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SEND and Additional Learning Support Policy

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1. Scope and Purpose

This policy outlines RNN Group's (hereinafter referred to as the 'Group') commitment to meeting its statutory duties to learners with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), and providing an inclusive, safe learning environment where learners with SEND can thrive. This policy responds to the requirements and recommendations of:

- The Children and Families Act 2014.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years (January 2015).
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2024).
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014

This policy applies to all learners with special educational needs and disabilities, their parents/carers and staff.

2. Aims

The Group fully endorses the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, 2015

(hereinafter referred to as the 'SEND Code of Practice'), and aims to operate a whole learner, whole college approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs. All learners are entitled to an education which enables them to make progress so that they:

- Achieve their maximum potential
- Become confident individuals, living fulfilling lives, and
- Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, higher education or training.

The Group SEND policy aims to:

- Identify how the Group will support and make provision for learners with special educational needs and difficulties (SEND)
- To work within the guidance provided by the SEND Code of Practice
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with those learners who have special educational needs
- To ensure access to the appropriate curriculum for all learners
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in provision for learners with SEND

This policy applies to all learners with special educational needs and disabilities, their parents/carers and staff (including all Group employees, it shall also apply to all RES employees and workers, external agency staff, contractors, volunteers, student teachers and those undertaking work experience.)

3. Definitions

A learner is defined as having 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 post-16 education.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as; “a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

Learners with a disability do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant correlation between disabled learners and those with SEND. Where a disabled learner requires special educational provision, they will be covered under the SEND definition.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Have an awareness of the legal responsibilities relating to equality and the statutory duties on post-16 institutions as specified under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- Ensure that there is a named Link Governor for SEND, and that they are able to carry out their duties, including accessing training.
- Ensure that the Link Governor completes a SEND link visit twice a year, reporting back to the board to confirm that the college is meeting its statutory duties to SEND learners, and making the necessary reasonable adjustments.

The SEND Link Governor will:

- Be fully involved in developing and monitoring the college's SEND Policy.
- Work with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the Group
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND within the group and update the governing board on this as appropriate.

The Deputy Principal/ CEO will:

- Provide strategic leadership for the college in all matters relating to SEND.
- Ensure that the SLT remain up to date and knowledgeable about the college's SEND provision.
- Ensure that the quality of SEND provision is continually monitored, and any concerns are addressed as a matter of urgency.
- Ensure that SEND provision is an integral part of the college self-assessment.

The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support will:

- Ensure that the Senior Management Team are up to date and knowledgeable about the college's Additional Learning Support offer.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and the demands it places on them.
- Ensure that data is available and analysed as part of equality monitoring.
- Ensure that the SEND curriculum offer is included in all relevant marketing (such as college prospectus and website), and is part of the Local Offer for Barnsley and neighbouring authorities.

The Head of Additional Learning and High Needs Support will:

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the College's SEND policy in line with its duty under the SEND Code of Practice
- Liaise with designated tutors where a Looked After Child has SEND
- Identify contact(s) to liaise with parents of learners with SEND
- Identify contact(s) to link with other education settings and outside agencies

- Support SLT to ensure that this policy is effectively implemented.
- Jointly monitor and track the progress of learners with SEND in consultation with appropriate curriculum teams, the ALS team, appropriate Local Authorities, parents and carers of learners with SEND and, any other stakeholder deemed to be appropriate from time to time
- Create and implement effective systems and procedures for the recording and delivering of ALS across the college.
- Create and implement effective processes for the identification of SEND and referral for support.
- Ensure that the delivery of support across the college is outstanding.
- Work with schools, colleges, local authorities and HE institutions to ensure effective transition between stages of education.
- Work with the examinations team to ensure that effective processes are in place regarding Exam Access Arrangements.
- Ensure that statutory duties regarding EHCP processes are adhered to.
- Liaise with Facilities Management to ensure compliance with all appropriate SEND legislation and guidance.

The SEND Assessors/ Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) Assessor will:

- Carry out ALS support appointments and assessments to identify need and recommend strategies to overcome presenting difficulties.
- Invite the learner in for a specialist assessment, if applicable
- Carry out individual care assessments/risk assessments where appropriate
- Ensure support is deployed in line with the Graduated Response approach and compliance with this policy and the SEND Code of Practice.
- Provide training and support on the use of assistive technology
- Work collaboratively with vocational teams to ensure ALS strategies are implemented and embedded as part of the curriculum delivery.
- Have a multi-agency approach to ensure that ALS packages for learners are individualized and meet learner needs in respect to their diagnosis and/or EHCP requirements.
- Collate, record and process all relevant Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) forms in a timely manner in accordance with internal deadlines. This shall include Form 8's and Centre Notes.
- Respond/Refer back to curriculum staff if incomplete/inaccurate applications are received or referrals for support needed.
- Work collaboratively with the exams department when processing EAA.
- Support the Head of Additional Learning and High Needs Support in researching developments and updates to access arrangements and SEND guidance and legislation.

