



## BOA SEND Policy 2025-26

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Trustees approval	To be ratified by BOA Governing Board at the AGM meeting – October 2025
Release date	September 2025
Review date	September 2026
Description of changes	N/A

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### 1. Aims

At BOA we support and value the abilities of all our students. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every person in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every child as an individual. We are committed to inclusion within the academy curriculum and participation in all aspects of academy life.

BOA adopts a 'whole academy approach' to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. All staff work to ensure inclusion of all students. The academy is committed to ensuring that students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes.

Our SEND policy and information report aims to:

- set out how our academy will support and make provision for students with SEND
- explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for students with SEND.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy and information report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out an academy's responsibilities for students with SEN and disabilities
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which sets out an academy's' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND coordinators (SENDCOs) and the SEND information report.

### 3. Definitions

A student has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream academies.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream academies.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 The SENDCO**

The SENDCO is Phillippa Nesbitt.

Tel: 0121 359 9300

Email: [phillippa.nesbitt@boa-academy.co.uk](mailto:phillippa.nesbitt@boa-academy.co.uk)

The SEND or Curriculum Support Office is located on Level 1 Bar Block.

SEND team:

- Isabella Caulkett: HLTA, attached to CMP and GDNM pathway
- Alex Higgins: attached to Acting pathway and in charge of Duke of Edinburgh
- Joanne McWillie: attached to MT pathway
- Georgina Rae: attached to VAD pathway, 1:1 KS5 academic support
- Viktorija Stepanova: attached to Music pathway
- Jade Yates: attached to Dance pathway, Exam Access Arrangements (EAA)

It is the responsibility of the SENDCO to:

- work with the Principal and Board of Governors to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy
- have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those who have Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)
- provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively
- be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure students and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- work with the Principal and Board of Governors to ensure that the Academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensure the academy keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date.

## 4.2 The SEND Link (on the Board of Governors)

The SEND Link on the Board of Governors will:

- help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the academy and update the governing board on this
- work with the Principal and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy.

## 4.3 The Principal

The Principal will:

- work with the SENDCO and SEND Links on the Board of Governors to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy
- have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.

## 4.4 Teachers/Tutors

Each teacher/tutor is responsible for:

- the progress and development of every student in their class
- working closely with any teaching assistants (TAs) or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- working with the SENDCO to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

## 5. SEND information report

### 5.1 The kinds of SEND that are provided for

Our academy currently provides additional and/or different provision for the four areas of need:

- Cognition & Learning: this covers a range of specific learning difficulties (SpLD) which may impact primarily on your child's academic ability and performance. These may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, maths anxiety and processing/memory skills
- Communication & Interaction: speech, language and communication needs fall under this heading and range from developmental language delay to difficulties with social interaction and communication which are part of Autistic Spectrum Condition
- SEMH: social, emotional and mental health issues, which affect your child's emotional and mental well-being and include anxiety (PDA/OCD), neurodiversity (ADHD/ODD), trauma, attachment disorder and emotionally based school avoidance
- Sensory & Physical: physical disabilities, including visual and hearing impairment, as well as sensory processing disorder.

## **5.2 Identifying students with SEND and assessing their needs**

We will assess each student's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Teachers/Tutors will make regular assessments of progress for all students and identify those whose progress:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap.

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example:

- social interaction and communication
- initiating and maintaining friendships
- emotional regulation
- developing resilience and emotional maturity.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a student is recorded as having SEND.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the student and their parents/carers. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

Children do not necessarily have SEND who:

- have English as an additional language
- are a looked after child
- qualify for Pupil Premium funding
- have difficulties with attendance.

### Application Process

Identification of need starts when students make their initial application to BOA and are invited to the aptitude workshop. As part of their application form, parents/carers complete an aptitude support survey which asks if the student has any additional needs and requires any reasonable adjustments on the day of the workshop. When the applications have been received, a member of the SEND team contacts each family who have requested reasonable adjustments to discuss the provision we are able to make and how we can support the individual as effectively as possible. In the case of students holding an EHCP, the SENDCO calls each family to clarify needs and offers an introductory SEND tour to students who may not have visited previously.

Once offers have been made, families of students with an EHCP are invited in for a meeting with the SENDCO and Principal to explore how provision will be met in the academy and ensure that BOA will be an appropriate placement in which the individual can achieve desired outcomes.

In the case of those invited to the second round of workshops, the SEND team revisits the aptitude support survey and reconfirms the reasonable adjustments. At this stage, we can personalise support based on the applicant's initial experience.

Examples of reasonable adjustments include:

- personalised meet and greet
- supervised rest/movement breaks
- access to TA support, with TAs specialised by pathway
- resources printed to specifications
- reader
- extra time for tasks
- check-ins.

