

TRUST IN LEARNING (ACADEMIES)

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) POLICY

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Approval By: Quality of Education Committee/ Trust Board	Lead: Director of SEND, Safeguarding and Inclusion	Review date: July 2026
As part of the review process, this policy/procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.		

History of Policy Changes:

Date	Page	Change	Reason for Change
June 2025		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

Contents

1. Statement of Intent	- 4 -
2. Values and Principles	- 4 -
3. Objectives and Scope	- 5 -
4. Responsibilities and Accountabilities	- 6 -
5. Definitions	- 8 -
5.1 Special Educational Needs	- 8 -
5.2 Disability	- 8 -
5.3 Areas of Need	- 8 -
6. Identification of SEND	- 9 -
7. The SEND Register	- 9 -
8. A Graduated Approach	- 10 -
9. Levels of SEND	- 11 -
9.1 SEND Support	- 11 -
9.2 Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	- 11 -
10. SEN information report	- 11 -
11. Partnership with Parents/Carers	- 11 -
12. Transitions	- 12 -
13. Training	- 12 -
14. Complaints	- 12 -

1. Statement of Intent

This document sets out the policy for supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within Trust in Learning Academies (the Trust). Trust in Learning Academies places a high emphasis on inclusion and providing a high-quality education for pupils within our city, including pupils with SEND, is a priority for the Trust. Trust in Learning Academies supports every school to create an inclusive learning environment which celebrates and supports diversity. Trust in Learning Academies has high expectations for all pupils with SEND. Our schools support pupils with SEND to overcome any barriers to learning that they might face so that all pupils are able to flourish and thrive. The Trust places each child at the centre of their education, and as such the pupil's voice must be heard in the planning and implementation of any additional provision required. Pupils are supported to achieve their potential and so be well prepared for their next step in life.

The policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with pupils, parents/carers and staff.

2. Values and Principles

This Trust Policy is set out with the following principles at its core:

Trust in Learning Academies is a family of schools each with a distinctive identity, collaborating to strengthen and support each other. We deliver high quality education with evidence-informed approaches to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Inclusion is at the heart of all we do. We actively listen to the voices of our pupils, staff and communities. Every school makes deliberate choices to be sustainable and globally focused.

The Trust vision is to:

- Inspire pupils to trust in learning and achieve their full potential
- To empower pupils to have confidence in their successes to make a positive contribution to the world
- To remove barriers to learning and help transform the lives of our pupils

Any data collected, stored or managed as a result of this policy is in accordance with UK and any relevant retained or assimilated EU law, and in line with the Trust's ethos and values.

This Policy has been framed in accordance with the guidance on best practice from the Department for Education (DfE).

3. Objectives and Scope

3.1 The specific aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure all schools within Trust in Learning Academies fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND;
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND;
- Outline how Trust in Learning Schools will:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with SEND
 - Enable pupils with SEND to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff and external professionals to enable pupils with SEND to access a high-quality education.

3.2 This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Bill (2011)
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practise (2015)
- DfE (2025) Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (2024)

3.3 This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Wellbeing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy

4. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

4.1 Responsibilities of the Trust central team

- To ensure that the policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or being care experienced.
- To ensure the policy is well communicated to all Headteachers.
- To ensure that the policy is regularly reviewed.

4.2 Responsibilities of the Headteacher

- To ensure the implementation of and compliance with current policy and procedures at school level
- To monitor systems, resources, impact and actions related to the policy
- To ensure the policy is well communicated and staff understand their role in its implementation
- To handle any complaints at school level which arise through this policy.

4.3 Responsibilities of school leadership

- To ensure staff are inducted into the procedures surrounding this policy and any updates
- To provide training to ensure policy compliance
- To hold sessions for parents and pupils as required, to ensure the policy is understood.

4.4 Responsibilities of SENCO

- To oversee and coordinate additional provision for all four areas of SEND: Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social Emotional and Mental Health Need, Physical and Sensory
- To coordinate and oversee the school's graduated approach
- To work in collaboration with colleagues, parents/carers, pupils and external agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the additional provision they need to be successful
- To work with the Headteacher and other senior leaders to strategically develop SEND provision in the school
- To work with the Headteacher and School Business Manager to ensure that SEND funding for pupils with SEND is spent effectively, supporting them to engage successfully in school
- To support transition in and out of the school for pupils with SEND, where necessary implementing and enhanced and graduated transition.

4.5 Responsibilities of all staff

- To uphold the whole school approach to the policy through modelling expected standards and utilising appropriate procedures
- To keep up to date with policy changes over time
- To promote a collaborative and inclusive ethos where all pupils can thrive
- To feed back to school leaders where concerns may arise in the implementation of the policy.

