



# **SEND POLICY**

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## **1. Purpose and scope**

Arco Academy is committed to ensuring that every student is supported to access an ambitious, broad and balanced education and to achieve the best possible educational and wider outcomes.

This policy sets out Arco Academy's approach to identifying, supporting, monitoring and reviewing special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and the responsibilities of staff and leaders. It applies to all students at Arco Academy, including students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and students whose SEND is identified or emerges during their placement.

This policy is intentionally separate from the SEND Information Report. The policy establishes Arco Academy's principles, responsibilities and framework. The SEND Information Report provides more detailed, parent-facing information about how these arrangements operate in practice and is reviewed annually.

## **2. Statutory framework**

Arco Academy has regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance when supporting students with SEND, including:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014;
- the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years;
- the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- relevant statutory safeguarding guidance; and
- statutory guidance relating to supporting students with medical conditions, where applicable.

Arco Academy will keep its practice under review and respond to changes in legislation, statutory guidance and regulatory requirements.

## **3. Definitions and key principles**

### **3.1 Special educational needs**

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has 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 education.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age.

### **3.2 Disability**

A disability is considered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. A student may be disabled without having SEN, may have SEN without being disabled, or may fall within both definitions. Arco Academy will consider both its SEND responsibilities and its equality duties when planning provision.

### **3.3 What does not, by itself, establish SEN**

A diagnosis does not automatically mean that a student has SEN. Equally, low attainment or slow progress does not automatically mean that a student has SEN. Behaviour, attendance difficulties, English as an additional language, a medical condition or social circumstances should not in themselves be treated as evidence of SEN. Arco Academy will consider the underlying causes of any difficulty and whether the student requires educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age.

### **3.4 Four broad areas of need**

Arco Academy may use the four broad areas of need as a framework for understanding and planning support.

They are not labels and individual students may have needs across more than one area:

- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties; and
- sensory and/or physical needs.

#### **4. Arco Academy context and approach**

Arco Academy is an independent co-educational school for students aged 11-16. Arco Academy supports students with a range of individual needs. Many students are placed and funded by their home local authority and have an EHCP. Arco Academy also supports students who do not have an EHCP.

Arco Academy is not designated by the Department for Education as a special school. Attendance at Arco Academy does not, in itself, mean that a student has SEN. Each student's needs, circumstances and suitability for placement are considered individually through Arco Academy's admissions arrangements.

Where a student has an EHCP, Arco Academy considers the needs, outcomes and special educational provision specified within the plan together with available professional advice and assessment information. Arco Academy works with the students, parents/carers, the home local authority and relevant professionals to understand, implement, monitor and review provision within the context of the placement.

Arco Academy's approach is founded on high expectations, high-quality and adaptive teaching, appropriate reasonable adjustments, timely targeted support and careful review of impact. Additional or specialist provision is used where it is required by individual need.

#### **5. Aims**

Through this policy, Arco Academy aims to:

- place students and their families at the centre of SEND planning and decision-making;
- identify emerging or previously unidentified SEND as early as possible;
- maintain high aspirations and expectations for students with SEND;
- remove or reduce barriers to learning, participation and achievement;
- ensure high-quality and adaptive teaching is the foundation of provision;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and support equitable access to education;
- ensure provision specified within EHCPs is understood, planned for and implemented appropriately within Arco Academy;
- use the Assess, Plan, Do, Review graduated approach to understand need, plan support and evaluate impact;
- work collaboratively with parents/carers, students, home local authorities and relevant education, health and social care professionals;
- support successful transition and preparation for adulthood;
- ensure staff have appropriate knowledge, guidance and professional development; and
- promote inclusion in the curriculum and wider life of Arco Academy.

#### **6. Roles and responsibilities**

##### **6.1 CEO and Advisory Board**

- provide strategic oversight and scrutiny of SEND provision and policy;
- hold Academy leaders to account for the quality and effectiveness of provision;
- consider information about SEND outcomes, provision and improvement priorities; and

## **6.2 Principal**

- has overall responsibility for the quality of education, provision and outcomes for students with SEND;
- works with the SENDCo and senior leaders to determine the strategic development of SEND provision;
- ensures appropriate staffing, training and resources are considered;
- promotes a whole-school culture of inclusion, ambition and accountability; and
- ensures SEND is considered within Academy self-evaluation and improvement planning.

