



Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy

Key staff members:	All staff
Responsible body:	Project Steering Group/Local Governing Body
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1. Introduction

“With high aspirations and the right support, the vast majority of children and young people can go on to achieve successful long-term outcomes in adult life.”

SEN Code of Practice 2014

This policy sets out how Mulberry UTC sets out to achieve this goal, so that all young people can achieve their full potential regardless of their additional needs.

2. Definitions

UTC students are recognised as having special educational needs or a disability if they require special educational provision to be made for them, which is different from or additional to a good differentiated curriculum plan available in a mainstream school. This is defined in the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** as:

- a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or a disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
- a child or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The Code of Practice defines special educational needs under four categories:

- **Communication and interaction**, e.g. speech, language and communication needs (SLCN); Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including Asperger’s Syndrome (AS);

- **Cognition and Learning**, e.g. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD); moderate learning difficulties (MLD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD);
- **Emotional, social and mental health needs**, e.g. attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD); depression, eating disorder, attachment disorder, self-injury'
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**, e.g. Vision impairment (VI); Deafness or Hearing impairment (HI); Multi-Sensory impairment (MSI); Cerebral Palsy etc.

A student may present with more than one need.

Provision and procedures for students with **Medical Conditions** are covered in a separate policy, the Medical Needs Policy, which is available on the UTC's website.

UTC students are recognised as having a disability if, as defined by the **Disability (Equality Act 2010)**:

- she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

A student does not have a learning difficulty or disability simply because the language in which they are taught is different from the one they speak at home. Nor does a student have special educational needs simply because their attainment is lower than would be expected at their age: factors which may have contributed to poor progress (such as poor attendance or effort) need to be considered and the reasons for them understood. The UTC's English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy and Raising Achievement Policy address these aspects of provision.

The UTC recognises that around 20% of children will have special needs at some point in their school career, but not all these needs are permanent and some may change. Included in this 20% are the approximately 2% of students with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.

3. Aim and objectives of the policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all policies of the UTC include and apply to students with special educational needs and disabilities and that the culture, practice, management and deployment of the UTC's resources are such that all students' needs are met. The governing body of Mulberry UTC will use their best endeavours to secure the necessary provision for students with special educational needs. They will support the implementation of this policy and the Code of Practice through the necessary resources and training.

This aim is supported by the following objectives:

- a strong ethos that values inclusion, recognises and respects everyone's differences, confirms high expectations of all and celebrates all achievement;

- clear roles and responsibilities for meeting students' SEND, supported by appropriate training and professional development;
- rapid identification and exploration of students' needs, so that provision can be made that removes or limits the impact of barriers to their learning and development;
- development of appropriate teaching and learning strategies within the mixed ability classroom;
- targeted provision for building the skills of students with SEND, including confidence and self-esteem; literacy, language, communication, numeracy and learning skills; and skills for adult and working life;
- systematic planning for, and tracking of, the progress of all students with SEND so that it is at least in line with national expectations for all students;
- access for students with SEND to the full range of day-to-day provision in the UTC, differentiated to meet their individual needs. This includes curriculum, teaching, clubs and activities that ensure opportunity for inclusion in the life of the UTC.
- helpful, timely and effective communication between staff (including those from outside agencies), students with SEND and their parents/carers that secures the confidence and trust of parents/carers, leading to sustained partnerships.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Every teacher is a teacher of every young person, including those with SEND. All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from TAs or specialist staff.

The UTC Principal has overall responsibility for SEND. The SEN coordinator (SENDCO) is responsible for ensuring that the UTC policy and other requirements outlined in the Code of Practice and other relevant documents are implemented as effectively as possible.

The link governor for SEND monitors provision, offers support as necessary and reports to the Local Governing Body each term.

All SEND and additional learning needs provision is led by the UTC's SENDCO, who works with a support staff team to assess students' needs, develop support plans, review their progress, support students in class or where appropriate withdraw them for extra support in literacy or numeracy. The SEND team works with Year Learning Co-ordinators, tutors and subject teachers to meet the needs of students with special needs. The SENDCO ensures the quality, and regular review of, individual students' plans, including EHCPs.

5. Implementation

The UTC ensures that appropriate and timely provision is in place for all students with Education, Health and Care Plans or Additional Learning Needs on our SEND register.