4.6 Responsibilities of each class teacher

- To have high expectations for all learners, including pupils with SEND
- To provide high quality teaching that is adapted and personalised to meet the needs of learners
- To ensure at least good progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those with SEND
- To have a good understanding of the needs of the students in their class and additional provision that needs to be put in place to support those students

- To effectively deploy and collaborate with teaching assistants or specialist staff to effectively support pupils with SEND
- As part of the graduated approach, to review each pupil's progress against SEND targets and update provision accordingly
- To work with external agencies, following their advice and implementing actions relating to pupils.

4.7 Responsibilities of parents

- To support the implementation of the policy with the child, as appropriate
- Where a parent has feedback on the implementation of the policy, to raise this directly with the school while continuing to work in partnership with the school.

4.8 Responsibilities of pupils

- To uphold school rules and expectations and thereby comply with the implementation of the policy
- To feed back on the implementation of the policy through appropriate means, such as school council, to school staff

4.9 Responsibilities of the Link Governor for SEND

- To work with the SENCO and Headteacher to understand the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND, including implementation of the SEND Action Plan
- To meet with the SENCO, at a minimum at least once a year, to gain insight into SEND provision at the school, including contextual challenges and priorities for development
- To take part in School Performance Board discussions with a "lens of SEND, informed by a comprehensive understanding of SEND provision at the school.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special Educational Needs

'A child or young person aged from 0 to 25 years has special educational needs or disability (SEND) if they have a *learning difficulty* or *disability* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for him or her' (SEND Code of Practice, 2015)

They have 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 schools.

5.2 Disability

A disability can be defined as a 'A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities.' (Equality Act 2010)

5.3 Areas of Need

Within SEND, there are four broad areas of need. Pupils often have needs that cut across more than one area, and their needs may change over time.

AREA OF NEED	CHARACTERISTICS MAY INCLUDE
Communication and interaction (C+I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty communicating with others • Difficulty understanding what is being said to them • Difficulty expressing themselves • Difficulty understanding or using the social rules of communication.
Cognition and learning (C+L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning at a slower pace than their peers. • Specific learning difficulties, which impact one or more specific aspects of learning, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia • Moderate or severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) • Difficulties with attachment • Distressed or withdrawn behaviour as a result of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) or trauma.
Physical and Sensory (P+S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment • Sensory processing needs.

6. Identification of SEND

The benefits of identifying additional needs at an early stage are widely recognised, enabling effective provision to be implemented which improves long-term outcomes for pupils. Trust in Learning Academies takes a proactive approach in identifying and responding to SEND.

One way of identifying special educational need is to consider a child's progress in learning. To ensure that this identification is effective, we assess each pupil's skills and levels of attainment on entry to school, which will build on previous settings and key stages, where appropriate. In addition, class teachers make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- widens the attainment gap.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND. In cases, where a child speaks English as an Additional Language (EAL), further work may need to be carried out to identify whether there is also a special educational need beyond a language barrier. Assessments will need to account for the child's fluency in English, as well as their understanding in their home language.

In addition to identification of special educational need through assessment of academic progress, staff are trained in how to recognise other signs that may indicate that a pupil has SEND. This includes distressed or challenging behaviour, difficulties with attention and concentration, difficulties managing change, difficulties with social communication, sensory processing needs, difficulties forming and maintaining relationships. Each TILA school has a system of referring any concerns to the SENCO for further assessment into SEND (see appendix). Parents/carers or pupils can also raise concerns about possible additional needs (see appendix).

7. The SEND Register

Pupils who have been identified as having a special educational need or disability (SEND) are entered onto the SEND Register that is held by the school. The SENCO is responsible for overseeing the SEND Register. When a pupil is added to the SEND Register, the school will notify the parents/carers.

The SEND Register is kept within the school, and its contents is held in line with the TILA Data Protection Policy. Its contents are only discussed with external agencies once parental approval for such a referral has been granted.

If a child is deemed to no longer have a special educational need, then they can be removed from the SEND Register. Parents/carers are notified when this happens.

8. A Graduated Approach

Trust in Learning Academies is committed to providing comprehensive support for learners with SEND, based on a graduated approach. The graduated approach is guided by the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process, “a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised, with a growing understanding of the learner’s needs and of what supports the learner in making good progress and securing good outcomes (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

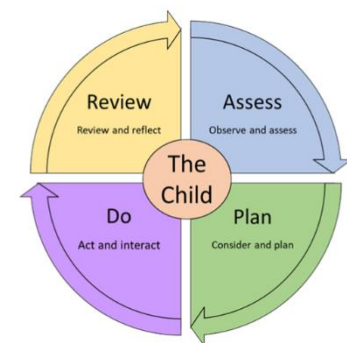
The Trust’s high-quality universal offer ensures that teaching and learning is adapted to support pupils overcome any low-level barriers to learning that they may be facing. Adaptive practice can be for all pupils and is responsive to need in any given lesson.

