relevant teachers or support staff;
- 4.12.4 Representatives of the SEND Specialist Teaching Team (if necessary);
- 4.12.5 An Educational Psychologist (if necessary);
- 4.12.6 Any other person the SEND team considers appropriate, including colleagues from relevant further education establishments for those students at phase transfer (Year 10 and 11)

The aim of the review will be to:

- 4.12.7 Assess the student's progress in relation to the outcomes on the EHC Plan;
- 4.12.8 Review the provision made to meet the student's need as identified in the EHC Plan;
- 4.12.9 Consider the appropriateness of the existing EHC Plan in relation to the student's performance during the year, and whether to cease, continue or amend it;
- 4.12.10 Set new outcomes for the coming year, if appropriate;
- 4.12.11 Amend Academic Profiles with additional information and relevant strategies.
- 4.12.12 Establish the beginning of transition plans for those moving across phase (Year 11 to Year 12)

4.13 Within the time limits set out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015, the SEND team will complete the annual review forms and send them, with any supporting documentation, to the Local Authority. As an Academy we recognise the responsibility of the Local Authority in deciding whether to maintain, amend or cease an EHC Plan.

4.14 At Watling Academy, we have a robust system for assessing, planning, delivering, reviewing and recording provision and ensuring that it is personalised to the individual student. Progress is tracked from entry to Watling Academy through progress report and staff feedback. Interventions are noted for each academic year on our Provision Map and an assessment of progress is made. Further interventions are established according to need. Progress towards EHC Plan outcomes is regularly reviewed by a young person's key worker and progress communicated to parents regularly.

Section 5: Criteria for Exiting the SEND Register

5.1 The SEND Register, which is held within Watling Academy, is constantly updated to respond to the needs of the students. If a student has made good progress and they no longer have needs that are significantly different to the majority of students the same age as them, then they may be moved off the SEND Register. A decision to remove the student from the Register will be made in consultation with the parents, the student and the SEND team. A letter confirming the student's exit from the register will be sent to the student's parents and we will continue to monitor and track the student's progress closely. As an Academy we expect movement in the Register and consider it an indicator of the success of support and interventions which have been put in place.

Section 6: Working with Parents

6.1. We involve parents in any Academy-based response for their child and we aim to ensure that they understand the purpose of any intervention and subsequent programme of action.

At Watling Academy we formally report student progress to parents every term through our progress report system. In addition parents are welcome to talk to the SEND team, at a mutually convenient time, whenever they have a concern about their child. Any specific concerns raised by parents will be investigated and the results reported back and discussed with parents.

6.2 Involvement with Educational Support Services

Where necessary, Watling Academy will refer a child to an external specialist after consultation with parents. The Academy recognises that referrals may not result in direct involvement from external services with the child, school and/or family.

6.3 Links with Medical, Social and Voluntary Organisations

As an Academy we will liaise as necessary with health professionals, including speech & language therapists, CAMHS, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. We may also contact specialist medical services, social services or voluntary organisations and may carry out specialist programmes recommended by them as appropriate. We will provide them with all relevant information.

6.4 Transition

6.4.1 When a young person has been offered a place at Watling Academy, we will meet with the relevant professionals at their current school to discuss the needs of those joining us. This includes those with an EHC Plan and those identified as SEND Support. Communication between Watling Academy and the student's previous school ensures that best practice is shared and that we are fully informed about the student's needs. These meetings will be arranged for any students needing extra support during the transition process. Both parents and students are invited to contribute to these meetings.

6.4.2 We offer extra transition days in addition to the main Academy induction day for students who are deemed to be vulnerable on transfer. Selection for this is based on the advice and information provided by the primary school. This provides further opportunities for familiarisation with the Academy layout and routines as well as allowing students to meet members of staff. If further transition opportunities are needed, an individual transition plan will be designed for students to meet their needs in conjunction with parents and the student's current school.

6.4.3 Initial advice and information regarding a student's SEND is circulated to all staff before they start at the school. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this before the student starts at Watling Academy.

6.4.4 Students with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities that are moving between key stages will have transition arrangements in place supported by the SEND department.

6.4.5 For students with identified SEND who leave Watling Academy for post-16 study, the SEND

department will liaise closely with Further Education providers to ensure a supported and robust transition plan. This may include supporting within initial visits during open days, helping with the completion of applications, attending transition visits alongside parents, and visiting the student during their initial weeks at their new placement. We recognise that transitions can be very challenging for both students and parents/carers, and aim to start this process as early as possible.

- 6.4.6 For those students with an EHC Plan, transition for post-16 study will be discussed as part of the 'Preparing for Adulthood' process of the Annual Review from Year 10 to ensure early identification of the support required for individuals as they begin Year 11.
- 6.4.7 Watling Academy is committed to working closely with Further Education providers in Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas as appropriate to ensure a smooth transition for all students with SEND.

Section 7: Supporting pupils with medical conditions

- 7.1 Most students at some time have a medical condition, which could affect their participation in Academy activities. This may be a short-term situation or a long-term medical condition which, if not properly managed, could limit their access to education. The Local School Board and staff at Watling Academy wish to ensure that students with medical needs receive care and support. We firmly believe that students should not be denied access to a broad and balanced curriculum simply because they are on medication or need medical support, nor should they be denied access to the curriculum or other additional activities.
- 7.2 Students who require additional supportive arrangements for examinations and internal assessments will be identified and, where appropriate, assessed by the relevant members of staff. A range of supportive arrangements can be put in place for those who qualify, in line with JCQ guidelines. JCQ is the Joint Council for Qualifications. Supporting documentation will be kept securely on file within the Student Support Centre and Examinations office. For students in Year 7-9 informal Access Arrangements, which have not been formally awarded by JCQ, will be in place to support the student. This also provides supplementary evidence for later formal applications and indicate a student's normal way of working at school.
- 7.3 Information regarding how students with medical conditions are specifically supported is contained in the Academy's Medical Needs Statement.

