

FOOTSTEPS TRUST DIFFERENTIATION, ADAPTIVE TEACHING AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Footsteps Trust Academy is committed to providing a high-quality, inclusive education that enables every student to achieve their potential regardless of starting point, ability, need, background or circumstance. The Academy recognises that students attending Alternative Provision may present with a wide range of educational, social, emotional, mental health and safeguarding needs and therefore require personalised approaches to learning.

In line with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- SEND Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Alternative Provision statutory guidance
- Teachers' Standards

all students are entitled to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that is appropriately adapted to meet their individual needs.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure all students can access learning and make progress.
- Promote inclusive practice and high expectations for all learners.
- Support students with SEND, SEMH needs and additional vulnerabilities.
- Enable staff to use adaptive teaching approaches effectively.
- Reduce barriers to participation and achievement.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Ensure learning is personalised and responsive to individual needs.
- Support positive educational and post-16 outcomes.

3. Definition of Differentiation and Adaptive Teaching

Footsteps recognises that every learner is unique and that students learn at different rates and in different ways. Effective teaching requires appropriate adaptation of teaching approaches, resources, support and assessment.

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Rather than creating separate curricula, staff will use **adaptive teaching** to ensure that students can access the same ambitious curriculum while receiving support, challenge and adjustments appropriate to their needs.

Differentiation may involve adaptation of:

- Teaching methods.
- Learning activities.
- Resources.
- Communication approaches.
- Levels of support.
- Assessment methods.
- Pace and sequencing of learning.
- Outcomes and success criteria.

4. Inclusive Practice

Footsteps is committed to ensuring that all students:

- Feel valued and included.
- Participate fully in learning.
- Experience success.
- Receive appropriate support.
- Have their strengths recognised.
- Are challenged appropriately.

Learning environments should promote:

- Safety.
- Belonging.
- Positive relationships.
- Independence.
- Confidence.
- Resilience.

Students must never be disadvantaged due to disability, SEND, medical need, social disadvantage or other vulnerability.

5. Understanding Individual Needs

Effective differentiation begins with understanding each student.

Teachers are expected to use information from:

- Baseline assessments.
- Educational records.

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- EHCPs.
- SEND Support Plans.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).
- Attendance information.
- Behaviour records.
- Safeguarding information where appropriate.
- Student voice.
- Parent and carer feedback.
- Multi-agency reports.

Knowledge of students' strengths, interests, barriers and aspirations should inform planning and delivery.

6. Supporting Students with SEND

Students with SEND may require:

- Adapted teaching strategies.
- Additional adult support.
- Alternative methods of recording work.
- Assistive technology.
- Chunked learning activities.
- Visual supports.
- Modified language.
- Sensory adjustments.
- Additional processing time.

Teaching staff are responsible for implementing the strategies identified within EHCPs, SEND plans and support plans.

The Academy expects all teachers to be teachers of SEND learners.

7. SEMH and Trauma-Informed Practice

Many students attending Alternative Provision have experienced:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- Interrupted education.
- Trauma.
- Mental health difficulties.
- Social and emotional challenges.

Teachers should adopt a trauma-informed approach which:

- Builds positive relationships.

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- Promotes emotional regulation.
- Uses predictable routines.
- Maintains high expectations.
- Provides appropriate support.
- Helps students re-engage with learning.

Behaviour should be viewed as a form of communication and addressed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

8. Adaptive Teaching Strategies

Teachers may adapt learning through:

Learning Support

- Scaffolded tasks.
- Guided practice.
- Additional modelling.
- Small-group teaching.
- One-to-one support.

Communication

- Simplified language.
- Visual supports.
- Key vocabulary teaching.
- Repetition and reinforcement.

Resources

- Writing frames.
- Sentence starters.
- Word banks.
- Graphic organisers.
- Mind maps.
- Visual prompts.
- Digital learning tools.

Assessment

- Verbal responses.
- Practical demonstrations.
- Alternative recording methods.
- Additional time.
- Chunked assessments.

Stretch and Challenge

- Open-ended tasks.

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- Independent enquiry.
- Higher-level questioning.
- Leadership opportunities.
- Extended learning activities.

9. Challenge for Higher-Attaining Learners

All students should experience appropriate challenges.

Higher-attaining learners should be provided with opportunities to:

- Think critically.
- Solve problems independently.
- Apply learning in complex contexts.
- Develop deeper understanding.
- Extend beyond minimum expectations.

Challenge should be embedded within lessons rather than provided solely through additional tasks.

The term "Gifted and Talented" may be used where appropriate, but the Academy focuses on ensuring challenge for all learners across all abilities.

10. Personalisation

Personalisation is central to the Footsteps approach.

Teachers should:

- Know students well.
- Build strong relationships.
- Set personalised targets.
- Reflect students' interests where possible.
- Adapt learning pathways when appropriate.

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) should inform planning and teaching.

11. Diversity and Equality

Teaching materials and resources should:

- Reflect modern British society.
- Promote equality and inclusion.
- Challenge stereotypes.
- Represent diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Support understanding of protected characteristics.

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Students should see themselves positively reflected within the curriculum wherever appropriate.

12. Assessment and Progress

Differentiation should be informed by ongoing assessment.

Teachers are expected to:

- Monitor understanding regularly.
- Use formative assessment effectively.
- Adapt teaching in response to need.
- Track student progress.
- Review ILP targets.
- Identify students requiring intervention or additional support.

Assessment should inform future planning and provision.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

Will:

- Ensure implementation of this policy.
- Promote inclusive practice.
- Monitor curriculum access and outcomes.

SENDCo

Will:

- Support staff in meeting student needs.
- Monitor SEND provision.
- Provide advice and training.
- Coordinate specialist support.

Teachers

Will:

- Plan and deliver adaptive lessons.
- Use assessment effectively.
- Promote inclusion.
- Maintain high expectations for all learners.
- Implement agreed support strategies.

Learning Mentors and Support Staff

Will:

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- Support learning and engagement.
- Encourage independence.
- Reinforce teaching strategies.
- Promote positive relationships.

14. Monitoring

The effectiveness of differentiation and adaptive teaching will be monitored through:

- Lesson observations.
- Learning walks.
- Student work scrutiny.
- Progress data analysis.
- Student voice.
- SEND reviews.
- ILP monitoring.
- Quality assurance activities.

Findings will inform staff development and school improvement planning.

15. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Curriculum Policy
- Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Accessibility Plan