However, when a child is identified as having potential SEND, the graduated approach begins. This cyclical approach includes review at least three times each academic year, and ensures that the school always has a strong, evidence-based understanding of each pupil’s additional needs and associated support that they require. The school’s procedures involved in the graduated approach are detailed in the appendix.

Assess

Staff working with the pupil (including teachers and pastoral staff) in collaboration with the SENCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil’s needs. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to additional support. The views of the pupil and their parents/carers will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil’s need.



Plan

In consultation with the parents/carers and the pupil, the teaching team working with the pupil and the SENCO, will decide which adaptations, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil’s additional needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed.

Parents/carers will be fully aware of the planned support and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

Do

The pupil’s class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress, even when a pupil’s additional support involves teaching away from the main class or subject teacher. In this instance, the teacher will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENCO will support staff in ongoing assessment of the pupil’s particular strengths and needs, in problem solving and advising on how to implement additional provision effectively.

Review

The effectiveness of the additional provision and impact on the pupil’s progress will be reviewed regularly. As part of this, SEND Reviews will take place at least three times per year. Evaluation of impact will take into consideration the level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes, the views of the pupil, parents/carers and staff who work with the pupil. The teacher and SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil’s progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents/carers.

9. Levels of SEND

9.1 SEND Support

The majority of pupils with SEND, will receive support at a SEND Support level. On the census these pupils are marked with the code K. The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget (Element 2).

These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Some pupils at SEND Support level may require the support of external professionals to provide further assessment of need and associated recommendations to school for how they can most effectively support the pupil.

9.2 Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Pupils who need more support to be successful than is available through the school-based SEND provision, may be entitled to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). An EHCP is a legal document that outlines the needs of the pupil, additional provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought. On the census, pupils with an EHCP are marked with the code E. An EHCP is granted after an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment is requested from the local authority. An EHCNA can be applied for by school or parents/carers.

Where a pupil has an EHCP, the school, in cooperation with the local authority, must officially review the EHCP at a minimum every twelve months through the statutory Annual Review process. If a pupil is not making the necessary progress, or the placement is breaking down, the SENCO will call an emergency review of the EHCP.

Some pupils with high-level SEND may require specialist educational provision. To access specialist provision, they will need an EHCP which identifies that a specialist educational setting is required.

10. SEN information report

Each year the school produces a SEN Information Report, which is published on its website, and which outlines how the policy is implemented. The SEN information report is updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

11. Partnership with Parents/Carers

Trust in Learning Academies recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers with the view to gaining the best possible understanding of each pupil with SEND's additional needs and provision required. Parents/carers are involved on initial identification of SEND and through SEND Reviews which are part of the schools graduated approach. If parents/carers have concerns or queries, they know how to contact their child's teacher and the SENCO, who will welcome further dialogue with them.

12. Transitions

Trust in Learning Academies recognises that some pupils with SEND will require enhanced transition processes. These may be into the school and/or out of the school to a new setting. They may also require additional support at transition points within school, for example when beginning a new academic year. As needed, schools provide additional transition support for pupils with SEND.

13. Training

Training to enable teaching and support staff to provide high quality teaching and learning for pupils with SEND will be facilitated on a regular basis. School leaders, including the SENCO, will continuously quality assure provision for pupils with SEND in order to identify staff with specific training needs.

14. Complaints

Where parents/carers have concerns about the school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns with the class teacher or SENCO. We will try to resolve the complaint, working collaboratively with the parents/carers to understand and address their concerns. If their concerns are not resolved, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally, following Trust in Learning Academies Complaints Policy.

Where parents/carers would like to raise concerns about a local authority decision regarding SEND, they should follow the local authority appeals procedure, outlined on the website:

- Bristol City Council: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers/education-health-and-care-plans/resolving-disagreements-about-send-provision>
- South Gloucestershire: <https://find-information-for-adults-children-families.southglos.gov.uk/kb5/southglos/directory/advice.page?id=LM67irgEFek>

15. School Procedural Information

School procedural information relevant to this policy will be made available by the school in their SEN Information Report. This will be available on the school website.

This includes:

- Details of SENCO and other members of the SEND Team
- Details of school graduated response including referral process, how provision will be recorded e.g. Pupil Passport templates
- School procedure for involving parents
- School procedure for involving pupils.