The Learning Support Assistants will:

- Support the inclusion of all learners, ensuring that they have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop in conjunction with this policy and their duty under the SEND Code of Practice.
- Have an in-depth knowledge of all the learners with SEND within their caseload and ensure that they are supporting to assist in the removal of any barriers to learning by implementing strategies and recommendations within the learners ALS plan/EHCP.
- Contribute to the setting and reviewing of personalized targets.

- Work with tutors to ensure that SEND learners' needs are met and that they are making progress towards their individual outcomes/goals.
- Measure the impact of ALS for learners with SEND by conducting regular reviews and recording these reviews as directed from time to time.
- Receive specialist training, prior to providing any personal/ intimate care for specific learners, who have been assessed as requiring this level of support.

The Examination Team will:

- Work collaboratively with the EAA Assessors to ensure the relevant EAA documents & reports are completed and on system
- Alert ALS and tutors if there is no report or if it has expired in a timely manner.
- Apply to the respective Awarding Bodies for approval of EAA for each exam.
- Alert the LSA Coordinators if additional exams support required (i.e. readers, scribes) and approval for any such support received from appropriate authorities.
- Provide individual and group training in relation to; invigilation, being a reader/scribe

The Curriculum Managers will:

- Develop a curriculum that meets the needs of learners, including those with SEND.
- Allocate resource to enable reasonable adjustments to be made to meet the needs of learners who have a disability.
- Allocate resource to enable effective support to be implemented for learners with SEND who do not need ongoing support from the ALS team.
- Ensure that there is a departmental CPD plan which develops the understanding of SEND and equips staff for their role in relation to learners with SEND.
- Monitor the quality of provision to learners with SEND within their department, and their progress.

The Curriculum delivery staff will:

- Deliver quality first teaching and individualised curriculum enabling all learners to make progress.
- Working collaboratively with Learning Support Assistants and/or other specialist staff to plan, assess and review the impact of the support and interventions provided to learners with SEND.
- Promote an inclusive atmosphere within the teaching space.
- Ensure any materials used are accessible to all learners.
- Ensure SEND learners are not disadvantaged by the teaching or assessment methods.
- Adapt delivery style and assessment methods to meet the needs of individual learners.
- Monitor the progress of learners.
- Maintain effective working links with the ALS team, ensuring any learning based reasonable adjustments needed have been implemented.
- Work in collaboration with any support staff who are allocated to learners in their classes.
- Undertake CPD that supports the development of their knowledge and understanding of SEND.
- Apply for Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) for learners and:

- Completing the EAA Application form and forwarding to the ALS Department by the published internal deadline.
 - Friday 8th Nov 2024 for all returning learners and those taking exams in January
 - Friday 17th January 2025 for all other learners
- Referring any learner to the ALS Department if a support need has been identified on programme.
- Informing the Exams Department when a learner requires access arrangements reflecting their 'normal way of working' within class and any mock exams.
- Notifying learners of the arrangements that have been approved for the exam thus allowing learners to raise any concerns in advance.

The Estates Team will:

Estates/Health and Safety Staff will:

- Ensure that mobility access and travel routes within college are maintained at all times.
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for all learning environments and examination rooms.
- Ensure that appropriate toilets sited near examination and learning environment are accessible and in good working order.
- Emergency Evacuation routes have level exits and appropriate plans in place.
- Provide suitable tables and seating for classrooms and examinations to meet the requirements of SEND candidates

The Security Team will:

- Challenge behaviour of all learners in an appropriate manner, building professional relationships where possible.
- Only identified trained staff members should restrain learners and this would only ever be under exceptional and individual circumstances.

The Human Resource team will:

- Ensure that recruitment of support staff and invigilators follows normal Group policy with regards to applicants with disabilities.
- Work in conjunction with the ALS team and the Head of Additional Learning and High Needs Support to coordinate training events to raise awareness, skills and knowledge of staff in relation to SEND.
- Ensure that all staff receive training on their responsibilities under the Equality Act.

Learners will:

- Take responsibility for disclosing their needs at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Attend support meetings and reviews.
- Act on agreed support strategies.
- Inform the college of any changes to need.

5. Partnership working and the Local Offer

The college works in partnership with learners and their parents/carers, placing the learner's views, wishes and opinions at the centre of the process. We aim to provide appropriate levels of support to ensure the best outcomes for the learner alongside effectively preparing them for their next steps and adult life.

