



# **SEND Policy**

## **(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)**

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| Written by:  | Director of Inclusion |
| Date:        | September 2025        |
| Reviewed by: | Director of Inclusion |

## Related Policies and procedures

- SEND Report (can be found on each school's website)
- Accessibility and Equality Plan (can be found on each school's website)
- Equality Policy Statement & Single Equality Scheme (Trust Website)
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions (Trust Website)

## **Introduction**

This policy sets out our vision and principles for children and young people with SEND and our expectations for all schools across the Trust. The offer in our curriculum and wider activities within each of our schools can be found in the SEND Information Reports which are published on each school's website.

## **Legislation and Regulation**

This policy is compliant with the following legislation and regulation:

- **Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)** – sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014**, including the **2024 Amendment Regulations** which introduce the **National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs** as the mandatory qualification from September 2024.
- **The Equality Act 2010** – protects children from discrimination and promotes inclusive practices.
- **The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015, updated 2024)** – statutory guidance for identifying, assessing, and supporting children and young people with SEND.

This policy also has due regard to the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- **DfE (2025) Keeping Children Safe in Education** – safeguarding responsibilities for all staff.
- **DfE (2021) School Admissions Code** – ensuring fair access for pupils with SEND.
- **DfE (2015) Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions** – guidance on managing health needs in educational settings.
- **DfE (2013) Ensuring a Good Education for Pupils Unable to Attend School Due to Health Needs**.
- **Ofsted Framework (February 2025)** – SEND is now a standalone category in inspections, with schools required to demonstrate inclusive curriculum, staff training, and effective interventions. Schools cannot receive a strong overall rating if SEND provision is inadequate.
- **SEND and AP Improvement Plan (2023)** – outlines the government's long-term strategy for improving SEND outcomes, including reforms to qualifications, funding, and service delivery.

## **Definitions of Special Educational Needs (SEN) taken from Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014:**

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age is considered to have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- **(a)** have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- **(b)** have a disability 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.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above, or would do so if special educational provision were not made for them.

A child or young person must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which they are or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

### Definition of Disability

Many children and young people with SEND may also have a disability. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if they have:

**“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”**

- Substantial means more than minor or trivial — for example, taking much longer than usual to complete a daily task like dressing or eating.
- Long-term means the impairment has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or more.
- Normal day-to-day activities include tasks such as walking, reading, writing, using public transport, or social interaction.

This definition includes progressive conditions (e.g. multiple sclerosis, cancer, HIV) from the point of diagnosis, and also covers recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis or mental health disorders.

It is important to note that:

- A child may have SEND without being disabled, or may be disabled without having SEND, or may have both.
- Conditions such as addiction to non-prescribed substances are not considered disabilities under the Act.

### Our Vision and Values

At Beacon, we are proud of our inclusive people-first approach to learning. Beacon Education aims to build an inclusive, supportive, considerate community of lifelong learners, who are self-aware, reflective of the thoughts and beliefs of others and aspire to make a positive difference to the world in which we all live.



All members of the Beacon family are committed to improving the quality of education for every child in our care. Our core values of **Ambition, Respect and Excellence** will be promoted, and we aim for a culture in which everyone is able to feel valued, and where all achievements and efforts are celebrated. Our Trust schools have an inclusive approach to teaching children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) which ensures that all children and young people achieve their potential; personally, socially, emotionally, and academically in all areas of the curriculum, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, social background, religion, physical ability or educational needs.

As a Trust, we understand that: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community.

Article 23 (Children with a disability)

We consider every teacher to be a teacher of every child and have the highest aspirations and expectations for all children and young people, including those with special educational needs/disabilities. We aim to achieve a community where parents and those working in school have a mutual trust and confidence in each other, created through clear, consistent approaches to communication and collaborative working.

## **Policy Statement**

We will ensure that:

All schools within the Trust have regard for the voice of the child or young person with SEND as well as those of the parent or carer, and take into account their feelings, wishes and views;

- Schools will work closely with the local authority, and the home local authority of children with SEND to assist them in fulfilling the obligations under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and its associated guidance.
- All schools have procedures and professionals in place to enable them to fulfil their statutory duties and to drive the ethos and vision that runs through the SEND Code of Practice.

## **Admission and Inclusion**

The Trustees, in line with current legislation, affirm that admission criteria must not discriminate against children and young people with SEND. This policy reflects the principles set out in the School Admissions Code (2021) and the SEND Code of Practice, which advocate for inclusive and fair access to education.