Knowledge gained through the application process, together with collating information from students, parents and carers, allows us to build up a picture of students' needs before they arrive. The SEND team then contacts previous settings to transfer students' SEND records and evidence of exam access arrangements, once they have accepted their place.

At the Year 10 and Year 12 Information Evenings, families can meet the SENDCO and SEND team; we share our knowledge of the needs to date and families can address any concerns that they have.

Our next step is to create a Learning Profile for our new students in Years 10 and 12, which are shared with staff before students arrive in September. Once students have begun their studies at BOA, the profile can be reviewed so that it accurately reflects personalised needs and effective strategies.

### **5.3 Identifying a previously unknown need – the graduated response**

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that we need to take a graduated approach to identify support for additional needs.

#### Identifying a previously unknown need

If you, as a parent/carer, have observed patterns/behaviours over time that you think may arise from an additional need, you can raise your concerns with your child's form tutor and/or the SENDCO. It is always useful if you can provide us with your experiences at home, looking back from birth (early/late/complex), through developmental milestones and previous school history, to your current observations.

Alternatively, if a member of the teaching staff has noticed performance/attainment/behaviour that may be a cause for concern, after they have made adaptations to their Quality First Teaching to meet the presenting needs, they may make a referral to the SENDCO, outlining those concerns and describing the provisions they have already put in place. The SEND Code of Practice (2014) tells us that it is, initially, the responsibility of the class teacher to meet the needs of the students in their care.

If Quality First Teaching continues to be unsuccessful in addressing the students' needs, then we expect that they will require provision which is different from mainstream provision. Firstly, we will need to assess the nature of the need.

### **5.4 Assessing and reviewing students' progress towards outcomes**

## Assess-Plan-Do-Review Cycle

### Assess

The SENDCO will ask the student's teachers for their feedback on what they have observed during lessons. The tutor and teachers will work with the SENDCO to carry out a clear analysis of their needs. This will draw on:

- the teacher's assessment and experience of the student
- the student's previous progress and attainment and behaviour
- comparison of performance across the curriculum
- the student's development in comparison to their peers and national data.

A member of the SEND team will have a 1:1 interview with the student to find out more about the challenges they may face in the classroom. From all this information gathering, we can see whether there is evidence of an additional need.

Furthermore, we will contact parents/carers to inform them of our concerns and actions and to gain understanding of the "whole student".

### Plan

If an additional need is clearly identified, we will produce an individual Learning Profile, agreed with the student and shared with all their teachers and families. We send the profiles home, following the timetable below, but we appreciate and action communication from home at any point. If parents feel that the Learning Profile needs to be amended, they are encouraged to contact the SEND team to arrange this.

### Review Schedule

Term	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
1	LP review	EAA emailed	LP review	EAA emailed
2				
3	EAs emailed	LP review	EAs emailed	LP review
4		EAA finalised	LP review	EAA finalised
5				
6	LP review			

LP – learning profile

EAA – exam access arrangements

At this stage, we will also explore access arrangements (EAA) to support exam success. All these arrangements should reflect the student's *normal way of working*, so they will be put in place during lessons and for assessments.

Please note that if the individual requires extra time/a reader/a scribe or more complex arrangements, we can only implement these with written evidence of a medical diagnosis or an assessment from a Specialist Level 7 Practitioner.

The student will be added to the SEND monitoring register. The Learning Profile will be shared with teachers, who will plan their lessons accordingly to provide for the individual's needs.

### Do

All teachers and support staff who work with the student will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

The class or subject teacher will take the lead on implementing the plan; the Curriculum Support area shares guidance on evidence-based strategies, which teachers can use alongside the Learning Profile, as well as anonymised case studies of students with whom we have worked successfully. This is known as Wave 1 support.

### Review

We will review the effectiveness of the adapted teaching and its impact on the student's progress after a cycle of 6 weeks. At this point, we can evaluate what is working well for the student and what adjustments we need to make to improve the provision. Teachers will analyse any data they have collected during that period and draw on their observations of the student's performance during lessons.

If, after two cycles, there are still concerns about the student and/or the gap has widened between themselves and their peers, then we would consider the next wave of support.

### Wave 2 – targeted support

During this wave, teachers can make use of a Teaching Assistant (TA) to offer targeted support in a small group. This might take place by strategic grouping within the classroom, with the teacher and TA working collaboratively, focused intervention during the lesson or small group withdrawal sessions to consolidate skills, knowledge and understanding.

Teachers will draw on evidence-based guidance on how to deploy TAs effectively, which can be found by following this link: [Deployment of Teaching Assistants | EEF](#).

Following a review of the impact of this targeted support, if progress has not been made towards achieving age-related expectations, we would move on to Wave 3 and a possible referral to external agencies.

