

The

PRIMARY SEND

HANDBOOK

for

TRAINEE
TEACHERS

SARAH ALIX



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Author Biography

Dr Sarah Alix has worked in Education for 20 years. She works for the Sigma Trust in Essex leading the teacher training provision. Sarah has experience as a youth worker, a primary school teacher, a behaviour support advisor working with primary, secondary and special schools, and working for a University as a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of their Education Department.

Sarah has a Doctorate in Education, a psychology degree, and post-graduate qualifications including the SENCo award, PGCert in Autism, MA in Education, and PGCert in HE. Recent publications include researching autistic trainee teacher experiences, and a handbook for foster carers.

Sarah is also a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a graduate member of the British Psychological Society and a Fellow of the Chartered College. She is part of the Autism Education Trust Expert Reference Group and Schools Reference Group.

Sarah has a great personal awareness and understanding of neurodiversity through her own family members who are autistic, have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia and general anxiety disorder, and through her own diagnosis of autism as an adult a few years ago.

Sarah has a strong belief that this is where it all starts: **education**, and that the school years lay the foundation for everything else to come, whether this is to work in health, finance, the arts, business or education to name a few, it all starts with the building blocks of school. This is why it is so important to promote the acceptance of differences, and to begin with this here within teacher training. Great teachers, with a secure understanding of how to adapt the curriculum for everyone, will make the difference to thousands of individuals each and every year.

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Acknowledgements

After writing *The Neurodiversity Handbook for Trainee Teachers*, I thought it was really important to write a book such as this to support primary trainee teachers navigating the SEND system in school and understanding their role in this. The two books complement each other; this book outlining the SEND system, the role of the teacher, and giving an in-depth look at the four broad areas of need from the Code of Practice, and the neurodiversity handbook reflecting upon this within a neurodiversity framework. I would like to thank Sage Editor, Delayna Spencer for all of her support and guidance along the way with both books and to Ruth Lilly and Esme Sawyer for their support and guidance. I would also like to thank each of my children; Charlie, Morgan and Maximilian for being the unique individuals that they are. It is important to thank everyone that has supported and helped me to write this book, given me insight, and have had discussions with me to form the case studies. This includes experienced staff from the Sigma Trust, SENCos, learning mentors, Trainee Teachers, Early Career Teachers and Parents.

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Introduction: How to use this Book

This book is a practical support book for primary Trainee Teachers, their mentors and teacher training tutors. It provides an overview of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) roles and responsibilities in schools, the broad areas of need, assessment and support for SEND pupils.

The chapters move through key areas to support SEND pupils, and there are three parts to this book:

1. *Part I* consists of Chapters One and Two in which the area of SEND is introduced, and the history of policy and legislation. How have we got to this point of supporting SEND pupils in schools? This section progresses to examine the roles and responsibilities of the SENCo and the class teacher in school in relation to supporting SEND pupils.
2. *Part II* focuses on the four broad areas of need that are outlined in the Code of Practice (CoP) (2015). There is a chapter dedicated to each of these four areas, in which the area is examined and consideration of how to support pupils with needs in each of these areas.
3. *Part III* looks at key areas of developing classroom practice in relation to SEND; relationships with other professionals, assessing pupil needs and there is a focus on Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans/ EHCPs).

There are links to the Core Content Framework and Teachers' Standards throughout.

The chapters draw upon expertise from Lead SENCos and SENCos in schools, and trainee and qualified teachers.

The book links directly to areas of the Core Content Framework, the Teachers' Standards and the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) (2015).

The book contains five types of interactive features throughout:

1. **Reflect** opportunities for the reader to reflect on areas of practice.
2. **Professional Discussion** for the reader to have with their class teacher, mentor, training tutor or SENCo.
3. **Activity** an opportunity to find something out or seek further information.
4. **Strategies to Support Pupils** outlining strategies for trainees to use (within Part II, Chapters 3 to 6).
5. **Case Studies** demonstrating examples of practice for reflection or discussion.

Key Documents Referenced throughout this Book

- *The Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (CoP) 2015*: This is a statutory code which contains the legal requirements for Local Authorities and schools, which outlines the roles and responsibilities that everyone has in relation to supporting pupils with SEND.
 - *ITT Core Content Framework (CCF) 2019*: This is a document written by the Department for Education (DfE) that sets out the minimum entitlement of training for all trainee teachers. It outlines the knowledge, skills and behaviours that define teaching. Initial Teacher Training Providers include all of the areas outlined within the CCF, within their own teacher training curriculum. Each chapter of this book links to areas of the CCF, so that you can see which areas of your teacher training curriculum are covered within the section of the book, and these are outlined at the beginning of each chapter.
 - *Teachers' Standards 2011*: these are the standards that you are assessed against at the end of your teacher training course and will determine if you pass the course and can progress to become an Early Career Teacher (ECT). You are required to meet these standards consistently throughout your teaching career. Each chapter links to areas of the Teachers' Standards, and these are outlined towards the end of each chapter so that you can connect the area that you have been working on and progressing towards meeting the standards.
 - *Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework*: This is a new document written by the Department for Education (DfE) (published January 2024) which is set to replace the CCF and ECF (September 2025). At the time of writing, this is not in use yet. The content is very similar to the CCF with a few more references to adaptive teaching and SEND, which are already covered within this book.
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Part I

**Policy and
Teacher
Responsibilities**

1

Policy Development and Legislation in the UK Context

Chapter Aims

- To understand how policy and legislation relating to SEND has changed over time.
- To consider what policy and legislation looks like in schools today.
- To understand the Local Authority's role in providing provision for SEND pupils.
- To gain an overview of the meaning of inclusion and different settings for SEND pupils.
- To gain an initial understanding of intersectionality, and how this may impact pupils in class.
- To have an overview of the categories of complex needs.
- To understand the importance of the Code of Practice (CoP) in school and how this informs the following chapters.
- To begin to understand how policy is changing, and what this might mean for class teachers.

Links to the Core Content Framework (CCF)

High Expectations

- **Learn that** a culture of mutual trust and respect supports effective relationships.
- **Learn how to** use intentional and consistent language that promotes challenge and aspiration.

Adaptive Teaching

- **Learn that** seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching.

Professional Behaviours

- **Learn that** reflective practice, supported by feedback from, and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement.
 - **Learn that** SENCOs, pastoral leaders, careers advisors and other specialist colleagues also have valuable expertise and can ensure that appropriate support is in place for pupils.
 - **Learn how to** engage critically with research and use evidence to critique practice.
-

Introduction

Consideration of SEND pupils in schools has changed and developed dramatically over the decades. This chapter will look at these developments so that you can understand how we have arrived at the system that is currently in place in schools, and you can consider why we have the systems and processes that we do, what challenges current systems pose to class teachers, and how you might implement current policy and legislation in your own classroom.

So, what is a Special Educational Need or Disability in this context?

Reflect

What is your current understanding of the term 'Special Educational Need or Disability' within schools?
