



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Date: May 2025

Due for review: Summer Term 2026

1. Aims

Our SEND policy aims to:

- Set out how our schools will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND.
- To raise the aspirations of and expectations for all children with SEND and disabilities to enable them to achieve their best.
- To provide a focus on high expectations of pupils with SEND and to ensure that they are well prepared for all stages of development throughout their lives including Nursery into Primary and Primary into Secondary transition and then subsequently into further education, including training, employment and independent living as appropriate.
- To ensure that the SEND of children are assessed and accurately identified.
- To enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum.

As a Trust, we have a very simple mission which is founded in a belief in the potential of every child. This is expressed in three clear aims:

- To nurture and develop the ambition, talents and interests of every child.
- To break down the barriers that inhibit the opportunities and achievements of disadvantaged pupils so that they can go on to lead lives of choice and opportunity.
- To create a family of schools that are deeply and purposefully connected to their communities.

We believe that education is transformative: it changes lives; and that schools are uniquely placed to engineer social change through powerfully addressing disadvantage in all its forms. The trust that is placed in us to nurture and support our pupils into flourishing and confident young people is one which we are committed to justifying.

We serve a diverse range of communities in Devon and Somerset and are dedicated to working in partnership with everyone invested in these communities to enrich our children's lives and empower them to carve out positive futures for themselves.

This is expressed through an absolute commitment to our local areas and an ambition to serve all the children and families within them.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), SEN Coordinators (SENCo) and the SEN information report

As a Trust, this policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that 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 the 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 schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

(SEND Code of Practice, 6.15 pg 94)

Many children who have SEND may have a disability under the *Equality Act 2010* – that is '...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'. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with chronic health conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but may have individual learning needs. There is also a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEND. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The SENDCo

They will:

- Work with the Headteacher to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHCPs.
- Ensure that teachers are aware their responsibilities to pupils with SEND.

- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services.
- Liaise with previous and potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.

4.2 The Trust SEND Leads

They will:

- Ensure that all legal and statutory requirements are met for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure this policy is adhered to across the Trust.
- Regularly evaluate to ensure appropriate provision is in place for all pupils with SEND across the trust.
- Ensure that all inclusive provision within the Trust is both efficiently and effectively managed.
- Ensure that details are published of what SEND provision is available through the Information Report and co-operate with the local authorities in drawing up and reviewing the Local Offer.
- Support the line management of each SENDCo within the schools.

4.3 Governance

Trustees will:

- Have due regard to the Code of Practice and towards all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities when carrying out their duties.
- Ensure that the legal obligations of The Equality Act 2010 are adhered to (see **Appendix 1**).
- Ensure that this policy is adhered to and strategies are effective in supporting all areas of children's development.
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans.

Local Governing Committees will:

- Provide a named governor for SEND in each school who ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEND provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.
- Have a consistent understanding about what inclusion is and how it is realised within each school.
- Proactively ensure that there is a meaningful culture of co-production.
- Check that their decisions make the school safer and more welcoming for pupils with SEND and that any unintended consequences are addressed.

The SEND Governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability provision within their school and update the governing board on this.
- Ensure the school is effectively supporting parents/carers of pupils with identified SEND.
- Check that risk assessment informs strategic decision making to support the wider responsibility of keeping pupils with SEND safe.

4.4 Senior Leaders**The Headteacher will:**

- Work with the SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Disseminate the school's vision for inclusion throughout the school.
- Ensure the school's Development Plan has clear aims and objectives in place related to SEND.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability

Senior Leadership Teams will:

- Identify, develop and embed a clear vision for the education of pupils with SEND.
- Create a culture and ethos that actively welcomes and engages pupils with SEND and their families.
- Proactively ensure there is a meaningful culture of co-production.
- Check that their decisions make the school safer and more welcoming for pupils with SEND and that any unintended consequences are addressed.
- Ensure that SEND is built into the work of each area of school life and not a 'bolt-on'.
- Confirm that the curriculum is accessible and works well for all pupils.

4.5 School Staff

Teaching staff (including Heads of Faculty, Heads of Department and Phase Leaders) will be responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class and reporting this to parents/carers.
- Working closely with any support staff or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENDCo to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this policy.
- Planning lessons to address any potential areas of difficulty and removing barriers to pupil achievements to enable those with SEND to access the full curriculum.

Pastoral staff (including Heads of House, Heads of Year, Tutors and Class Teachers) will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the personal, emotional and social development of pupils, ensuring their full participation in all enrichment and extra-curricular activities.
- Supporting the SENDCo to identify needs through the application of the school's graduated response.

Teaching Assistants will be responsible for:

- Knowing the identified needs and outcomes of the pupils they support.
- Working under the direction of the class or subject teacher to ensure pupils achieve the learning objective(s).
- Ensuring a focus on any individual targets/outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Liaising with the class or subject teacher and SENDCo to keep support plans updated.
- Contributing to any reviews of plans belonging to the pupils they support.
- Communicating effectively with the class or subject teacher and SENDCo.
- Deliver and monitor specifically identified interventions and maintain up-to-date records of these.

4.6 Families

Parents and Carers will:

- Engage in the production of pupil support plans.
- Attend and contribute to review meetings.
- Contribute their experiences to parent/carers voice to enable a culture of co-production.

Children and Young People will:

- Engage in the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle (at an appropriate level for their age and development).

- Contribute to the production of their pupil support plans.
- Contribute (and where appropriate attend) their review meetings.
- Contribute their experiences to pupil voice to enable a culture of co-production.

5. Working with Other Agencies

The Trust may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEND and effective support and interventions. The pupil's parents and carers will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed should be recorded and shared with the parents and carers and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEND support. Every effort will be made to access external advice and support swiftly. The Local Offer, published by each Local Authority and available through their website, details the range of support available both within the Trust and in the local area.

6. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy is **statutory** and will be reviewed by the Trust SEND Leads **every year**. This is done in consultation and co-production with all stakeholders (listed in Section 4), with their views taken into account and, where appropriate, incorporated.

It will also be updated during the year, if any changes are made to the information within it.

It will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

7. Complaints

Initially any complaint about the level of provision for a pupil with SEND should be addressed to the SENDCo.

If the issue is not resolved then the complaint should be raised with the Headteacher.

The Trust Complaints Policy, available on our [website](#), gives details of this process and, if necessary, how to escalate any concerns.

Parents and carers of children and young people in receipt of an EHCP also have the right to go to the local authority if they consider the school is not meeting their child's needs as set out within this plan.

8. Links to Other Policies and Documents

This policy links to the following Trust policies and documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Equalities Information and Objectives
- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy

In addition to these, this policy also links to the following policies and documents within each individual school, which can be found on their website:

- SEND Information Report
- Behaviour Policy (or equivalent)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Each school's Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School Policy

Appendix 1

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people. It states that:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child's disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.
- Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people. Public bodies also have specific duties under the public sector equality duty and must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with this general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable. The general duty also applies to bodies that are not public bodies but that carry out public functions. Such bodies include providers of relevant early years education, non-maintained special schools, independent specialist providers and others making provision that is funded from the public purse.
- The duties cover discrimination in the provision of services and the provision of education, including admissions and exclusions. All providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services. Most providers must also make reasonable adjustments by making physical alterations. Schools and local authority education functions are not covered by this last duty, but they must publish accessibility plans (and local authorities, accessibility strategies) setting out how they plan to increase access for disabled students to the curriculum, the physical environment and to any information that requires to be shared with all/any stakeholders.