The UTC facilitates partial or full inclusion, relying on the involvement of specialist professionals, as well as teaching assistants and SEND teachers. The UTC SEND team draws on the expertise at Mulberry School for Girls, bringing in support from Mulberry's team for medical, complex needs and

social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs where necessary. Regular SEND training is available to staff through Mulberry School for Girls.

The UTC aims for a flexible yet manageable approach, personalised to meet the individual and diverse needs of students, including:

- using the SEND Code of Practice as a framework for the identification of, and the provision for, students with SEND;
- providing ongoing professional development to all staff in understanding and meeting specific SEND;
- increasing the confidence and self-awareness of students with SEND, so that they can be involved in, and make decisions around, their own provision, learning and progression into adult life;
- engaging with parents/carers about all aspects of the special needs provision made for their child and proactively developing this partnership;
- focussing on improving literacy and numeracy skills of students with SEND, both as an end in itself and as a means of ensuring maximum access to the rest of the curriculum
- meeting the special educational needs of students with physical disabilities as far as practicable in terms of the layout/resources of the UTC;
- deploying the UTC's SEND resources in as effective a way as possible and ensuring timely intervention;
- contributing to and drawing on the Tower Hamlets Local Offer.

6. Curriculum

The UTC aims to include students with SEND in all of aspects the mainstream curriculum, making the full range of provision accessible and striving to ensure that all students take advantage of opportunities.

At Key Stage 4 a small group of students with special needs may be guided towards an option or options in the Special Needs Pathway, reducing the volume of GCSE courses they are working towards and in some cases replacing these with Entry Level and pre-entry qualifications in some subject areas. Some students, in line with the assessment of their needs are withdrawn for further literacy and numeracy, speech and language and/or social skills development.

At Key Stage 5, because of the specialist nature of our provision, courses are available at Level 2 and above. Again a small group of students may work towards a low volume Level 2 qualification, supplemented by skill-specific certification relevant to their employment pathway.

Curriculum accessibility is supported by:

- schemes of work and teaching resources for mixed ability groups that are differentiated to ensure access for students with SEND;
- ability grouping with appropriate staffing ratios that facilitate access to the full curriculum;
- training for all students and staff to understand and assist students with mobility issues or social communication problems;
- IT equipment and aids to facilitate students with visual impairment, hypermobility, dyspraxia or specific learning or literacy difficulties;

- peer mentors, buddies and tutor groups trained in how to include and support students with specific SEND;
- supported independent learning clubs to enable students to research, draft and refine their work for their various courses;
- clubs and extra-curricular activities supported by TAs where necessary;
- work placements, off-site visits and residential planned with partners to ensure all students' needs are met;
- additional guidance, planning and support for students and parents/carers, particularly at key transition points and in planning for adulthood.

Support is predominantly provided in the mainstream classroom by SEN Teachers and Teaching Assistants in order to allow continued access to the full curriculum. The number of lessons supported in the classroom is allocated according to the needs of the student, the resources of the Department and the constraints of the timetable.

In addition to in-class support, some students may need to work in small groups of up to 6 outside their usual classes. Provision at this stage may also include support and advice from other agencies e.g. Educational Psychologist, School Counsellor.

7. Identification of needs

There are two main methods of identification of students with special needs: identification and referral at the transfer stage and referral by teaching staff, parents and outside agencies throughout the age range.

Transfer stage:

Joining Year 10: The SEND team and Year 10 pastoral team screen all new entrants by interviewing them with their parents, visiting their previous schools and collating information from their records. On admission, students are assessed for reading age, spelling age, language level and numeracy level. An example of their writing is also analysed. Students may also be observed in lessons.

Joining Year 12: The Y12 pastoral team screen all new students by interviewing them, preferably with their parents. A discussion of any SEND and special provision to date is a key strand of application and admission interviews. UTC staff will contact the previous schools of any students with SEND and gather information on strategies used and collate information from their records.

Students with EHCPs naming the UTC will be made known to UTC staff at an early stage of the preceding year. UTC staff attend the annual review and contribute to the transition plan. Students will visit the UTC on several occasions to explore their particular needs in the new, specialist environment.

From this information students who have been highlighted as having Special Education Needs are assessed in order to identify their specific needs and ascertain the level of support required, with input from outside professionals such as psychologist or therapists where appropriate.

The SEND Team compiles information about each student with SEND and uses Tower Hamlets SEN Support guidance and Department for Education guidance to make decisions about the type of

support the student needs, summarising this in their SEND Record. This information is made available to teachers and other relevant staff.

