

The Lotus Academy Trust



Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

The Damara School



Specialist SEMH Independent School

# SEND POLICY and INFORMATION REPORT

**Approved by:** Trust Board

**Initial Ratification:** 31 August 2019

**Review:** Oct 2020; Oct 2021; Oct 2022, Oct 23, Oct 2024

**Next review due by:** October 2025

## **1. Aims**

The Damara School's SEND policy and information report aims to:

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

### **Mission statement:**

To provide children with educational experiences that caters for their individual needs and strengths. Using a therapeutic and holistic model to learning and development, our commitment is to develop new and existing skills and abilities in every child so that they may reach their full potential academically, socially, emotionally and mentally.

The school is committed to providing an inclusive education for its pupils and works with parents / carers and pupils to develop a holistic and therapeutic approach to supporting individual needs. Through establishing a culture of inclusion and diversity, we aim to ensure each pupil feels a sense of belonging and self-worth. High expectations will be set for all pupils relevant to their personal starting points. The school will use Individual Learning Plans (ILP) as a means of ensuring every pupil is included in their education.

We believe in a learning environment where every pupil can participate and achieve irrespective of their barriers and where the school will create opportunities to support pupils to overcome these barriers, raise aspirations and reach their full potential.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy and information report is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report

## **3. Definitions**

A pupil has SEN 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.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 The SENCO**

The SENCO is Sandra Govender. The Assistant SENCO is Julie Cox

She will:

- Work with the leadership team and SEN trustee to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEN policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans

- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- Advise on the deployment of resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers (including Post 16) of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Work with the leadership team and SEN trustee/governor 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 pupils with SEN up to date

#### 4.2 The **SEN trustee** is Sue Clifton

The SEN trustee will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEN issues at trust board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the CEO and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school

#### 4.3 The **Assistant Headteacher** is Julie Cox

The Assistant Headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEN trustee to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school
- Have shared responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN 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 to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEN policy

### 5. **SEN information report**

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

The SEN Code of Practice states that children have special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them; provision that is additional to or different from that made for others of the same age. The School implements support for pupils using the graduated approach. Interventions are three-tiered: Quality First Teaching; Additional out of class support and interventions involving the support of external agencies.

- The School is a specialist school that supports pupils with needs that fall within the four broad areas of need, including communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; sensory and / or physical needs. The primary need the school caters for is SEMH = Social, Emotional and Mental Health however the following SEND disorders/delays that may present as a secondary need include:
- SEMH = Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- ADD/ADHD = Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ASD = Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- SPLCN = Speech, Language and Communication Needs

## **5.2 Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs**

All pupils arrive at the school having experienced fractured, little or no formal education for a number of years. As they come from different previous placements, their subject specific knowledge and competencies vary greatly. Most pupils also arrive at school with abilities that are well below that which is typical for their age. All pupils complete national diagnostic assessments (reading, writing, spelling, comprehension and strengths and difficulties) which form the 'starting point' data from which progress is measured.

Attendance figures; pupil, teacher, intervention staff and parental / carer qualitative data will be analysed alongside quantitative progress data to establish possible reasons for progress that is not in line with the rates of progress made by their peers. At this stage, lesson observations and coaching may be completed by the SENCO in conjunction with members of teaching staff and the pupil. Where relevant, external professionals may be called in for support and advice.

Class teachers are responsible for mentoring pupils on a regular basis. All pupils have their individual targets identified on their ILP and at the back of their timetables. Strategies for helping them achieve these targets are included in the ILP. The ILP is a working document and as such is regularly updated by the teaching staff following contact with either the pupil or the pupil's parent / carer. More formal updating of the ILP takes place each half term and is documented by the SENCO and leaders in discussion with the pupil and the pupil's parent / carer. These ILPs are shared with parents and carers after every review.

