Policy Information Sheet

Name of Policy:	**Inclusion Policy**
Delegated Authority	☒ Trust Board ☐ Nominated Committee ☐ CEO ☐ CFO ☐Other _____
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1. Statement of Intent

At Hartlepool Free School, we are committed to creating an inclusive, supportive, and nurturing environment where every pupil is valued, respected, and enabled to achieve their full potential. As a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) School, we recognise that pupils may face significant barriers to learning, participation, and wellbeing. We are dedicated to removing these barriers and promoting equality of opportunity for all members of our school community.

We believe that inclusion is the responsibility of everyone and is central to our school's ethos, values, and practice.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure all pupils feel safe, valued, and included.
- Promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination.
- Support pupils to access a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum.
- Foster positive relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Celebrate diversity and individual strengths.
- Meet the needs of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Work collaboratively with families, external agencies, and other professionals.
- Promote emotional wellbeing, resilience, and positive mental health.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

4. Principles of Inclusion

At Hartlepool Free School we believe that:

- Every child has the right to learn and achieve.
- Diversity enriches our school community.
- Individual needs should be recognised and responded to appropriately.
- Pupils should be actively involved in decisions affecting them.
- Positive relationships are fundamental to successful inclusion.
- High expectations should be maintained for all pupils.

5. Identification and Assessment of Need

All pupils attending the school have identified SEMH needs, often alongside additional needs such as:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- ADHD
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Learning Difficulties
- Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Attachment and Trauma-related Needs

Assessment information from EHCPs, previous settings, families, and professionals is used to develop individualised support plans and provision.

6. Curriculum Access

We will ensure that all pupils:

- Access a broad, balanced, and appropriately differentiated curriculum.
- Receive teaching that is responsive to their individual needs.
- Have opportunities to experience success and develop confidence.
- Participate in enrichment activities, educational visits, and extracurricular opportunities where appropriate.
- Receive support to develop literacy, numeracy, communication, emotional regulation, and independence skills.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure full participation wherever possible.

7. Behaviour and Inclusion

Our approach to behaviour is based on understanding, relationships, and support rather than punishment.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and seek to understand the underlying causes of distress or dysregulation.

Staff will:

- Use trauma-informed and relational approaches.
- Promote restorative practices.
- Support emotional regulation and self-awareness.
- Implement individual behaviour support plans where required.
- Maintain high expectations while providing appropriate support.

8. Equality, Diversity and Protected Characteristics

The school actively promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

We will not tolerate discrimination based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We actively promote respect, understanding, and appreciation of diversity through the curriculum and wider school life.

9. Pupil Voice

Pupils are encouraged to contribute to decisions about:

- Their learning
- Personal targets
- Behaviour support strategies
- School development and improvement

We value pupil feedback and seek opportunities for meaningful participation.

10. Working with Families

We recognise parents and carers as key partners in supporting pupils.

The school will:

- Maintain open and honest communication.
- Involve families in planning and reviewing provision.
- Provide regular updates on progress and wellbeing.
- Signpost families to appropriate support services when required.

11. Multi-Agency Working

We work closely with external professionals, including:

- Educational Psychologists
- CAMHS
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Social Care
- Health Services
- Local Authority SEND Teams

Partnership working ensures pupils receive coordinated and effective support.

12. Staff Training and Development

Staff receive ongoing training to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- SEMH needs
- Trauma-informed practice
- Attachment awareness
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Safeguarding
- Equality and diversity
- SEND best practice

Training supports the delivery of high-quality inclusive provision.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Pupil progress and outcomes
- Attendance and engagement data
- Behaviour and wellbeing information
- Pupil voice
- Parent and carer feedback
- Staff feedback
- Quality assurance activities

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

14. Conclusion

At Hartlepool Free School, inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil is respected, supported, and empowered to succeed academically, socially, emotionally, and personally. Through collaborative working, high expectations, and a culture of belonging, we strive to provide an environment where all pupils can thrive.