### Wave 3 – 1:1 support

This involves individualized support and, at this level, we would make a referral to an external agency with specialism in the specific area of need. As an academy, we receive an allocated number of hours from PSS (Pupil Support Services) and CAT (Communication and Autism Team) but we can also buy in traded services, which form part of the local offer: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/>.

#### Cognition & Learning

- Pupil Support Services

#### Communication & Interaction

- Communication and Autism Team
- Speech & Language Therapy

#### SEMH

- Referral to CAMHS
- Referral to Forward Thinking Birmingham
- Referral to counselling services e.g. bereavement

- Educational Psychologist (if available)

### Sensory & Physical

- Visual Impairment Service
- Hearing Impairment Service
- Occupational Therapy

A specialist teacher from the relevant agency will make an initial visit to the student in school and assess whether further intervention is required. In this case, the specialist teacher will produce a set of recommendations to support the student in school and at home. This model of support will be reviewed after six weeks and again at the end of a second six-week cycle. CAT, for example, runs courses/drop-ins for parents/carers and the Birmingham SEND local offer website signposts community organisations to support families.

Please note that practitioners from these agencies cannot give a diagnosis for a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD), although they can offer advice for the next steps.

If you require an assessment or diagnosis for any condition arising from neurodiversity, this must come via a health route. We can provide school-based evidence as part of a referral, but your point of contact is your family GP.

Once a diagnosis has been given, the student will change status on the SEND register to K code, which indicates a SpLD.

### Higher-needs funding

At this point, if we are unable to meet your child's needs and they are failing to thrive in school after following the graduated response, we can apply for top-up funding from the local authority for a SEND Support Provision Plan. Essentially, this would provide funding for some focused individual support from an adult.

In exceptional circumstance, school or parents/carers can apply to the local authority for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment, with the aim of securing higher-needs funding through an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

### Exam Access Arrangements (EAA)

(25% extra time/reader/scribe)

If a student has had EAA in place at their previous school, then we need to have the evidence (including an assessor's certificate) to implement these at BOA. We will endeavour to request this information from feeder schools, but it is not always possible (for example due to data restrictions) to have all these ready to implement at the start of the BOA learning journey. Parents/Carers can also request this documentation and send it in to us.

Different routes:

- Form 9: if a student has a diagnosis of an SpLD or a medical condition, then EAA can be applied for, using a Form 9. The EAA should reflect the student's normal way of working. We must have evidence of the diagnosis in order to proceed.
- Form 8: if a student has been assessed by a specialist teacher, holding the specific Level 7 qualification, the SENDCO can complete a Form 8, explaining why the EAA have been requested and describing the individual's normal way of working; the academy will engage a specialist assessor to carry out the testing for a Form 8, following feedback from teachers and parents/carers and the gathering of teacher evidence.

- Centre-delegated arrangements: these are arrangements that can be put in place by the academy without having to make an online application, providing that we have enough evidence; these include examples such as supervised rest breaks; fidget toy; prompt and ear defenders/ear loops/ear plugs.

In terms of logistics, EAA need to be confirmed at least six weeks before external examinations take place and in line with the review schedule included above.

### **5.5 Supporting students moving between phases**

As explained in 5.2, we start the transition process from the date an application is processed by the SEND team and we contact parent/carers of all students who declare that they have additional needs. Through a range of information-gathering activities involving home, previous school(s) and the student themselves, we can construct a Learning Profile to share with all staff before a student's arrival in September.

In addition to this, we offer an extra transition day for students with SEND during which they meet the SENDCO and the SEND team as well as their tutors and pathway teachers. We believe that this helps to reduce anxiety which may build up during the summer break. If families request an extra tour of the school, we are happy to arrange this.

Similarly, we prepare our SEND students for moving to their next setting from BOA. As well as having careers guidance with a trained adviser, we also assist students in researching their choices and advocating for their needs through liaison with student services and collaboration with parents/carers. In addition, we ensure that we transfer all paperwork relating to EAA, as requested, to the settings and/or to students themselves, as this information may be required for future courses/qualifications.

### **5.6 Our approach to monitoring the progress of students with SEND**

Throughout a student's time in our setting, we continue to ensure that close monitoring of their progress takes place through:

- half-termly tracking
- discussion during progress meetings of individual student performance
- involvement of the SENDCO in key meetings when provision mapping takes place.

Student progress is monitored through the scrutiny of Grade Card data and conclusions are shared with Directors/Curriculum Leads and their teams.

All students feel valued, have individual targets, and are clear about what they need to do next to make the progress expected of them.

During the tracking of student progress, we check that students:

- are making the level of progress expected
- are being set challenging targets
- are further supported where progress is limited
- have any barriers to learning identified and addressed.