The college is committed to working collaboratively with local authorities and health professionals to put in place suitable arrangements for all young people with SEND. We encourage positive and timely communication from external partners regarding learners' needs, to enable us to meet and exceed our statutory duties.

The college also seeks to work in collaboration with schools and other education providers to ensure a smooth and effective transition for learners with SEND.

The Group accepts learners from across borders and therefore works collaboratively with a variety of local authorities with regards to promoting and meeting the local offer. Each

Local Authority's local offer is published on their respective websites and can be accessed below:

- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council: <https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/>
- Nottinghamshire County Council: <https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/kb5/nottinghamshire/directory/localoffer.page?newdirectorychannel=9-2>
- Doncaster Council: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/local-offer-send>
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council: https://barnsley.cloud.servelecsynergy.com/Synergy/Local_Offer/
- Sheffield Council: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/local-offer>

6. Supporting transition

We encourage learners with SEND to disclose their need to the college at the earliest opportunity, so that appropriate support can be put in place in a timely manner. Opportunities for disclosure will be provided before, during and after application. The college will ensure that staff are available at open events to discuss what support is available, and offer SEND specific events, including individual tours, to those who would benefit from them.

Where the Group is aware that a young person with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) intends to apply to us, then a member of the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team will attend their annual review at school to aid transition, when invited by the school or Local Authority.

Any applicant that declares SEND will be contacted by the ALS team to discuss what support is needed. Support with interviews can be requested. Where applicable, the ALS team will also liaise with any external agencies involved with supporting the learner.

Where appropriate, learners with SEND will be offered support with their transition into college. This will be agreed with the learner (and parent/carer/current school where applicable) and will be designed around the individual needs of the learner.

Where a learner has an EHCP, the transition plan should be agreed at the annual review in the year preceding the entry to college, however it may be appropriate in some circumstances for this to be agreed further in advance. The implementation of this transition plan may need negotiation with the Local Authority to ensure funding is available to meet the learner's needs.

7. Additional Learning Support

Additional Learning Support (ALS) is action that is taken to provide support for learning that is over and above that which is usually provided.

ALS is provided to help learners access their education and make progress. The need for ALS arises from a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND).

At the RNN Group we implement a graduated response whereby actions are reviewed in the context of a growing picture of the learner's needs. See appendix 1 for detail.

The Group will provide the necessary support to enable any learner with SEND to access their programme of study in a way that they are not disadvantaged due to their SEND. We endeavour to meet need through careful planning and high-quality teaching and learning, and supplement this with other support strategies for those that need it.

Where additional support is needed, the ALS team will produce a support plan, which will inform all staff who work with the learner of the support needed and the strategies which will help them. This plan will direct staff to the relevant sections of the Inclusivity Toolkit. Learners who are accessing support from a Learning Support Assistant, will review their progress on a termly basis, reflecting on how the support is aiding their studies and are improvements they have seen in their own skills.

Learning support available:

- Differentiating and personalised the curriculum where appropriate to ensure it is accessible to all learners
- Adapting resources and materials
- Study skills support
- Social skills support
- Assistive technology support
- Support for learners with medical/health support – to be reviewed and risk assessed accordingly
- Exam access arrangements e.g. use of a separate/smaller room, extra time, reader, scribe, supervised rest breaks, different coloured paper/overlays, prompt, etc.
- Confidential health and well-being support i.e. mentor/counselling support
- Learning support assistant support; in/out of class/individual/shared/group support
- Meet and greet
- Break and lunchtime support/supervision
- Mobility support
- Sensory support for learners with hearing or sight impairment

If a learner is based for part of their programme in a workplace (e.g. an apprenticeship, internship or work placement), then with the learner's permission the employer will be included in communication regarding support.

8. Identification and assessment of SEND

Each learner's knowledge, skills and behaviors will be assessed on entry and measured throughout the academic year. Tutors and support staff will make regular assessments of progress for all learners and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- Fails to match or better the learner's previous rate of progress.
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the learner and their peers.
- Widens the attainment gap.

This should also include progress in areas other than academic attainment, for example, wider softer skills development.

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

The Group encourages learners with SEND to disclose their needs to the Group at the earliest opportunity, so that appropriate support can be put in place in a timely manner. Opportunities for disclosure will be provided before, during and after the application process.

Additional support needs will be identified through the learner recruitment and admissions process, staff or self-referral and through the EHCP consultation process. However, we appreciate that some learners do not wish to disclose immediately or may be unaware of their learning needs, with this in mind we accept referrals throughout the year. Referrals can be made by the learners, parent or carer or by staff members who identify a potential learning need.

