



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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1. Statement of intent

This policy outlines the framework for schools within the Spiral Partnership Trust to meet their duties and obligations to provide a high-quality education to all of its pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Schools in the Trust will work with Hertfordshire Local Authority, and within the following principles which underpin this policy:

- The involvement of children, parents and young people in decision making.
- The identification of children and young people's needs.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- Highest possible quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over their support.
- Working towards preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children and Families Act (2014) (and related regulations)
- Health and Social Care Act (2012).
- Equality Act (2010)
- The Education Act (1996)
- DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' (2014)
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions at school (2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy

3. Definitions

The law states that a child has a special educational need if he / she has a:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- Disability or health condition which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

All schools in the Trust will make provision for pupils within the 4 Broad Areas of Need:

- Communication and interaction.
- Cognition and learning.
- Social, mental and emotional health.

- Sensory and / or physical

4. Admissions

Spiral Partnership Trust will ensure that all schools meet their duties under the Schools Admissions Policy. The same entry criteria will be applied to all pupils and potential pupils.

- Not refusing admission for a child that has named the school in their EHC plan if the placement is considered to be the most appropriate for the child.
- Adopting fair practices and arrangements in accordance with the Schools Admission Code for the admission of children without an EHC plan.
- The schools will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school.
- All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community.
- Information will be obtained on future pupils in order to facilitate advanced planning. Prospective parents of pupils with SEND are invited to a transition meeting prior to the pupil starting school in order to discuss the pupil's specific needs.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Education Committee will be responsible for:

- Approving this policy.

The Local School Committee (LSC) has a responsibility to ensure that the school:

- Fully engage parents and / or young people with SEND when drawing up policies that affect them.
- Identify, assess and make SEND provision for all children and young people with SEND, whether or not they have an EHC plan.
- Use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by a child or young person's SEN.
- Designate an appropriate member of staff (the SEN co-ordinator or SENCO) as having responsibility for co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN.
- Appoint a designated teacher for 'looked after' children.
- Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to help alleviate any substantial disadvantage they experience because of their disability.
- Take necessary steps to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not discriminated against, harassed or victimised.
- Publish annual information on the school's SEN Policy, setting out the measures and facilities to assist access for pupils with disabilities.
- Publish annual information about the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities, the steps taken to prevent children with being treated less favourably than others, the facilities disabilities provided to assist pupils with disabilities, and the school's accessibility plan.
- Publish accessibility plans setting how they plan to increase access for pupils with disabilities to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information, reviewable every 3 years.
- Develop complaints procedures which, along with details about appealing to the SEND Tribunal, will be made known to parents and pupils through a single point of access.
- Provide suitable, full-time education from the 6th day of a fixed permanent exclusion of a pupil with SEN, in line with their EHC plan if in place.

The Headteacher has a responsibility to:

- Ensure that those teaching or working with the pupil are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them.
- Ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the course of the academic year.
- Cooperate with local authorities during annual EHC plan reviews.
- Ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within the school
- Regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements
- Ensure that teachers understand the strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and possess knowledge of the most frequently encountered special educational needs

The SENCO must:

- Be a qualified teacher
- Attain the National Professional Qualification for SEND within 3 years of appointment
- Work closely with the headteacher and Local School Committee, as part of the school leadership team, to determine the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school, including advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Undertake day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy
- Ensure they have oversight of the needs of pupils with SEND attending the school, and advising the headteacher in relation to those needs as appropriate.
- Coordinate the specific provision made to support individual children with SEND, including those with EHC plans.
- Ensure relevant staff members have the appropriate knowledge, skills and training required to support pupils effectively.
- Liaise with the parents/carers of pupils with SEND and, where the child does not have an EHC plan, inform them when SEN provision is being made.
- Be a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services, other providers and professionals and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Be familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to the family.
- Ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils SEND up to date.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Planning and reviewing support for pupils with SEN, using the Graduated Approach, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO, external agencies, and the pupil themselves
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment or starting point.
- Using appropriate assessments to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty and ensuring that there are no barriers to pupils achieving.
- Liaising with other staff who may support pupils with SEND, including the delivery of interventions, to ensure a joined up approach

6. Involving pupils and parents/carers in decision making

Effective planning should help parents/carers, children and young people with SEND express their needs, wishes and goals, and should:

- Focus on the child or young person as an individual, not on any SEND diagnosis
- Be easy for pupils and their parents to understand and use clear, ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon
- Highlight the pupils' strengths and capacities.
- Enable the pupil, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in future.
- Tailor support to the needs of the individual
- Organise assessments to minimise demands on families
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach

7. Joint commissioning, planning and delivery

The Trust will ensure that schools collaborate with the local authority in the exercise of its duty to work together with health and social care providers by:

- Identifying improved system outcomes in consultation with pupils and their parents, taking into account:
 - Prevention.
 - Early identification / recognition.
 - How pupils and their families will be able to access services.
 - How transitions between life stages and settings will be managed, including from early years to primary education, primary to secondary, and secondary to further education (FE).
 - How provision and support services will enable pupils to prepare for their future adult life
- Drawing on the wide range of local data-sets about the likely education needs of children and young people with SEND to forecast future need, including:
 - Population and demographic data.
 - Prevalence data for different kinds of SEN and disabilities among children and young people at national level.
 - Numbers of local children with EHC plans and their main needs.
 - The numbers and types of settings locally that work with or educate children with SEN and disability.
 - An analysis of local challenges / sources of health inequalities.

