**Special Educational Needs Coordinator –**

**Considerations for Job Description and Person Specification**

It is a legal requirement for all maintained schools, including academies and free schools, to have a named Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). This document is intended to assist schools and academies when they are considering the job description and person specification for the role of SENCO in their maintained setting. **It should be read alongside the 3 key documents listed here which provide further details of the SENCO’s role and responsibilities and the** legal/statutory implications for the role:

* Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014 (updated 2015)) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
* The Equality Act Guidance for Schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
* Guidelines for the ‘use of reasonable force’ – please note that for pupils with SEN, there are other statutory guidelines which apply in addition to these <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

The key responsibilities, knowledge and skills mentioned below include both statutory and best practice suggestions and therefore should be considered with the above documents to ensure that the statutory requirements for each setting are met.

Ultimately, the responsibilities included in the SENCO’s job description should ensure that the setting can:

* Ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND; academically, socially and emotionally
* Support their staff to be continually reflective and able to identify and respond to pupils with SEND
* Provide a good universal offer of high quality inclusive teaching and learning provision in all classrooms by equipping staff well with knowledge and skills

**Overview of the role**

The SENCo is the person who usually has overall responsibility for ensuring the provision, for all pupils with SEND, is implemented in their setting. Ideally, the SENCo will be a member of the setting’s senior leadership team; working closely with the headteacher, senior management and fellow teachers, they should be instrumental in the strategic development of SEND policy and provision.

* The SENCo has responsibility for day-to-day operation of the setting’s SEND policy and for coordinating provision for learners with SEND.
* SENCos should adopt the key principles of an effective SENCo which include a focus on:

• their own professional development

• leading, developing and supporting colleagues

• working in partnership with learners, families and other professionals.

**Qualifications required for the role**

The person(s) appointed to the SENCo role **must have** Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and ideally have had relevant teaching experience.

The person(s) will also need to hold or be willing to achieve the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASENCO). **NB: this qualification does NOT have to be held at the time of appointment but must be achieved within three years of the post being taken up.**

**Responsibilities, Knowledge and Skills**

**The responsibilities, knowledge and skills included here are not necessarily exhaustive and should be added to and adapted, along with the wording of them, to meet the needs of individual setting.** As previously mentioned, the SEND CoP provides full details and advice on the role of SENCos in a range of education settings.

**Key Responsibilities**

The key responsibilities that are likely apply to all SENCo positions include:

* Inspire inclusive practice and to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils with SEND; including completion of a setting self-evaluation (East Sussex Quality Mark for Inclusion) and action planning for continuous improvement in inclusion practice, contributing to the school improvement plan
* Work with the headteacher and governing body to ensure that the setting meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements including providing a SEND perspective across the whole school framework; including reviewing and writing appropriate policies
* Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school’s SEND policy; including maintaining the setting’s SEN register
* Ensure effective systems for identifying SEND and assessing and reviewing SEND provision are in place; including creating and monitoring additional needs plans, provision maps with staff and as necessary, prepare applications for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), monitor and review provision and co-ordinate and attend annual reviews
* Co-ordinate and monitor the impact of provision for pupils with SEND; supporting target setting for pupils with SEND, collecting and interpreting specialist assessment and performance data and share with other staff, Headteacher and Governors as appropriate
* Advise setting staff on the graduated approach and evidence based, best practice strategies and interventions to ensure that all pupils with SEND in their classes make progress, as well as ensuring the social and emotional wellbeing of their pupils
* Support staff in further assessment of a pupil’s particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support
* Support the professional development of setting staff; including leading on national and local policies related to SEND and initiating and developing approaches across the setting ensuring all staff recognise and fulfil their statutory responsibilities to pupils with SEND
* Ensure that the records of all pupils with SEND are accurately maintained; reviewing and monitoring school systems
* Advise the headteacher on the deployment of the school’s delegated SEN notional budget and other resources to meet pupils’ needs effectively
* Support the efficient/effective deployment of staff and resources; including supervision and of learning support assistants, involvement in the appointment of Teaching Assistants
* Liaise with: parents of pupils with SEND, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies, external agencies, especially ISEND support and intervention teams, other setting staff including next provider of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned

**Key Knowledge, Skills and Experience**

The key knowledge, skills and experience that are likely apply to all SENCo positions include

* Qualified Teacher Status - essential
* Teaching experience in a relevant setting with evidence of delivering high quality inclusive teaching and learning
* Strong commitment to raising educational attainment for pupils with SEND
* Up-to-date knowledge on identifying and support pupils with SEND
* Understanding of evidence based, best practice strategies and interventions to improve access to all lessons for pupils with SEND
* National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASENCO) or ability and willingness to achieve the qualification within 3 years of undertaking the role; a willingness and ability to develop specialist knowledge and keep up to date with local and national policy and developments – essential
* Excellent, effective communication skills; oral and written
* Ability to build and maintain good productive working relationships with colleagues
* Good coaching, influencing and negotiating skills that demonstrate empathy and emotional intelligence;
* Ability to assess, analyse and problem solve and actively contribute to raising performance of pupils with SEND
* Good organisation and time management skills
* Ability to quality assure provision including carrying out effective lesson observations
* Understanding of budgets including budget monitoring, costed provision mapping and deployment of the SEN notional budgets
* Ability to effectively allocate resources including additional adults to support pupils with SEND to achieve best outcomes
* Ability to motivate and inspire confidence in pupils, staff, parents and the wider community in order to further develop and promote the school.
* ICT and its effective use as a management tool as well as across the curriculum to enhance teaching and learning

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the SENCo role further please contact Helen Cottell, Senior Manager: SEN Practice and Standards via email: helen.cottell@eastsussex.gov.uk