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1. Aims

Our SEND Policy and Information Report aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for students with special educational needs (SEND)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for students with SEND

The Taunton Academy is an 11-16 inclusive school serving the area of Taunton, Somerset. At the Taunton Academy, all students are valued equally, regardless of where their abilities lie, with the school being committed to developing the best in everyone. All students are entitled to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is differentiated to meet individual needs. Within its aims, The Taunton Academy is committed to equal opportunities, with students being encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their academic or physical ability, through the provision of a balanced and challenging curriculum in both content and styles of learning.

Students of all ages and all abilities will:

Be treated as individuals where their individual needs, interests and aptitudes are recognized.

Be entitled to have an emerging or evident special educational need identified and assessed.

Be provided with opportunities for continued growth and development so that they can increase their self-esteem and become confident.

Receive a balanced curriculum in both content and style of delivery, which allow them to make informed choices as they progress beyond the school.

Be encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their abilities.

Be encouraged to learn through a range of enjoyable and stimulating experiences in an atmosphere where students feel valued, encouraged and safe.

Learn to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning and actions so that they will be equipped to deal with life after school.

Be encouraged to see education as a life-long process to the benefit of all aspects of their life.

This SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Information Report outlines information regarding the ways in which we will provide support for all students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in order to realize their full potential, make outstanding academic and personal progress and grow to be equipped for their future lives. Provision may change and develop over time.

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 schools' responsibilities for students with SEND.
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and the SEND information report.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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 schools

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 schools.

The SEND Code of Practice provides an overview of the four key areas of need, which includes:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The SENDCO

The SENDCO is Karen Mellish.

She will:

- Work with the head teacher and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- 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 EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, 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 school'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 are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Work with the headteacher and governing board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date.

4.2 The SEND governor

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND within the school and update the governing board on this.
- Work with the head teacher and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

4.3 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND and/or a disability.

4.4 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants 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 pupil'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 school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- Communication and interaction, for example, Autistic Spectrum Condition, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties.
- Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia and moderate learning difficulties.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and anxiety.
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments processing difficulties and epilepsy.

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. Class teachers 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 needs.

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 graduated response 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.

5.3 Consulting and involving students and parents

We believe that parents, carers and students are at the heart of our discussions. To that end, we will have an early discussion with the student and their parents when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulties.
- We take into account the parents'/carers' concerns.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the student's record and given to their parents. We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a student will receive SEND support.

5.4 Assessing and reviewing students' progress towards outcomes

The progress of students, including those with SEND are regularly assessed both formally and informally. The Taunton Academy keeps parents informed through progress review and reports which will show your child's current and target levels, effort, behaviour, homework and attendance. In addition, Heads of Faculty and inclusion staff including Year Leaders will monitor and review your child's levels and notice subjects where your child is not making the right amount of progress.

In addition, we follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENDCO to carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs. This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the student.
- Their previous progress and attainment and behavior.
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant.
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.
- The views and experience of parents.
- The student's own views.
- Advice from external support services, if relevant.
- Advice from the authority's support services i.e. Educational Psychologist, if relevant.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly.

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. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the student's progress through open/information days, Parent's evenings and letters home.

5.5 Supporting students moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the student is moving to. We will agree with parents and students which information will be shared as part of this. For students in Year 11, they will have a careers' interview with support staff to help them decide their appropriate Post-16 pathway whether that is in training, further education or employment.

5.6 Our approach to teaching students with SEND

Our teachers have high expectations of all students, including those with SEND. All teachers will be told about your child's individual needs and will adapt their lessons to meet these requirements. Teachers have experience and/or are trained in doing this. This may involve using different strategies, more practical/adaptation of resources and activities. This means your child can access the lessons fully.

Within school, there is a variety of staff roles to help us fully support your child. Where it is felt it is the right thing to do, a student may be offered additional help and support, in which case you would be informed. There are a range of interventions and additional subject support that are available and should your child need this, it will be discussed with you.

When your child is approaching the start of Key Stage 4, if we think it is needed, we will assess and apply for GCSE exam Access Arrangements according to the Joint Council for Qualifications Exam Regulations.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class.

High quality teaching is our first step in responding to students who have SEND. This will be differentiated for individual students.

We will also provide the following interventions:

- Individual literacy and numeracy programmes including adaptive ILI and Spelling Detectives
- Direct Instruction for Years 7 and 8
- ELSA support in our SEMH hub
- Reading Mentors
- Maximizing GCSE access arrangements support
- Speech and Language programmes
- OT/Physiotherapy programmes

5.7 Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

Our school is a fully accessible site offering a safe learning environment and we do all we can to continually improve the accessibility. We do our best to make it welcoming to the whole community. The Taunton Academy has an Accessibility Plan and Policy that we monitor, review and then report upon every year. The school adheres to the statutory requirements set out in a child's Education Health and Care Plans. We are mindful of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 as amended in September 2012 to provide auxiliary aids and services where appropriate as detailed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The Taunton Academy has a range of specialist SEND facilities in place including:

- Increased access to the curriculum
- Physical environments (acoustic tiling) for students with auditory impairments.
- Lifts to all floors
- Assistance during examinations
- Disabled changing and toilet facilities
- A fully accessible site

In addition, we make the following adaptations to ensure all students' needs are met:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all students are able to 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 laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

5.8 Additional support for learning

We have a wide range of staff to support students and address any additional needs they may have, including students with SEND. The inclusion team consists of the designated safeguarding lead, behaviour team, SENDCo and SLT member focusing on Pupil Premium, ELSA trained support staff along with a member of staff responsible for medical issues and Year Leaders for each year group. There is also a Transition and Well-being lead.