## **6.3 SENDCo**

- coordinates the day-to-day operation of this policy and Arco Academy's SEND provision;
- advises the Principal, teachers and support staff on SEND practice and the graduated approach;
- oversees the identification, assessment and review of students with identified or emerging SEND;
- maintains oversight of relevant SEND records, support documentation and provision;
- supports implementation and monitoring of provision for students with EHCPs and contributes to Annual Reviews;
- works with students and parents/carers to ensure their views inform planning and review;
- liaises with home local authorities and relevant external professionals and services;
- supports transition into, through and from Arco Academy;
- identifies staff development needs and provides or facilitates appropriate guidance and training; and
- monitors the quality, consistency and impact of SEND provision and reports to senior leaders and the Advisory Board as appropriate.

## **6.4 Teachers**

Teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students they teach, including where a student receives additional support from teaching assistants, the Inclusion Team or specialist professionals. Teachers will:

- provide high-quality, ambitious and adaptive teaching;
- understand and implement relevant EHCP provision, agreed strategies, support plans and reasonable adjustments;
- use assessment to identify barriers and inform teaching;
- work with support staff and specialists so that additional provision connects with classroom teaching;
- contribute evidence to Assess, Plan, Do, Review and EHCP reviews;
- monitor the impact of strategies and interventions; and
- raise concerns promptly through Arco Academy's agreed processes.

## **6.5 Inclusion Team and support staff**

- deliver identified support and interventions under appropriate direction;
- understand the intended outcomes of the support they provide;
- feedback evidence on student engagement, progress and response to provision;
- support students to develop independence rather than unnecessary dependence on adult support; and
- work consistently with agreed strategies, plans and reasonable adjustments.

## **7. Identification and assessment of SEND**

Arco Academy aims to develop a holistic and increasingly precise understanding of each student. Assessment is an ongoing process rather than a single event.

### **7.1 Students entering with identified SEND or an EHCP**

Where needs have already been identified, Arco Academy will build on the available evidence. Information considered may include:

- the current EHCP, SEND plan or equivalent support documentation;
- professional reports and recommendations;
- information supplied through admissions and local-authority consultation;
- information from previous educational settings;
- current and prior attainment and progress information;
- baseline, diagnostic and curriculum assessments;
- attendance and engagement information where relevant;
- health and social care information relevant to education; and
- the views, strengths, interests and aspirations of the student and their parents/carers.

### **7.2 Emerging or previously unidentified need**

For students without an EHCP, or where new needs become apparent, concerns may arise through:

- teacher and support-staff observation;
- progress and attainment information;
- diagnostic assessment;
- student or parent/carer concerns;
- changes in presentation or engagement;
- information from previous settings; and
- advice from relevant professionals.

When concerns arise, Arco Academy will consider the students' strengths and the full context of the difficulty. Slow progress or behaviour will not automatically lead to identification of SEN. Where appropriate, Arco Academy will begin or refine the graduated approach and seek specialist advice.

## **8. The graduated approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review**

The Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle supports ongoing understanding of a student's needs and the effectiveness of the provision in place. For students with an EHCP, APDR works alongside, and does not replace, the statutory EHCP and Annual Review process.

### **8.1 Assess**

Assessment draws together information about the student's strengths, needs, barriers to learning, attainment and progress, communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health needs, sensory/physical needs, attendance and engagement where relevant, aspirations, parent/carer views and relevant professional advice.

### **8.2 Plan**

Assessment information is translated into practical, clearly understood provision. Planning may identify:

- intended outcomes and priorities;
- curriculum adaptations and classroom strategies;
- reasonable adjustments;
- targeted or specialist interventions;
- resources, equipment or access arrangements;

- responsible staff and delivery arrangements;
- how progress and impact will be measured; and
- a review point.

Where appropriate, arrangements are recorded in Arco Academy's support documentation, including Additional Needs Plans (ANPs), individual strategies, provision records and risk assessments.

### **8.3 Do**

Teachers implement the agreed teaching approaches and remain responsible for the student's progress. Additional adults and specialists work in partnership with teachers. Relevant staff are expected to understand the students' needs, agreed approaches and intended outcomes, and to record or report the impact of support appropriately.

### **8.4 Review**

Review considers whether provision is having the intended effect and what should happen next. Evidence may include:

- progress towards EHCP, SEND or individual outcomes;
- academic progress and attainment;
- personal, social and wider developmental progress;
- attendance and engagement where relevant;
- the effectiveness of interventions, strategies and reasonable adjustments;
- the student's response to provision;
- student and parent/carers views;
- staff observation and assessment; and
- external professional advice.

Review findings inform the next APDR cycle. Provision will be refined, continued, stepped up or stepped down according to evidence of need and impact.