Within the UTC, after transfer:

The progress of all students is monitored to check that they are progressing in line with expectations. Students not making expected progress will be followed up by the SEND team, to identify any barriers to learning. Students can be referred by any teacher to the SENDCO, if any aspect of their learning is causing concern. After further consultation, the SENDCO may decide that further assessment is required.

The UTC recognises the need to consider separately the needs of students who are at an early stage of English language development and those of students with learning difficulties. When EAL staff work with students who also have a learning difficulty, they will refer to the SEND Department. They may be referred at any time. The EAL or SEND Department will carry out a bi-lingual assessment to establish the learning needs of students when appropriate.

8. Monitoring progress

Every student on the SEND register has an SEND Record, co-produced by the student, SEND staff and parents/carers. Teachers access SEND Records via SIMS, and review them with parents at parents' evenings. Teachers are encouraged to comment on and annotate ILPs regularly in order to keep them up to date, relevant and realistic. Teachers are expected to implement the advice on ILPs in their lessons and to liaise closely with the SEND department in order to establish the most effective teaching strategies to support individual student's needs. Teachers hold the responsibility for evidencing progress according to the outcomes described on ILPs and teachers report progress in line with the school's assessment cycle.

The academic and social progress of students with SEND provision is monitored closely and regularly via teachers and Teaching Assistants in order to ensure the most up-to date assessment and appropriate provision. The SEN team hosts a review meeting twice a year with the student and parents/carers to monitor review current targets and provision and agree new targets and strategies. We are committed to listening to the voice of the student and acting on it.

If a student is making adequate progress, s/he may no longer need to receive SEND provision. We consider a student to have made adequate progress when she no longer meets SEND criteria. Students who have previously had additional SEN support and no longer need that support continue to be monitored carefully and their progress checked regularly.

If a student is not making adequate progress, in spite of the provision, we are making, we may seek outside advice. This could include an assessment by outside agencies. For a small minority of students this may eventually lead to a request to the LA's Educational Psychology Service for a statutory assessment, which could lead to an Education Health and Care Plan.

A student with an EHC Plan has a Key Support Teacher and or Teaching Assistant who works with subject teachers to meet the needs of the student and leads the monitoring and review of the Plan.

9. Working with students with Special Needs in mainstream classes

Students with Special Needs are supported primarily in mainstream, mixed ability classes. This can be done in various ways:

- (1) Subject teachers, sometimes working with a support teacher, provide differentiated materials to meet the needs of all the students in their class.

Differentiated material – (including support and extension work) should be clearly identified on subject schemes of work.

Differentiated resources/materials to be filed centrally in the department to facilitate access by all staff and copy to be filed in the SEN Department.

- (2) Subject teachers, alongside support staff where possible, plan activities including group work and oral work in such a way that all students can participate.

Oral work should be encouraged. Students should be given the opportunity to put their learning into their own words, whether in English or in their own language as appropriate.
(Please refer to Language and Literacy Policy)

- (3) Students with special needs respond well to a multi-sensory approach to learning (i.e. using material and resources that students can access through all available senses and experiences). Students should be offered opportunities to learn through practical work such as play, drama, ICT, class visits, making and using objects and other stimuli.
- (4) Students with special needs have their work marked and assessed in the same way as other students and according to subject departments' marking policies. However, if a grading system is used, it is obvious that any child who constantly receives low grades is going to become discouraged. The comments and targets for the students should reflect their effort and personal achievement.

Marking should be meaningful and encouraging including clear comments on how the student can progress. Support teachers should be involved in the marking of targeted students' work.
(Please refer to Marking Policy)

- (6) Students with special needs should be rewarded in the same way as other students. Teachers need to be aware that the progress of some students may be subtle and less noticeable but no less deserving of praise and reward.

We believe that the above statements are all good practice, beneficial to all students, not just those with special needs.

10. Working with students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in small groups

The SEND Team offer students with SEND intensive teaching (in a small group, where appropriate, to enable the development of their basic skills to facilitate access to the mainstream curriculum.