We also have a small number of teaching assistants who are trained to deliver interventions such as Direct Instruction. In addition, they can also work in the following ways where appropriate:

- Teaching assistants will support students on a 1:1
- Teaching assistants will support students in small groups

5.9 Expertise and training of staff

Our SENDCO has over 10 years' experience in this role and holds the Post Graduate NA SENDCo Award as well as a Master of Education in Special Educational Needs with psychology modules from the University of Bristol.

She works full-time to manage the SEND provision.

We have a team of teaching assistants both full and part-time, including two higher level full-time teaching assistants (HLTA) who are trained to deliver SEND provision.

We have two specialist staff for ELSA interventions

5.10 Securing equipment and facilities

As a school we can access a range of services including the visual and hearing impairment teams and the Special Educational Needs Assistive Technology Advisory Service (SENATAS). These services are contacted when necessary and appropriate, according to your child's needs. If you believe your child needs specialist equipment or other facilities, please contact Karen Mellish or discuss the issue at the next review/parents evening.

5.11 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

The school has a Quality Assurance process that assesses the effectiveness of Teaching and Learning for all students, including those with SEND. The outcomes of these evaluations are used to create and implement development plans for all aspects of school life. These are regularly reviewed through regular evaluation. Additionally, progress and attainment data for students is analyzed for effectiveness and value for money.

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

- Reviewing students' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Using student questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENDCo
- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding annual reviews for students with or EHC plans and/or Higher Needs Funding

5.12 Enabling students with SEND to engage in activities available to those in the school who do not have SEND

The Taunton Academy aims to provide the best opportunities for students with SEND to participate in and enjoy activities outside the classroom and on school trips. We are a fully inclusive school. All children in the school are encouraged to take part in extra activities at

break time, lunchtime and after school. Day and residential trips are open to all children and your child's specific needs can be discussed if they wish to join such a trip.

For example:

We liaise closely with parents/carers in advance of the event to make sure we have addressed any concerns.

Teachers, teaching assistants and support staff are aware of students' needs and receive additional training so they can support students with SEND both in and outside of the classroom.

We promote and encourage the inclusion of all our young people with SEND in all our external activities, clubs and sports.

The school consults with parents/carers and health professional to make access arrangements for students with SEND so all can participate in school visits and outside learning. All staff organizing visits are trained and risk assessments are completed. Where there are specific issues regarding safety and access for individuals, further plans are put in place to ensure needs are discussed and planned (using risk assessments) in consultation with parents/carers. It may be necessary to have detailed discussions to ensure the health and safety of your child on certain trips and we would seek to work closely with parents to do all we can to allow all children to be included in school activities. In addition:

All students are encouraged to go on our Year 7 off-site trip to Hestercombe House.

All students are encouraged to take part in sports day/school plays/special workshops, etc.

No student is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEND or disability.

The facilities to provide to help disabled students access our school can be found in the school's Accessibility and Disability Policy can be found here:

<https://www.thetauntonacademy.com/learning/send/>

5.13 Support for Improving Emotional and Social Development

At The Taunton Academy we take our pastoral responsibilities seriously. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of student support and guidance. One way we support our students is by assigning them to a form tutor who will (in most cases) remain with them as they progress up the school. This provides continuity and builds a strong relationship between tutor and students. Each year group is led by a Year Leader who supports both academic and pastoral needs and their work is overseen by a very experienced Deputy Head Teacher.

There are additional members of staff who are able to provide pastoral support, these include ELSA trained staff, teaching assistants and a designated senior leader responsible for safeguarding and child protection. In addition, we also have excellent relationships with a number of external agencies, for example: CAMHS and Children's Social Care teams. In addition, we provide support for students to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Students with SEND are encouraged to be part of the school council
- Students with SEND are also encouraged to attend resilience groups to promote teamwork/building friendships etc.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

5.14 Working with other agencies

The Taunton Academy can access a range of services including:

- Educational Psychologist
- Learning Support Services
- Somerset Autism and Communication Service
- Physical, Medical Support Service which includes
 - The Physical Medical Support Team (PIMS)
 - Hearing Support Team
 - Vision Support Team
- Special Educational Needs Assistive Technology Advisory Service (SENATAS)
- CAMHS
- Paediatricians
- GPs
- Children's Social Care
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service
- School Nursing Services

These services are contacted when necessary and appropriate, according to your child's needs. The school works closely with the Somerset local authority and uses the Early Help Assessment process as and when appropriate. We follow a graduated response as outlined in the Code of Practice seeking advice from these multi-agencies when earlier support has been reviewed and further support and advice are required.

5.15 Complaints about SEND provision

Complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the Year Leader, class teacher/SENDCO/head teacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy, which is on the school website.

The parents of students with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

5.16 Contact details of support services for parents of students with SEND

Parents, carers can make telephone/email contact or discuss their concerns at parent's evenings.

The Somerset County website contains a wealth of information about Family Support Groups, which can be found on the following links:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/>

5.17 Contact details for raising concerns

The SENCo is Karen Mellish: kmellish@thetauntonacademy.com

5.18 The local authority local offer

Our local authority's local offer is published here:

<https://choices.somerset.gov.uk/025/local-offer/>

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy and information report will be reviewed every year by Karen Mellish, SENCo.

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:

- Accessibility and Disability Plan
- Behaviour for Learning and Exclusion Policy
- Equality Statement
- Safeguarding Policy

A copy of all our policies can be found at the following link on The Taunton Academy website:

<https://www.thetauntonacademy.com/about-us/policies/>