

## **Special Educational Needs Information Report – Response to Regulations published with the Children and Families Bill 2014**

### **1. Information about the kinds of special needs for which provision is made at the academy**

The Kings of Wessex Academy is an inclusive school and our mission statement is ‘Getting the best out of everyone’. We have supported the education of students with needs in each of the four designated areas of special educational needs (SEN).

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

These have included students with specific language and communication needs, Asperger’s Syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia, students with dyscalculia, ADHD, attachment disorder, anxiety, sensory integration disorder, Down Syndrome and cerebral palsy.

Whilst we provide day to day support and follow the advice of external agencies, we are a mainstream school and therefore support for more complex needs and therapeutic work may be provided by outside agencies. The academy has an admissions policy that outlines our admission procedure for students with disabilities. The academy is inclusive and would only restrict admitting a disabled student if we could not meet their needs through ‘reasonable adjustments’ or their admission would impact negatively on the effective education of other students as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010. Planning for reasonable adjustments would take place as early as year 7 for students with significant needs and the academy publishes its Accessibility plan outlining its short, medium and long term goals for improving our practice in this key area.

### **2. Information about the academy’s policies for the identification and assessment of students with SEN**

Most students, who have special educational needs, are identified by first and middle schools, but the academy is alert to the fact that student needs can develop as they face changes in their lives and the increasing challenges of secondary education. The academy monitors students’ progress closely using the academy’s normal assessment procedure of data entry and grade reviews. Students who raise concern are discussed by subject teachers and subject leaders at regular tracking meetings as well as at ALG, Subject leader, year leader and SENCo tracking meetings. Pastoral concerns and updates (e.g. medical issues and mental health) are also shared at meetings between year leaders and the Deputy Head. At this stage the SENCo may be consulted and can carry out an assessment of skills such as reading, spelling, speed of processing and receptive vocabulary. There are also ways of assessing students’ emotional wellbeing if teachers notice changes in behaviour or mood. If a student undergoes assessments, because concerns are raised by teachers, parents will be informed.

Teachers communicate frequently and are encouraged to place concerns in context. They are also encouraged to intervene early with wave one classroom intervention. If the SENCo conducts assessments a spreadsheet is produced designed to be accessible and useful to staff, parents and students. If the SENCo

requires external expertise to make an assessment of student needs e.g. hearing issues, visual issues and all issues relating to mental health, students will often be referred to external agencies for support or they may ask parents to contact their GP. Again, in this instance consent will be sought from parents.

**3. Information about the academy's policies for making provision for pupils with SEN including: evaluation of provision, reviewing progress of students, approach to teaching, adaptation of curriculum, support for learning, additional activities available and support for emotional wellbeing.**

The academy strives to meet the needs of students and uses its best endeavours to do so. It provides a range of provision for students with identified ('highlighted') needs and aims to provide a graduated response. Many students' needs will be met by interventions run by subject staff, in group work or through interventions that are available to a wide range of students. Some students' needs will be met with 'special educational provision' and these students will be placed on the school's special educational needs register.

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision on an intervention specific basis. However, in general we will use the academy's main data gathering systems to ensure students are progressing in areas that are linked to the interventions e.g. English grades may well improve following literacy intervention. Students involved in an intervention will normally have an initial assessment to provide a baseline for comparison with reviews of progress internally each half term. Provision will also be monitored using student and parent feedback through termly ILP communications for those on the SEN register.

The pastoral team monitor the social, emotional and mental health provision for students with tools such as checklists, questionnaires and feedback. The academy recognises that nationally there is a higher incidence of bullying towards students with SEN than others. We are very proud that the occurrence of bullying towards SEN students is extremely rare at the academy, even within the low levels of problems in this area overall. Our students do not tolerate unpleasantness towards vulnerable students and we offer social skills interventions to try to help all students develop their ability to make friends. To help prevent issues, the SENCo and LSAs make sure that they present themselves as approachable and friendly. Students feel comfortable to tell us when they are beginning to feel unhappy and we are able to quickly resolve things. We also have a range of whole school strategies to tackle bullying which are available in the relevant policy.

The academy's evaluation of provision for sensory and physical needs forms part of the planning for the accessibility plan updated each year. External agencies e.g. speech and language, occupational therapy, will often monitor the care plans they set out using their own assessments.

Observations and learning walks are undertaken routinely by senior staff to ensure quality teaching and learning is in place for students with special educational needs. Their findings are shared with staff and inform training and department priorities. Our overall approach to teaching students with special educational needs takes into account the Code of Practice's description of the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle and we look to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and

expertise to meet students' needs in the classroom. Withdrawal and intervention should only take place when they can be linked to the goals of improved emotional wellbeing and student progress. For instance, current research suggests that one to one LSA support in the classroom can be counter-productive leading to increased dependency and that too much intervention can mean that students miss out on effective classroom instruction. Therefore when interventions are put in place they are evaluated and should be evidence-based. The academy is focused on raising achievement and helping students to fulfil their aspirations in preparation for adult life.