## **9. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

Where a student has an EHCP, Arco Academy will work collaboratively with the students, their parents/carers, the home local authority and relevant professionals to support delivery and review of the special educational provision identified within the plan.

Arco Academy will ensure that relevant staff understand the parts of the EHCP needed to fulfil their role, including identified needs, outcomes, provision and reasonable adjustments. Progress towards outcomes will be monitored throughout the year and will inform the statutory Annual Review.

Arco Academy will contribute to and, where required by the arrangements in place, coordinate Annual Review processes in accordance with statutory requirements and local authority procedures. The student and parents/carers will be supported to contribute their views.

Where evidence indicates that a student's needs or required provision have changed significantly, Arco Academy will raise this with the home local authority and relevant professionals. Where appropriate, Arco Academy may recommend amendment of the EHCP or that the local authority considers an earlier review or reassessment. Placement and funding decisions remain subject to the relevant statutory processes and agreements with the home local authority. Arco Academy will not assume that a specific intervention, model of adult support or level of withdrawal is appropriate solely because a student has an EHCP; provision will follow the individual plan and assessed need.

## 10. Students without an EHCP

A student does not need an EHCP to receive SEND support. Where Arco Academy identifies that a student has SEN, Arco Academy will, as appropriate:

- record the identified needs and relevant evidence;
- involve the student and parents/carers in planning and review;
- use the APDR cycle;
- record agreed provision, strategies and reasonable adjustments;
- monitor progress, participation and the impact of support;
- seek specialist advice where appropriate; and
- review whether the level and nature of support remain suitable.

Where a student's special educational needs appear significant and/or complex and, despite relevant support, it may be necessary for provision to be specified through an EHCP, Arco Academy will work with the student, parents/carers and relevant professionals in relation to a request to the home local authority for an EHC needs assessment. Arco Academy will provide available evidence of needs, progress, provision and impact to inform the local authority's decision-making.

## 11. Teaching, curriculum and reasonable adjustments

High-quality teaching, informed by knowledge of the student, is the first response to identified need. Arco Academy will maintain ambitious expectations while adapting teaching and the learning environment to reduce barriers.

Depending on assessed need, approaches may include:

- explicit instruction, modelling and scaffolded learning;
- pre-teaching, re-teaching and retrieval practice;
- chunked or simplified instructions without reducing appropriate challenge;
- visual supports and structured routines;
- additional processing time;
- multi-sensory approaches and practical resources;
- alternative methods of recording and appropriate assistive technology;
- literacy and numeracy intervention;
- planned adult support;
- environmental adaptations, including seating or reduction of distraction where appropriate;
- movement, regulation or structured break opportunities where appropriate; and examination access arrangements where eligibility and evidence requirements are met.

Reasonable adjustments are determined according to individual circumstances. Arco Academy will avoid rigid or blanket approaches and will review whether adjustments remain effective and proportionate.

## 12. Student and parent/carer participation

Arco Academy recognises students and parents/carers as important partners in SEND planning and review. Communication should be accessible, respectful and focused on outcomes.

### 12.1 Student voice

Students will, as appropriate to their age, understanding and circumstances, be supported to:

- express their views, wishes and feelings;
- understand their strengths, needs and what helps them learn;
- contribute to APDR and support planning;
- contribute to EHCP Annual Reviews;
- identify aspirations and priorities; and
- participate in transition and preparation-for-adulthood planning.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to share their knowledge of the students and to participate in planning, review and decision-making. Arco Academy will communicate relevant progress, concerns and planned changes and will provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute to reviews.

### **13. Transition and preparation for adulthood**

Transitions will be planned according to individual need. This includes entry to Arco Academy, movement between phases or programmes, changes of setting and transition to post-16 education, employment or training.

Where appropriate, transition planning may include information sharing, liaison with previous or receiving settings, visits, meetings, familiarisation activity, updated student profiles and involvement of relevant professionals or local authority services.

From Year 9 onwards, planning and reviews for students with SEND will give increasing attention to preparation for adulthood. Depending on the student, this may include:

- further and higher education or training;
- employment and careers aspirations;
- independent living and independence skills;
- good health and wellbeing;
- friendships, relationships and participation in the community; and
- the support required for a successful transition to the next stage.

### **14. Working with external agencies**

Arco Academy will seek specialist advice or involvement where this is necessary to understand or meet a student's needs. The professionals involved will depend upon the student's individual circumstances and home local authority arrangements.