Learners identified as having SEND will be invited to attend an assessment appointment with skilled and experienced SEND Assessors.

An individualised ALS plan will be created and this will be shared with relevant staff to inform teaching and learning, and to ensure that the recommended reasonable adjustments and strategies are made to remove any barriers to learning.

9. Learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's)

An education, health and care plan ('EHCP') is for those children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

EHCPs identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support required to meet those needs.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice, the Group will cooperate with local authorities and the statutory processes and timeframes when being consulted on as a provider of choice for learners.

Before being named as a provider in section 'I' of the EHCP, it is important that the Group are confident the learners needs can be met and that the appropriate provision type be made available.

If there are concerns with regards to being able to meet the needs and provision type outlined within learners EHCP's, this will be discussed with relevant colleagues and professionals where appropriate.

Learners with an EHCP will have their progress reviewed regularly throughout the year, with their plan being reviewed annually. Parents/carers will be kept informed at all stages, and all relevant professionals will be invited to the annual review under the responsibility of the respective Local Authority. Preparation for Adulthood will form a key component of the EHCP outcomes agreed for all learners at the college.

If the characteristics of learners should change in relation to their behavior and restraint is required, the Group would review the appropriateness of the provision with external support and if appropriate provide appropriate training to designated members of staff.

10.14 – 16 Learners

Learners who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) and are applying to study part time at the college must declare support needs as part of the application process to ensure that appropriate support can be put in place. Where the learner has, or has previously had an EHCP, then the Local Authority should be involved before the learner enrolls.

The Group works with any schools, who send school link learners to ensure their needs can be met for this part of their education.

11. Higher Education (HE) Learners

HE learners who disclose a disability will be contacted by the HE & EAA Assessor to discuss their needs and what support is necessary. The way that support within HE is accessed depends on the course type and method of study.

12. Access Arrangement, Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration

Where a learner has a substantial disadvantage in an examination situation, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. Any access arrangements that were in place in school do not

automatically carry over into college; the current centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates, however, professionals from other organisations may give advice.

The Group recommends that the learner request a copy of their Form 8 from school and provides that to the college (The Form 8 is the form that the education provider has to submit to JCQ). This enables the ALS team to get a full understanding of the historical need for the arrangements, and will speed up the new application process.

All staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) handbook.

13. Developing independence and Preparing for Adulthood

Deployment of support will be based on a graduated approach considering;

- the level of study programme,
- prior attainments,
- aspirations and career goals,
- progression routes,
- individual needs and
- EHCP's where appropriate.

ALS is intended to be flexible and creative in order to meet the needs of individual learners, however the need to promote independence must also be considered.

The Group works towards the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) standards when reviewing the ALS needs of learners with an understanding that the support and services offered to young people with SEND may change as they become an adult. This could result in a reduction in the levels of support which learners' access over time.

14. Reporting concerns

In line with the college's complaints procedure, learners are encouraged to resolve any issues/concerns informally before making a formal complaint. If a learner with SEND (or their parent/carer) need support with raising an issue/concern, either informally or formally, then this will be made available via the ALS team.

Head of Additional Learning and High Needs Support

Director of Safeguarding and Student Support – Laura Reid

15. Expertise and training of staff

The Group is committed to the CPD of all staff, and SEND training is a key priority. ALS staff are expected to have, or be working towards relevant qualifications in learning support, and receive regular updating and input from local partner agencies, alongside role specific development.

SEND Assessors are experienced in a range of learning difficulties and disabilities with a minimum of 2 years' experience of working in an FE environment.

Support plans are prepared for all learners and accessed by all staff supporting learning in advance of supporting the learner in their teaching and learning environment.

The Group works in conjunction with the Local Offer and ensures specialist support/health services are bought in to support any learners who require this; i.e. SaLT, VI, HI, Educational Psychologists.

16. Data Protection

The Group will process the information it collected only for the lawful purposes originally stated at point of data collection; in compliance with a legal obligation or if it is necessary to protect the vital interests of the learner and will take all necessary steps to keep it secure at all times.

The personal data collected will be processed in accordance with the relevant Data Protection legislation and the data we collect from the data subject will only be disclosed to other parties for administration of the learner interaction with the Group; if required by law or with specific consent.

If a learner or other agency requires access to the learner record, either during or after its termination, then a formal Subject Access Request must be made to the Group via the data protection team at sar@rnnngroup.ac.uk

There is no charge for the provision of this information however; the Group may withhold certain information that is exempt from the right of Subject Access.

17. Graduated response