## **Legal Duties and Principles**

- The School Admissions Code (2021) requires that children and young people with SEND are treated fairly in all admissions processes.
- The SEND Code of Practice (Section 1:27) states that:
  - Admission authorities must consider applications from parents of children with SEND (but without an EHC plan) on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria, as part of the normal admissions process.
  - Schools must not refuse to admit a child with SEND (but without an EHC plan) on the grounds that they feel unable to meet the child's needs.
  - Schools must not refuse admission solely because a child does not have an EHC plan.
- The SEND Code of Practice (Section 1:28) and the Equality Act 2010 prohibit discrimination against children and young people with disabilities in relation to school admissions. This includes:
  - Direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
  - A duty to make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure disabled pupils are not disadvantaged.

## **Commitment to Inclusion**

The school is committed to:

- Ensuring that all children and young people, regardless of their SEND status, have equal access to admissions and educational opportunities.
- Making reasonable adjustments to support children with disabilities, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Promoting a culture of inclusive practice, where diversity is valued and barriers to learning are actively removed.

## **Support for our schools**

Beacon Education uses a Trust-led model to support its schools. Educational Directors and specialist staff work with Headteachers and SENCOs to ensure consistent, high-quality support and training across the Trust. Schools also collaborate through the West Somerset Behaviour Partnership Board to share expertise and promote inclusive practice locally.

## Education and Health

All schools in the Trust work jointly with education and health care professionals and agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in their setting. Schools will work with local and national providers to secure the services needed to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

These services might include: speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, educational psychology assessment, mental health services, and other health and social care professionals.

All schools will make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people and will make arrangements to support those with medical conditions.

## The SEN Information Report

Each school in the Trust provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs for the four areas of SEND of the Code of Practice:

- Communication and interaction
- Social, emotional & mental health difficulties
- Cognition and learning
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Each school in the Trust publishes a SEND Information Report on its website. These reports vary by setting to reflect local needs and provision. They complement the Trust's SEND policy and outline each school's approach to SEND, available support, staff expertise, and contact details, including a link to Somerset County Council's SEND Local Offer.

Our schools will:

- Appoint a qualified SENCO who will complete the National Award in SEN Coordination within three years of starting the role.
- Publish a SEND Information Report on their website, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.
- Ensure all teachers take responsibility for the progress of pupils with SEND.
- Prioritise the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND in performance management.
- Provide a broad, ambitious curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Use assessment tools to identify SEND and consult with parents to place pupils on SEND Support where appropriate.
- Consider evidence of disability under the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments.
- Promote inclusion by enabling pupils with SEND to participate in all activities unless agreed otherwise.
- Regularly assess progress and take action for pupils making less than expected progress.
- Inform and work with parents when making special provision, meeting with them at least three times a year.
- Use the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle for all pupils on SEND Support.
- Request an EHC needs assessment from the local authority when necessary, in consultation with parents and the pupil.
- Deliver the provision set out in EHCPs and work with local authorities to complete annual reviews within statutory timeframes.

## Responsibilities

The following responsibilities apply in relation to this policy:

- Headteachers are responsible for ensuring an appropriately qualified member of staff is the designated SENCO within their school, and that each SENCO is supported appropriately to carry out

the role. Headteachers are responsible for enabling the SENCO to work strategically within their school to ensure the best possible education for learners with SEND.

- SENCOs are responsible for ensuring the education within the academy is compliant with the SEND Policy, as well as supporting parents and carers and the children and young people in meeting their responsibilities.
- Teachers are responsible for working in line with the DfE Teachers' Standards 5 and providing appropriate education for all the learners within their class(es) as outlined in Section 6 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Trustees, Executive Leadership Team and SEND Trust Lead will work with the Headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the Trust.

### **Monitoring and Compliance**

- Headteachers will monitor compliance with this policy within their school throughout the academic year, with Beacon Education quality assuring the impact of this policy in supporting SEND children and young people and in meeting the SEND Code of Practice.
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### **Appendix One - Identification of Need**

*A graduated approach: 'Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEND'*

*High Quality Teaching: 'The baseline for all learners'*

#### **1. Initial Monitoring**

Children or young people who fall significantly outside expected academic progress are discussed at pupil progress meetings. Teachers, in partnership with parents/carers and the pupil, consider next steps. A graduated response is initiated to monitor progress and implement clear support strategies.

#### **2. SENCO Involvement**

The SENCO is consulted as needed following initial interventions. They may observe the pupil and advise on further support or adjustments.