Small group learning will include the following areas:

- work packs based on a scheme of learning;
- oral work;
- sequencing, prediction and self-correction exercises;
- keeping a spelling book, first draft book and writing folder
- printing, typing, binding books of students' own work;
- specific work on listening and communication skills (targeting students with a hearing impairment);
- specific work on social skills and emotional literacy;
- specific sessions to listen to students and to support their well-being, particularly in terms of measures to prevent bullying;
- specific work on numeracy;
- use of specially designed computer programmes;
- provision of a wide range of carefully-chosen books, including bi-lingual books, for students to read at home.

Small group learning allows students to learn at their own pace and build self-confidence and independence.

11. Working with outside agencies

The UTC uses outside agencies to support its work and offer specialised help to those students who are assessed as needing it. In particular the UTC will bring in support from Mulberry's team for medical, complex needs and SEMH where necessary, including the school's Counsellor. In addition we will work, when appropriate, with:

- **Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Specialist Teachers** - specialist teachers for hearing and visually impaired students come into the UTC on a regular basis to assess the hearing and vision of students. They refer students on to receive further treatment and give advice to students and staff about ways of coping with hearing or vision impairments in the classroom.
- **Educational Psychologist** - the Educational Psychologist (EP) attends highlighted meetings with the SEN Team and to review the progress of students who already receive support but are causing concern. The EP is particularly involved in the assessment and review of students who have an EHC Plan. S/he also advises and works with the SEN Department for other Additionally Supported Students causing concern.

- **Speech Therapy** - the Speech Therapy Service provides therapy for students where the need is stated in the EHC Plan. They also provide training and programmes for teachers and TAs to use in their work.
- **Occupational Therapy Service and the Physiotherapy Service** - the Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services work with students who have certain physical impairments and/or those who have difficulties in carrying out everyday tasks. They provide a programme for guide teachers and Teaching Assistants in how to work with them.

12. Partnership with parents

The support and involvement of parents/carers is essential to the progress of students with SEND. UTC staff aim to be positive and proactive and to listen and respond without delay. Families and students are given a central role in the review of an EHC Plan.

The SEND Team:

- inform parents/carers if their child is referred for assessment and discuss the provision proposed;
- use parents' and carers' knowledge of their children and strategies that work;
- provide support for students' learning and personal development at home;
- communicate frequently about how their child is doing, and on their well-being, success and needs;
- involve parents and carers in reviewing their child's progress;
- involve parents and carers, and students, in any decision to engage outside agencies;
- provide bespoke advice to parents of students with SEND at transitions into and out of the UTC and at changes in routine such as work placements;
- help parents and carers to get independent advice.

Parents of students with SEND provision are invited to discuss their child's progress at regular reviews, with an interpreter if necessary. Parents are invited to make an appointment with the SENDCO and/or Director of Progress to discuss any concerns about the special needs of their child.

The SEND team are always available at the following calendared events for discussing students' progress and forward planning:

- Year Group parents' afternoons and evenings
- Open Days to support transitions
- performance, presentations and celebrations
- student/parent academic review meetings
- EHC Plan annual reviews

The SEND Team can also support parents/carers at any other meeting relating to the student's well-being and learning, such as:

- discussions/meetings with DoPs
- Case Conferences

Detailed records of students' SEND needs, provision and the impact of this provision are kept in the student's main file. Records of review meetings with students, parents and/or teachers are also held there. This information is available to parents/carers on request to the SENDCO.

The Tower Hamlets Parental Advice Centre (PAC) provides advice for parents of students with Special Needs, and also provide interpreters. The PAC provides the LA's SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information and Advice Service) required by the Code of Practice 2014.

13. Training

The training needs of staff with respect to SEND are identified and planned through regular audits of staff knowledge. The SEND department runs regular training sessions for teachers to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision to respond to the strengths and needs of all students. Outcomes for all students, including students with SEND, form part of the evidence base for teachers' Appraisals. Teaching Assistants receive regular training and their performance and effectiveness is monitored through the UTC's Performance Management systems.

All teachers and support staff undertake induction on taking up a post and this includes a meeting with the SENDCO to explain the systems and structures in place around the UTC's SEND provision and practice and to highlight the needs of individual students. Regular SEND training is available to staff through Mulberry School for Girls and whole-staff training on SEND is delivered as part of the UTC's INSET programme.

The SENDCO has NASEN membership and attends local SENDCO network meetings in order to keep up to date with regional and national updates in SEND. The SENDCO and the SEND department maintain strong links with all local secondary schools from where UTC students enter.