## **5.3 Consulting and involving pupils and parents**

The School appreciates that parents / carers have a wealth of information on their children that can positively contribute to our practice. The Individual Learning Plan (ILP), the 'All about me' pupil voice and the Risk Assessment are the tools used for sharing information with parents/carers. The tutors are the primary liaisons for families while the SENCO and leaders liaise directly with external professionals working with pupils. All planning for pupils will be 'person-centred' ensuring that parents / carers and pupils are consulted and collaborated with throughout the process.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan have their provision monitored and reported on half termly; with a review taking place annually unless a need requires an emergency review. Pupils, parents, staff and external agencies feedback is gathered and such qualitative data forms part of the overall analysis of performance.

Conversations with parents/carers will make sure that:

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

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

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

During induction, the lead will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- Pupil Placement Form and referral documents
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour
- Previous placement records, if any
- The views and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external support services, if relevant

We evaluate the effectiveness of our SEND provision through an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to judge whether pupils make at least expected progress and achieve their academic and social potential.

Analysis takes place:

- at a Senior Leadership level, where the team analyses whole school data every half term, in relation to teaching and learning and pastoral outcomes with particular attention to the school's performance within the local and national contexts

- at a subject level, with subject leaders, class teachers and support staff analysing attainment and attitudinal data every half term following each Progress Check Point (PCP).
- at a level where leaders liaise with teachers to analyse and review the holistic overview of pupils' progress, with particular attention to pupils' attendance, progress towards individual targets and attitude to learning.
- at all levels where staff (in class and extended learning) are required to analyse the impact of the intervention in place in their area to ensure all pupils achieve their personal targets and make at least expected progress from their starting points.

## **5.5 Preparing pupils for adulthood**

Pupils with SEND in all years receive support with their post-16 pathway. The school will liaise with post-16 education providers to ensure that all key inclusion information is shared and relevant support is in place to give pupils the best chance of succeeding in post-16 education or training. Support is provided to pupils via the pastoral programme, careers advice and guidance, Theme Days, Assemblies and PSHE lessons to ensure that they are enabled to make informed choices about their future.

We aim to raise aspirations and provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Aim high and set a progress target for all pupils to make at least expected progress;
- Use the ILP and Risk Assessment to identify individual pupil needs and barriers to learning and improve ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Refer to the ILP and Risk Assessment to inform planning and implement necessary teaching strategies for individuals;
- Monitor achievement data by SEND, FSM, PP, NPP, YC, EAL, MAAT (A, G&T), CLA and action any differences;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting appropriate and challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge derogatory and discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Make reasonable adjustments, where necessary, to ensure pupils with SEND have full access to a broad and creative curriculum;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own individuality and celebrate the diversity of others;
- Promote independence and high expectations at every level;
- Seek to involve all parents / carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage staff discussions of pupil's differences to raise awareness;
- Train, coach and mentor staff to plan and deliver Quality First Teaching

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the learning environment and specific resources will be obtained to best meet the individual needs of pupils. Teachers are expected to plan Quality First Teaching that meets the needs of all pupils in their classes. Teachers are accountable for differentiation as evidenced in schemes of work and planning. The Baseline Data, Risk Assessment, Individual Learning Plan (ILP) are planning tools for all teachers and support staff; enabling them to successfully meet the needs of every individual in the classroom.

## **5.6 Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN**

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

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

We will also provide the following interventions:

- Reading
- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Mathematical reasoning
- Social Skills
- Social, emotional and mental health sessions

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

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

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils 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.
- Quality First Teaching: differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

Pupils also engage in an intervention programme to help close attainment gaps, develop social skills and aspirations. During the extended learning programme staff lead bespoke 1:1 or small group sessions aimed at meeting the additional needs of pupils.

The learning environment is further enriched by the promotion of co-curricular activities such as assemblies, theme days and trips and the use of external partners.

### **5.8 Additional support for learning**

Group sizes are intentionally small (max 12) to aid pupils learning. Pupils are supported in lessons with a high staff to pupil ratio of 1:3 (appropriate to needs). Each class has a teaching assistant who will work closely with the teacher to decide where the support is best required using the Baseline Data, RA and ILP as a guide. In addition, where pupils need specific 1-1 support in lessons, a dedicated member of the support staff team is allocated to the child in need.