8. Funding

- All schools in the Trust will allocate the appropriate amount of core per-pupil funding and notional SEN budget for the SEN provision of its pupils.
- All schools will ensure that any top-up funding allocated from the local authority's high needs funding block through Specialist and Specialist Plus EHC plan funding will be used appropriately to meet the provision outlined in Section F of the EHC plan

9. Local Offer

The Trust will ensure that all schools cooperate with the local authority and its partners in the development and review of the local offer.

10. Identification of need

The Trust will ensure that all schools endeavour to identify pupils' needs as early as possible through a consistent approach that includes:

- Making regular assessments of all pupils' current skills and levels of attainment
- Ensuring that high quality teaching is adapted appropriately for all pupils in the class and that ordinarily available provision and reasonable adjustments are in place

- Providing appropriate support to pupils identified as making less than expected progress given their age, stage of development and starting points
- Considering whether a pupil may have additional needs when support targeted towards specific needs fails to close the identified gap
- In collaboration with parents/carers, make referrals to other agencies should further investigation of possible underlying needs be required

11. Graduated approach

Where a potential special educational need is identified, all schools in the Trust will employ the graduated approach to meeting pupils' needs, including through:

- Establishing a clear **assessment** of pupils' needs
- **Planning** with parents/carers the strategies to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.
- **Implementing** the strategies with support from the SENCo as required
- **Reviewing** the effectiveness of the strategies and making any necessary revisions

12. SEN Support

In collaboration with parents/carers, a pupil may be added to the school's SEND Register at SEN support if:

- The support needed is more than ordinarily available provision and reasonable adjustments.
- Little or no progress has been made after teaching approaches were targeted specifically at a child's identified area of need.
- The pupil continues to show signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which results in lower than expected attainment in some curriculum areas
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties continue to be displayed, which are not ameliorated by the positive behaviour management techniques and relational practices employed by the schools
- Sensory and physical difficulties continue, despite the provision of specialist equipment
- Communication and/or Interaction difficulties remain, despite the provision of a more personalised approach.

The SENCo and other relevant staff, in consultation with parents/carers, will discuss seeking advice from external support services where a pupil:

- Continues to make significantly less than expected progress in specific areas over a sustained period
- Continues to work significantly below the age-related expectations of children of a similar age
- Continues to have significant difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which significantly impact on the pupil's own learning and that of the class group on a regular basis, despite the additional support that has been implemented
- Has sensory and/or physical needs that require specialist equipment and regular advice or visits from a specialist service or advisory teacher
- Has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause significant barriers to learning

13. Statutory assessment

- Schools in the Trust will, in consultation with parents/carers, request a statutory assessment of SEND where pupils' needs are significantly more than can be met through SEN support
- Schools will meet their duty to respond to any request for information from the local authority, relating to a statutory assessment within the 6 week time frame
- If the decision is taken by the local authority not to carry out an assessment or issue an EHC plan, the school will consider and implement the recommendations of feedback from the local authority regarding how the pupil's outcomes can be met through the school's existing provision.

14. Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

- Schools in the Trust will meet their duty to respond to local authority consultations within the 15 day time frame.
- Schools will admit any child where the school has been named in an EHC plan, if the placement is considered by all stakeholders to be appropriate to meet the child's needs, considering age, ability, aptitude or SEN and will not compromise the provision of efficient education for others or the efficient use of resources.
- Schools will ensure that staff teaching or supporting a pupil with an EHC plan are aware of the pupil's needs and that provision is in place to meet these.

15. Reviewing an EHC plan

Schools in the Trust will, in consultation with parents/carers, will:

- Cooperate with the local authority to arrange annual review meetings within the statutory time frame (6 months for Early Years and annually for school aged pupils).
- Seek updated advice and information about pupil progress prior to the annual review from all parties involved
- Prepare and send a report of the review meeting to the local authority and everyone invited within 2 weeks of the review.
- Where transition to another phase of education is approaching, ensure that a review of an EHC plan is undertaken within the local authority's required time frame

16. SEND Tribunals

Schools in the Trust will meet their requirement to respond to any request to attend a SEND Tribunal to explain any departure from their duties and obligations under the SEND Code of Practice.

17. Data and record keeping

Schools in the Trust will:

- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Include details of SEND, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists as part of the standard system to monitor progress, behaviour and development of all pupils.
- Record details of additional or different SEN provision on a school provision map

18. Confidentiality

Schools in the Trust will not disclose any detail of an EHC plan without the consent of the pupil's parent/carers, with the exception of disclosure:

- To the SEN and Disability Tribunal when parents appeals and to the Secretary of State if a complaint is made under the Education Act 1996.
- On the order of any court for the purpose of any criminal proceedings.
- For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986 or from the Children Act relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and local authorities.