14. Accessibility

The UTC is aware of its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, to increase accessibility for disabled students over time. The UTC building has designed to make it fully accessible to students with physical disabilities. The UTC's separately-published Accessibility plan is available on the UTC website.

15. Dealing with complaints

Parents who are not satisfied with the school's provision for their child should write to the Principal in the first instance, explaining the nature of their concerns. If necessary the Governing Body can be involved, as outlined in the UTC's Complaints Policy available on the UTC's website. If the matter cannot be resolved, parents are entitled to pursue the matter through the external complaints procedure set out on page 245 of the SEND Code of Practice.

16. Evaluating the impact of SEND provision

The SEND Team, and all others responsible for aspects of the progress of UTC students, monitor the progress and achievements of individual students with SEND and these students as a group. Practice is detailed in the UTC's Raising Achievement Policy.

An evaluative report on the progress of students on the SEND Register is presented to Governors annually. The evaluation process includes students and parents/carers. The UTC makes statistical information from this report available to students and parents via the website. In addition, the impact of each strand of the UTC's SEND provision is evaluated annually, enabling Governors to make judgements about value for money and to adjust provision accordingly.

17. Reviewing the policy

This SEND Policy is reviewed annually by the SEND department, with students, parents/carers, teachers, the Leadership Team and Governors. It is reviewed via a process of consultation and discussion by all stakeholders, with the Governing Body giving final approval. Outside the annual review process, all UTC staff are updated by the SENDCO on any developments regarding this policy or the SEND Code of Practice.

This Policy is published on the UTC's website to fulfil the UTC's statutory responsibility to publish the information it contains.

APPENDIX A – The four areas of special educational need

(i) Communication and Interaction

Students may have one or more of these difficulties, affecting learning (including literacy), socialisation and emotional development:

- (a) Developmental Language Delay: for example, a delay in language comprehension, expression or interaction; progress, however slow, follows a 'normal pattern' of development;
- (b) Developmental Language Disorder: for example, development in language comprehension, expression or interaction will show an uneven or unusual pattern;
- (c) Phonological/Speech Difficulty: this refers to the student's ability to produce intelligible speech and will include those with specific difficulties including verbal dyspraxia and dysarthria;
- (d) Receptive Language Difficulty: the student may have particular difficulty attaching meaning to words and developing concepts or have difficulties understanding complex grammar or implied meaning;
- (e) Expressive Language Difficulty: the student may have difficulty accessing vocabulary, using complex grammar, organising ideas, structuring sentences and conveying intended meaning;
- (f) Autistic Spectrum Conditions / Disorders: autistic conditions are now generally regarded as developmental patterns linked to neurological factors, affecting social interaction and relationships, language and imagination with (typically) restricted and repetitive patterns of self-chosen behaviour.

(ii) Cognition and Learning

Students with general learning difficulties have academic attainments which are significantly below those of their peers due to a slower rate of learning. They will have difficulty acquiring and applying basic literacy, numeracy and language skills. Additionally, they may have difficulty with concentration, memory, social skills and self-esteem.

Some students may have specific learning difficulties in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers, which are not typical of their cognitive ability or general level of performance. They may gain some skills quickly and demonstrate a higher level of ability orally, yet may encounter sustained difficulty in gaining literacy or numeracy skills. These difficulties may sometimes be associated with significant problems of:

- sequencing and short-term memory
- verbal recall or significant delays in language functioning (e.g. word retrieval difficulties)
- visual and auditory perception
- developmental co-ordination difficulties (dyspraxia)
- frustration and self-esteem.

(iii) Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Students with significant behavioural, emotional and social development difficulties will show evidence of emotional instability or disturbed behaviour that is significantly different from that of

their peers. They may be hyperactive and have difficulty concentrating and applying their learning. They may appear withdrawn or isolated, be disruptive and disturbing and may also have low self-esteem. The impact of their behaviour may affect their academic achievement.

Where a student is at risk of permanent exclusion, a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) will be implemented; for students with special educational needs, the PSP will be linked with the provisions of the student's Intervention Plan(s) so that all needs continue to be met at the same level. A PSP is not a separate stage on the SEN Register but simply an additional strategy.

(iv) Sensory and/or physical needs, including medical conditions

The sensory range extends from profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may only be temporary. Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; others may lead to more complex learning and social needs; a few students will have multi-sensory difficulties, some with associated physical difficulties. For some, the inability to take part fully in school life causes significant emotional stress or physical fatigue.