This may involve education, health, social care or other specialist services. Arco Academy will work to ensure that professional recommendations are understood in the context of education and incorporated into planning where appropriate and practicable.

Consent and information sharing will be managed in accordance with safeguarding, data protection and professional requirements. Where there is a safeguarding concern, information may be shared without consent where this is lawful and necessary to protect a child or another person.

### **15. Social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing**

Arco Academy recognises that social, emotional and mental health needs can affect access to learning, relationships, participation and progress. Support will be matched to individual need and coordinated with safeguarding, pastoral and behaviour arrangements where relevant.

Where behaviour is a concern, staff will consider whether there may be an underlying unmet need, SEND, communication difficulty, mental health need, environmental factor or other barrier requiring further understanding. Behaviour itself will not automatically be treated as SEN.

Support may include pastoral support, targeted evidence-informed interventions, structured opportunities to develop emotional literacy or regulation, adaptations to teaching and environment, risk-management measures where appropriate, and referral to external professionals or services where necessary.

### **16. Equality, accessibility and participation**

Arco Academy is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to taking appropriate steps to prevent disabled students from being placed at a substantial disadvantage. Arco Academy will make reasonable adjustments and consider auxiliary aids and services where required.

Students with SEND should be able to participate in the wider life of Arco Academy, including educational visits, physical activity, enrichment, extracurricular opportunities and community activity, with reasonable adjustments and appropriate risk management where required.

Arco Academy's Accessibility Plan and equality arrangements provide further information about access to the curriculum, physical environment and information.

## **17. Training and professional development**

Arco Academy will plan staff development in response to the needs of its students, identified improvement priorities and changes in statutory guidance or professional practice.

Training may include whole-school development, role-specific training, consultation with specialists, coaching, briefings and online learning. The SENDCo will support staff to translate training into consistent classroom practice and will identify where further expertise is required.

## **18. Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness**

Arco Academy evaluates SEND provision by considering the impact on students rather than whether an activity has simply taken place. Evidence may include:

- attainment and progress information;
- progress towards EHCP and other identified outcomes;
- APDR reviews and provision records;
- intervention entry and exit information;
- lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny;
- attendance and engagement where relevant;
- student voice and parent/carers feedback;
- implementation of agreed reasonable adjustments and strategies;
- SENDCo and senior leadership monitoring; and
- scrutiny by the CEO and Advisory Board.

Findings will inform Academy self-evaluation, staff development, resource decisions and improvement priorities.

## **19. Record keeping, confidentiality and information sharing**

Arco Academy will maintain appropriate records relating to SEND, including relevant assessments, plans, provision, reviews, correspondence and professional advice. Records will be held securely in accordance with Arco Academy's data protection and records management arrangements.

Information will be shared with staff and professionals on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary to support education, wellbeing or safeguarding. Information will be transferred appropriately when a student moves setting, subject to legal requirements and Arco Academy's information-governance arrangements.

## **20. Complaints**

Concerns about SEND provision should, wherever possible, be raised with Arco Academy in the first instance so that they can be addressed promptly. Parents/carers may contact the relevant member of staff or SENDCo. Where a parent/carers remains dissatisfied, the matter will be considered in accordance with Arco Academy's Complaints Policy.

Arco Academy's complaints arrangements do not remove or limit any statutory rights of children, young people or parents/carers in relation to SEND, including applicable rights of appeal or disability discrimination claims.

## 21. Relationship with the SEND Information Report

This SEND Policy and the SEND Information Report are complementary but distinct documents.

| SEND Policy                                                                           | SEND Information Report                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sets the principles, duties, responsibilities and framework for SEND at Arco Academy. | Explains how SEND arrangements operate in practice for students and families.      |
| Reviewed at least annually and sooner where required.                                 | Published and reviewed annually, with operational information updated as required. |

Detailed information such as current contacts, examples of interventions, services, accessibility arrangements and parent/carer support should normally sit in the SEND Information Report or other linked Academy documents so that operational information can be updated without unnecessary duplication.

## 22. Monitoring and review

The Principal and SENDCo will monitor implementation of this policy. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and earlier when there is a significant change to legislation, statutory guidance, Academy arrangements or the needs of the student population.

The CEO and Advisory Board will approve the policy and receive appropriate information to support strategic oversight of SEND provision.

## 23. Linked policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside current versions of relevant Academy documents, including:

- SEND Information Report;
- Admissions Policy;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Equality Information and Objectives / Equality Policy;
- Curriculum Policy;
- Teaching and Learning Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Data Protection / Privacy arrangements; and
- Careers information, advice and guidance arrangements.