Section 8: Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

- 8.1 This Policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:
 - 8.1.1 Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools DfE February 2013
 - 8.1.2 SEND Code of Practice (2014)
 - 8.1.3 Schools SEND Information Report (2014)
 - 8.1.4 Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at School with Medical Conditions (April 2014)
 - 8.1.5 The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document (2013)
 - 8.1.6 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2014-2015)
 - 8.1.7 Accessibility Policy and Plan (2020)

- 8.1.8 Teachers Standards (2012)
- 8.1.9 Equity Policy (2014-2015)

8.2 This Policy was created by the Academy SENDCo and approved by the Watling Academy Local School Board. It is shared with parents and families via the Academy website.

Section 9: Policy on SEND training for staff

- 9.1 Whole staff training in SEND will be identified and met through INSET provision.
- 9.2 SEND training sessions will be organised to meet the current needs of staff and will be led by the SEND team, another member of staff, or by an appropriate outside agency.
- 9.3 Teaching Assistants will complete a bespoke programme of weekly training, covering areas of need and strategies for in-class support, as well as relevant training on Access Arrangements and other areas aligned with the School's improvement plan.

Section 10: Roles and Responsibilities

- 10.1 The key individuals within Watling Academy who share a responsibility for those students identified as having SEND are:
 - 10.1.1 The Head of School
 - 10.1.2 The member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for SEND and disability;
 - 10.1.3 The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)
 - 10.1.4 Heads of Department and Assistant Heads of Department
 - 10.1.5 Subject Teachers
 - 10.1.6 Student Support Staff
 - 10.1.7 A member of the Local School Board responsible for SEND
- 10.2 The SEND team, in collaboration with the Head of School and Local School Board, is responsible for:
 - 10.2.1 Overseeing strategic development, the SEND Policy and provision to raise the achievement of SEND students.
 - 10.2.2 Co-ordinating provision for students with SEND.
 - 10.2.3 Developing effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching through analysis and assessment of students' needs. This is achieved by monitoring the quality of teaching and student achievements and by setting targets for improvement.
 - 10.2.4 Collaboration with Heads of Department and pastoral colleagues to ensure that learning for all students is given equal priority and that available resources are used to maximum effect.
 - 10.2.5 Managing Teaching Assistants.
 - 10.2.6 Overseeing the records of all students with SEND.
 - 10.2.7 Liaising with parents/carers of students with SEND.
 - 10.2.8 Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
 - 10.2.9 Liaising with external agencies including the Local Authority's Support and Educational Psychology services, Health and Social services and voluntary bodies.

10.3 The Head of School and the Local School Board have delegated the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this Policy to the SEND team.

Section 11: Storing and Managing Information

11.1 All SEND files are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Student Support area or on secure electronic databases. They are accessible to any member of the teaching staff and appropriate support staff on request. All staff also have electronic access to appropriate documents on the Academy's secure online area.

Section 12: Reviewing the Policy

12.1 It is important our SEND Policy reflects current practices within the Academy. The Policy will therefore be reviewed regularly by the SEND team and updated with amendments considering national, local and Academy changes. Any adaptations will be presented to the Local School Board.

Section 13: Accessibility

13.1 All students, including those with SEND, will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which will include the National Curriculum. The Local School Board of Watling Academy is responsible for ensuring that teaching arrangements and strategies are fully inclusive. The culture, practice, management and deployment of resources are designed to ensure all student's needs are met.

13.2 Students on the SEND Register mainly receive support within mainstream classes across the curriculum using a variety of strategies. Additional individual or small group support is used to help some students to improve their reading, spelling, numeracy or study skills.

13.3 The notional budget will be used to access resources, develop the Academy environment and support staff in order to allow all students to access the curriculum and fulfil their development potential.

13.4 The building and the premises has wheelchair access, including lift access and toilet facilities for disabled students. The Academy has four 'Evac chair' for emergency evacuation of the staircases. Arrangements for emergency evacuations are considered for individual students.

Section 14: Dealing with complaints

14.1 Parents are encouraged to discuss any problems with their child's subject teacher or Tutor initially. Most problems can be resolved in this way. If this is not the case parents may raise their concern with the Head of Year or SEND team as appropriate.

14.2 However, if this fails and a parent wishes to make a formal complaint, the Local School Board has published guidelines for parents detailing the necessary stages in the Complaints Procedure.

Section 15: Bullying and behaviour

- 15.1 Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All incidents of bullying will be dealt with swiftly. Watling Academy has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- 15.2 Further information regarding how incidents of bullying are dealt with within the Academy can be seen in the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 15.3 At Watling Academy, safeguarding and child protection is paramount and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our students. We believe that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.
- 15.4 If any behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, procedures and processes will be followed at all times in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- 15.5 All students at Watling Academy, including those on the SEND register, are subject to the same high expectations in terms of their behaviour and any behaviour will be considered in accordance with the Academy behaviour policy.

Appendix 1

Details of key people who share a responsibility for those students identified as having SEND at Watling Academy:

Watling Academy SENDCo: Mrs Natalie Bennett. Mrs Bennett has Qualified Teacher Status and holds the National Award in SEND Co-Ordination (NASENCO). She is the member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for SEND.

She can be contacted by email at send@watling.academy

Deputy SENDCo: Miss Addobea Okutu. Miss Okutu has Qualified Teacher Status and is working towards the NPQSEND.

The member of the Local School Board with assurance responsibility for SEND is Mrs Helen Pidgeon.