In a small number of cases the curriculum is adapted for students –this can be in terms of alternative qualifications such as Entry Levels, reduction in timetabled lessons or Freestanding Maths Qualifications. Some students need physical adaptations to be made to the classroom or resources and we have staff trained in adapting materials for the visually impaired, support and facilities for students with physical disabilities and students whose needs require specific teaching strategies. Planning to meet students' needs and personalising the curriculum is something teachers try to do for all students.

Some students have the support of a learning support assistant in the classroom to support learning whilst others have the support of the learning support assistant to prepare resources. Many students have access to computers to support their learning –there are lots of computer rooms, portable laptops and I pads to help students to learn with the benefits of technology. All computers in the school have the programme Claroread –this 'text to speech' programme allows students to have independence when reading challenging texts and also has functions to change screen colour and look up the meaning of words quickly. Teachers are trained in a range of strategies to support common areas of learning needs and there is a personalised SEN profile for each student on the special educational needs register.

### **List of typical interventions for each area of need:**

#### *Cognition and Learning Interventions could include –*

Reading programmes – reading with adult or sixth form volunteers, reading box scheme

Toe by Toe, MSL, Lexia, Alpha to Omega, Stride Ahead etc.

Spelling programmes – Success maker

Lexia, 1200 words, Nussy, subject specific vocab lists

Numeracy- Numicon, entry level booklets, Diagnostic interviews in Number Sense

A range of ipad and computer software including Successmaker Maths

Memory and Study Skills – Memory Journey, Mind mapping, listening skills, Nussy Fingers, BBC Skillswise

#### *Communication and Interaction interventions could include-*

Structured Schemes of Work on Narrative and Vocabulary – Victoria Joffe

Rhodes to Language, Black sheep, BT and Talkabout materials

November 2016

Care Plans as suggested by Speech and Language therapists

Vocabulary, debating and word finding activities

*Social, emotional and mental health interventions* might include –

NFER Nelson emotional literacy

Cool Kids Program

Drawing on Your Emotions, Mentoring Activities, Exploring Feelings

*Sensory and Physical interventions* could include –

Occupational therapy care plans

ALERT type activities

*Other types of support/intervention:*

Speed up Handwriting and Hairy letters

Physio

Craft activities and games for specific coordination goals

Computer programmes and adaptations to support physical needs

Visual tracking apps and worksheets

Horticulture

Homework club/safe space

PSHE days

Key workers

#### **4. Name and contact details of the SEN Coordinator (SENCo)**

The academy employs **Zoe Boulton** as the special educational needs coordinator. At our academy this post is called the Learning Support Leader. She can be contacted via the main office by phone or email. She has undergone a wide range of SEN training in areas such as dyscalculia and dyslexia, The Management of Actual or Potential Aggression, working memory, supporting students with ASD and social communication difficulties, supporting students with visual impairments and those with attachment disorder. She has qualifications at masters level in areas such as educational and exams access arrangement testing and the role of the SENCo. She is completing the National SENCo award.

## **5. Information about the expertise and training of staff and how expert support is secured**

Staff are trained each summer on the particular needs of complex students joining the academy in September. There is also a mixture of compulsory and opt-in training sessions for special educational needs. For example last year this included whole staff training on type one diabetes, revision strategies for students with SEN, literacy development and differentiation. The SENCo carries out regular audits of SEN training needs at meeting with SEN representatives from each department and training opportunities are put in place to match teaching staff and Learning support assistant training needs. Learning support assistants have internal and external training sessions and last year we focused on visual awareness training, moving and handling when working with disabled students and essential classroom support skills as many learning support assistants were new to post in September. The academy accesses a range of expert support when needed from County's Support Services and more information can be found on the Somerset Choices website. Consultation meetings, held in the autumn term, are a good opportunity for the SENCo to get specialist advice from the educational psychologist and Learning Support Service regarding students and their potential need for external agency involvement.

The SENCo has expertise in dyslexia, speech and language needs, ASD and many aspects of sensory needs. She has also been part of the Cheddar Valley Federation SENCo group receiving training in Numeracy support, ASC and the new Code of Practice. The SENCo works with the SENCos in the Cheddar Valley group and those in the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) The Wessex Learning Trust to share training and resources.

## **6. Information about how equipment and facilities to support students with SEN are secured**

The academy is a well equipped to support students with physical disabilities as the main block has a lift and we have a fully equipped therapy room with a hoist. Typically, additional specialist equipment is secured in conjunction with external agencies such as PIMS and SENATAS. We also often provide laptops and Ipads for students with a significant need for this equipment. The new school changing rooms also offer good facilities for students requiring adapted toileting and showering facilities.