To do this, the SENDCO:

- keeps accurate records of the levels students are attaining
- is involved in discussions with teachers

- maps the provision and support available for students within targeted support and SEND support categories
- tracks the progress of individual students and student groups over the year
- uses reviews of the Learning Profiles to ensure that the adaptive strategies and EAA are the most appropriate for the student; once the student feels that they can become more independent, then strategies are reduced, as are the barriers to learning that the student may face
- works closely with the pastoral team to monitor attendance to school and lessons of students on the SEND register and will arrange contact with families to discuss intervention.

## **5.7 Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment**

We make the following adaptations to ensure all students' needs are met:

- modifying our curriculum to ensure all students can access it – for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.
- adapting our resources and staffing
- using recommended aids, such as assistive technology, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- adapting our teaching – for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

As explained in 5.4, we aim to meet the needs of all learners by Wave 1 universal support, through Quality First Teaching. If this provision does not prove successful over at least one cycle, then we will start to implement Waves 2 and 3, seeking advice from external agencies as necessary.

## **5.8 Enabling students with SEND to engage in activities available to those in the academy who do not have SEND**

All curricular and extra-curricular activities and academy visits are available to all students. No student is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEND.

## **5.9 Expertise and training of staff**

We recognise the importance of regular staff training to ensure that we keep up to date as well as exploring new areas of knowledge in relation to SEND. To do this, we are committed to the following cycle of staff training on an annual basis:

1. Essential training is delivered to all teacher staff at the start of each academic year with updates at key points
2. SEND regularly features as part of the CPD training programme and the performance management cycle; at least one SEND session is scheduled per cycle
3. SEND Bulletins are issued twice per half-term to keep all teaching staff informed of key dates and events for students with SEND; these contain training information on an aspect of SEND, which supports the delivery of Quality First Teaching
4. Support staff are provided with specific training tailored to their respective students and relating directly to the statutory requirements detailed in individual EHCPs

5. Support staff have opportunities to attend external training, including local authority events
6. Through the appraisal cycle, support staff, in discussion with the SENDCO, identify students for whom they will be the key adult and the training needs required to fulfil this role effectively; undertaking this training then becomes an appraisal target
7. For career development, support staff are encouraged to undertake the HLTA course and take on responsibility within the department
8. Support staff develop expertise in pathways and work effectively with teaching staff during practical and theory lessons; this means they can also deliver purposeful 1:1 tuition when students are completing coursework and preparing for exams.

### **5.10 Securing equipment and facilities**

Resources to support students with SEND are kept in classrooms. However, the SENDCO does have some specialist equipment. Additional resourcing implications may emerge from discussion around the strategies to be used with individual students.

The annual audit and preparation for setting the actions on the academy development plan provides the opportunity to look at the overall SEND budget. The SEND budget includes money for the SEND team and purchasing additional services from the local authority. Careful assessment of student progress helps measure value for money against different activities and interventions.

The BOA Board of Governors, the SENDCO and Senior Leadership Team are involved in the process of determining how the SEND budget is allocated.

### **5.11 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision**

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEND through:

- analysis of individual tracking information
- analysis of trends of student groups against national and local authority averages
- observations of teaching and support
- student and parent/carer views
- Voice of BOA (student feedback)
- regular staff evaluations
- reviewing the impact of interventions
- monitoring by the SENDCO
- annual reviews for students with EHCPs
- feedback from external agencies.

### **5.12 Contact details of support services for parents/carers of students with SEND**

Birmingham SEND information advice and support service (SENDIASS) offer independent advice and support to parents and carers of all children and young people with SEND.

Email: [sendiass@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@birmingham.gov.uk)

### **5.13 The local authority local offer**

The academy has a wide catchment area; therefore, we have students who reside in a number of different boroughs. Here are the links to each of their local offers:

Birmingham: [www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk)

Coventry: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer>

Dudley: <https://dudleyci.co.uk/send-local-offer>

Leicester: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/where-to-start-with-send/what-is-the-local-offer>

Sandwell: <https://fis.sandwell.gov.uk/kb5/sandwell/directory/localoffer.page>

Solihull: <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/children-and-family-support/localoffer>

Walsall: <https://send.walsall.gov.uk/>

Warwick: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send>

Wolverhampton: <https://www.localofferwolves.co.uk/>

Worcester: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer>

### **5.14 Contact details for raising concerns and complaints about SEND provision**

If you wish to discuss your child's learning difficulty or disability, or if you are unhappy about any issues regarding the academy's SEND provision, please contact the following:

1. The class/subject teacher
2. The SENDCO
3. The Principal

Any initial complaints should be raised initially with the SENDCO [Stage 1]. However, our complaints procedure is outlined in the BOA General Complaints Policy for Parents & Carers [available on our website] and clarifies details for more serious concerns.

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy and information report will be reviewed annually by the SENDCO. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. It will be approved by the governing body.

## **7. Links with other policies and documents**

This policy links to our policies on:

- BOA Admissions Policy
- BOA Equal Opportunities Policy
- BOA General Complaints Policy for Parents & Carers