We work with the following agencies to provide support for pupils with SEN:

- EHCP co-ordinators, Social Care, Youth Offending Team, Police and charities such as Matthew Project, The Rose Project, Nelson's Journey, Young Carers, etc

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

Staff are given training and support to identify and implement the most effective intervention strategies to support pupils to overcome and/or remove their barriers to learning and to reach their academic and social potential.

The Baseline Data, Risk Assessment and Individual Learning Plan are accessible to all colleagues. These are working documents and planning tools which inform staff of pupil's individual needs and barriers to learning. Cover / supply teachers are expected to familiarise themselves with the documents prior to taking the lessons they are covering.

Teachers and support staff will be required to undertake regular CPD to enhance their skills base for teaching and supporting pupils with diverse levels of need.

A cycle of Pastoral and Teaching and Learning training sessions for all teaching and support staff run continuously through the school's CPD programme. Where appropriate, these may be led by external professionals and practitioners. Examples of session content include and not limited to:

- Assessing individual barriers to learning and any additional needs
- Quality first teaching: meeting the needs of all pupils in the classroom
- The Graduated Approach
- Target setting and Individual Learning Plans
- Lesson studies
- Home Learning and independent learning
- SEND legislative developments
- TA deployment and the role of the additional adult in the classroom
- Making effective use of resources and the effective use of data in improving attainment
- Running a successful enrichment/extended learning session

- Teaching strategies for effective intervention

An individual staff training log is kept annually to record all staff training for the year.

### **Local Offer**

The link for the Norfolk local offer can be accessed here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer>.

The link for the Norfolk local offer for children and young people can be accessed here: [SEND Local Offer for children and young people](#). The forum information can also be accessed through: [Your Voice forum](#)

The link for the Suffolk local offer can be accessed here:  
<http://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/localoffer.page?localofferchannelnew=0>

As we may have pupil referrals from both the Suffolk County Council and Norfolk County Council, we hold termly review meetings to report on the quality of provision at our school. We also work with them to ensure that all aspects of the local offer are made available to pupils, parents and carers.

### **How our staff are trained to meet the needs of pupils with SEND:**

Using the pupils' Baseline data, Risk Assessments and Individual Learning Plans as source documents, staff are given training and support to identify the most effective intervention strategies for use when working with pupils. The objective is to implement these strategies to support pupils to overcome and/or remove their barriers to learning and to reach their academic and social potential.

### **Our practice to ensure the development of the 'whole child':**

The School believes in personalising learning so that every pupil achieves and develops as a confident, independent learner. In light of this; every 'All about me' interview, and Individual Learning Plan review is led by the individual pupil under the guidance of the tutor.

The Baseline Data, Risk Assessment and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) of the child inform staff of individual profiles. These tools are developed throughout the pupil's time at school and are reviewed and reported on during the pupil's educational journey at the School. Within the ILP, pupils have strategies or reasonable adjustments that must be used in lessons to support their learning. ILP'S are shared and developed in consultation with pupils, parents and staff.

### **How the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs**

The school has a broad, holistic and therapeutic curriculum that caters for the varying abilities of pupils and that support wide range Post 16 opportunities.

### **How the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in activities**

To develop appropriate social skills, pupils spend break and lunch times together, socialising and engaging in a range of indoor and outdoor activities with staff and peers. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. Subjects are also allocated a budget to ensure that all resources are purchased for all pupils to participate in the learning. No child is expected to pay for any resources including ingredients in Food Technology, materials in Resistant Materials and trip costs.

### **How we work with other agencies for in order to meet the needs of SEND pupils:**

When required, the School will liaise / work with / contract external providers (local and national), seeking advice on best practice and methods of support. Such professionals may include; Systemic Family Therapists, Educational psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Solution-focused therapists, county advisors, social care workers, paediatricians, CAMHS practitioners, medical needs teams, and sensory support.

### **How we handle complaints:**

Should you wish to contact someone to discuss a concern, a pupil's class teacher is the first point of contact. You can also arrange to meet with the school's SENCO.

The school has also has a Complaints Policy in order to handle any complaints related to SEND provision. Any parent / carer wishing to make a complaint should do so following the procedure outlined in the Complaints Policy to be found on the website.