## **7. The arrangements for consulting parents and involving them in the education of their child**

Parents will be informed if their child is placed on or taken off the special educational needs register. Communication from parents with the tutor, teacher or SENCo is encouraged according to the nature of the inquiry and some students with special educational needs have daily contact folders. Most communication is via e-mail. In addition, the SENCo attends parents evenings and appointments to see her can be made with the academy office. Parents of students on the special educational needs register will have termly contact with the SENCO or her representative and this will involve individual learning plans being devised and reviewed. Parents of students in receipt of personalised funding ('High Needs funding') from county or those with EHCP s will be invited to attend an annual review – a pro forma for parents and carers is sent out in advance to collect parents' views but there is also ample opportunity for views to be gathered at these meetings. Parents can access further information regarding SEN policies and procedures on the school website under the 'Learning' tab and then in 'SEN Information'. Information regarding County Services can be found at <https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk/>

### **8. The arrangements for consulting young people and involving them in their education**

The opinions of young people with special educational needs are important and all staff aim to be approachable and supportive for any feedback to be shared by students on a day by day basis. The target setting process is key to ensure students understand the aims of any intervention and at the end of interventions there is a chance for the young people to feedback what they have learnt. Also the students will be encouraged to share their views in individual learning plan meetings and annual reviews.

### **9. The arrangements made by the governing body relating to complaints from parents regarding provision**

In the first instance, parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the teachers or staff directly involved with the issue. The SENCo is also happy to try to help to resolve issues if this is not appropriate. The SENCo has oversight of the academy's SEN provision. If the concern remains, then contacting the Headteacher via the school office may be appropriate. Finally the governors can be contacted through Mr Keith Perry, Bursar, who acts as the contact point. All members of staff can be contacted via the academy office on the usual academy contact details.

### **10. How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services, local authority support services and voluntary organisations in meeting the need of students and supporting families**

Education, Health and Care plans (which replace statements over the next four years) aim to increase the cooperation between schools, social care and health services. The academy will have a designated officer within health and social care to help them liaise for joint working. We will continue to work closely with the external agencies that currently support the academy -details can be found on the academy offer documentation. We can also direct parents to the SENDIAS service and there is a link below to the local authority Support Services for Education website's and local offer. This website is designed to be a hub to allow young people and families access to services and an explanation of the support available in the county. Independent Supporters have been appointed by the government to advise specifically on issues relating to the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans and again the link will be on the Somerset Choices information website. The SENCo updates and consults the designated SEN governor on a regular basis.

### **11. The contact details of support services for parents**

SENDIAS have a website <http://www.somersetsend.org.uk> and their phone line is 01823 355 578.

Many areas of SEN have associated charities and some services like Integrated Therapy (OT and Speech and Language) have helplines. Please contact the SENCo if you have specific queries as she will be happy to help. GPs are also often a good source of advice and provide links to other services.

## **12. The academy's arrangements for transferring between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood and independent living.**

Transition arrangements are a strength of the academy as we are closely connected with our feeder schools. When students are due to transfer to The Kings of Wessex Academy and they have an Education Health and Care plan or high needs funding, then the SENCo is invited to the year 8 annual review to gain an understanding of needs and potential provision required. Additional visits, meetings with parents and transfer days help students to feel more confident. Liaison between staff and transfer of paperwork and individual learning plan documents ensure that staff are aware of student needs. Whole staff training follows where required and specific teachers are asked to attend meetings for particular students. Students who join us mid-year are interviewed by senior staff and key information is shared by their previous schools and the SENCo will often carry out a testing 'MOT'. We have a three year GCSE and so there are no main transitions in school until leaving year 11.

Transfer to sixth form is dependent on meeting the Academy's entry requirement because we offer a range of A Level courses which are demanding. Students' needs are passed to their new teachers following the same process as those students in younger years. For students transferring to college, we meet or contact key representatives from the colleges with parental and student permission – this is normally signalled on the application forms for the institutions. Access arrangement information and relevant documents are passed on when students are actually on the college roll.

In terms of preparing for adulthood, we are proud to employ Dr Hall as our academy careers advisor. Dr Hall makes students with SEN a priority and meets with these students as required. This is a common part of the process before annual review meetings. Senior staff also hold 'futures meetings' with students in year 11 to help them prepare for their next steps. They are sensitive and experienced in personalising these meetings to meet student needs. Our academy also has an active PSHE curriculum as part of Citizenship lessons and topics relating to adult life are covered such as applying for jobs, sex education and staying safe with regard to risks such as drugs. The lessons are adapted by staff to meet students' needs and the SENCo offers advice and resources for students with complex needs. Some students may also complete an Entry Level Life and Living Qualification.

Work experience is also a key part of our preparation for adult life, coordinated by Dr Hall. She works closely with the year heads, parents, students and SENCO to find suitable placements. Sometimes extra visits are carried out in advance of work experience week to prepare students. During the week LSAs or the SENCo may visit students more frequently that need this and will liaise with employers to make sure the week is a success.

For students that have an Education, Health and Care plan, additional support around transition is provided by Connect South West. This is a statutory service provided by Somerset and our current advisor is Gavin Salter. He can advise on both mainstream and specialist provision post-16.

## **13. Information on where the local authority's local offer is published**

The links below will take you to Somerset's and North Somerset's local offer websites. They set out the provision in Somerset and North Somerset and will give information about services and support available.

Somerset:

<https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk/>

North Somerset:

<http://nsod.n-somerset.gov.uk/kb5/northsomerset/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

November 2016