#### **3. Determining Level of Need**

Based on teacher observations, parental input, and—where appropriate—advice from external professionals, the level of provision required is identified.

#### **4. Post-SEND Register Monitoring**

Pupils recently removed from the SEND register continue to be monitored to ensure sustained progress and early identification of any emerging needs.

#### **5. Parental Engagement**

Parents/carers are informed at every stage. Support plans are reviewed regularly, and families are encouraged to share insights and concerns.

#### **6. Monitoring Without Formal Identification**

A pupil may be monitored due to concerns raised by staff or parents, without being placed on the SEND register. These concerns are documented to support future decisions and progression.

#### **7. Use of Existing Structures**

Pupil progress meetings and parent consultations are key opportunities to assess and monitor all pupils, including those with emerging or less visible needs.

### SEND Support:

When it is determined that a child or young person has SEND, parents and carers are informed before the pupil is added to the school's SEND register. Formal identification helps ensure that effective provision is put in place to remove barriers to learning.

Support follows the four-part **Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR)** cycle (see Appendix Two). This ongoing process is part of the graduated response and allows provision to be refined as understanding of the pupil's needs develops. It also helps identify the most effective interventions to support progress and secure positive outcomes.



### Applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan:

If a child or young person has significant or lifelong difficulties and is likely to require specialist provision or additional funding, a Statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment may be requested. This can be initiated by the school or by a parent/carers.

Requests are appropriate when:

- The child's needs cannot be met through the school's existing SEND support.
- A multi-agency approach is needed to assess, plan provision, and identify resources.
- There is evidence of multiple cycles of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) process with limited progress.

A strong request includes:

- Evidence of the graduated response
- Documentation of interventions and outcomes
- Input from professionals and the family

In Somerset, the Statutory SEND Team manages the EHC assessment process. Requests must include parental consent and are submitted via the [SEND Professional Portal](#).

Further information is available on the [Somerset SEND Local Offer](#).

For impartial advice and support, families can contact **Somerset SENDIAS** (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service):

-  **Telephone:** 01823 355578
-  **Email:** [somersetsemdias@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:somersetsemdias@somerset.gov.uk)
-  [Website](#)

## Appendix Two – Graduated Response

### Using the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' Cycle

The graduated response is a four-part cycle designed to support children and young people with SEND through increasingly targeted interventions. It ensures that provision is responsive, evidence-based, and regularly reviewed.

### 1. Assess

Teachers, supported by the SENCO, assess the pupil's needs using:

- Observations and classroom data
- Standardised assessments and screening tools
- Input from parents/carers and the pupil
- Advice from external professionals (where appropriate)

This stage builds a clear picture of strengths, barriers to learning, and areas requiring support.

### 2. Plan

In consultation with parents/carers and the pupil:

- Specific, measurable outcomes are agreed
- Support strategies and interventions are identified
- Staff responsibilities and resources are allocated
- A support plan is created and shared

Planning includes consideration of reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

### 3. Do

The agreed support is implemented:

- Class and subject teachers remain responsible for the pupil's progress
- Strategies are embedded in everyday teaching
- The SENCO provides guidance and monitors implementation
- Staff record progress and any changes in need
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### 4. Review

Progress is reviewed regularly (at least termly):

- Outcomes are evaluated against the support plan
- Adjustments are made to provision as needed
- Parents/carers and the pupil are involved in the review
- Decisions are made about continuing, changing, or escalating support



Where progress remains limited, further advice may be sought, or a request for an EHC needs assessment may be considered.

### Screening and Assessment Tools as part of the APDR process

This guidance supports schools in applying a clear graduated response to assess need and inform the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle.

*“Where a child or young person continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to their area of need, the school should consider involving specialists.”*  
 (SEND Code of Practice, paragraph 6.58)

Schools should use a range of screening and assessment tools aligned with Somerset's Graduated Response framework. These tools help identify needs across the four broad areas of SEND and guide appropriate interventions. Quick Checkers and Inclusion Tools are available for:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction

- Sensory and Physical
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

When specialist support is required, and existing services cannot meet the identified needs, schools should complete a **Somerset Early Help Assessment (EHA)**. The EHA is a shared tool used across agencies to:

- Identify the strengths and needs of the child or young person and their family
- Coordinate support from relevant services
- Make a formal 'request for services' where necessary

The EHA ensures that families only need to tell their story once and that practitioners work together to deliver timely, coordinated support.