



# **Special Educational Needs Policy**

**October 2026**

**Review Date: October 2027**

At NET Academies Trust we strive to embed the social model of disability as we work together to enable all our children to participate fully in learning in our schools.

The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers in society NOT by their impairment or difference. These barriers can be physical or caused by people's attitude to difference. At NET, we aim to recognise and remove barriers, working hard to change people's attitudes to disability and difference.

This means that sometimes we may need to change the way we do things to ensure that everyone can join in.

## 1 Aims

All academies within the Trust share common values and an ethos that every child should be included in all aspects of school life. High Quality Teaching and inclusive tools are the bedrock of inclusive teaching. Some children need educational provision which is additional and different to this. As a Trust we do not advocate the allocation of named 1-1 support. We call this approach the 'Dependency Model' because there is a risk that the child becomes dependent on the support provided.

### 1.1 Each academy within NET shall ensure that:

- High Quality Adaptive Teaching and inclusive classroom practice form the foundation of provision for all pupils.
- The Trust uses Essex Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision guidance to support decisions regarding provision, reasonable adjustments and intervention.
- Pupils will not be labelled or disadvantaged by any policy or procedure operated within the Trust;
- The Trust adopts a whole-child, whole-school approach to inclusion, recognising that successful outcomes are achieved through strong partnerships between pupils, families, staff and external agencies;
- The Trust will use its best endeavours to ensure that appropriate provision is secured for any pupil with special educational needs in order to achieve agreed outcomes;
- It has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO will maintain and regularly review the SEN provision held for each individual pupil and co-ordinate support. However, it will be the responsibility of all teaching staff to plan for and support individual pupils, to implement recommended strategies and generally be responsible for ensuring that pupils receive provision appropriate to their needs and agreed outcomes; and
- Children and young people with SEND are enabled to participate fully in all aspects of school life alongside their peers through a whole-school commitment to inclusion, adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments.

### 1.2 All support provided and decisions taken have regard to these general principles as well as the legal framework set out in the Children & Families Act 2014, the SEND

Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015. This policy also has regard to the Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

## 2 Definitions

- 2.1 Under the Children & Families Act 2014, a child/young person will have SEN if they have a learning difference or impairment which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

From a Social Model perspective, there is a radical difference between **impairment** and **disability**:

**Impairment** is an individual's physical, sensory or cognitive difference (for example, being blind, experiencing bipolar, having M.S. or a learning difficulty).

**Disability** is the name for the social consequences of having an impairment. People with impairments are disabled by society, so disability is therefore a social construct that can be changed and removed.

- 2.2 A Child or Young Person will have a learning difference or impairment if they have:
- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
  - An impairment that may require adjustments to enable full use of facilities that are generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools in England.
- 2.3 Special Educational Provision is education or training that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children/young people of the same age by mainstream schools. Below we have provided four examples of the kinds of reasonable adjustments that may be available at the Trust;
- *Additional arrangements for PE/lunch/break for wheelchair users or pupils with impaired mobility.*
  - *Access to quiet, calm environment around the school for pupils experiencing or at risk of sensory overload.*
  - *Equipment or adaptations in the classroom such as larger print, off white paper, adapted seating or hearing loops.*
  - *Adaptations for special events such as sports days, trips, etc. – extra 'event' space in addition to sports day activities to allow autistic pupils to join in line with their interest and attention levels.*

### **3 Roles & Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Trust Board and remain under constant review by Head Teachers and the Trust Inclusion Lead.
- The Trust will appoint a governor with responsibility for SEN. The SEN Governor will raise SEN issues at governing board meetings; monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN provision within the academy and work with designated senior leaders to develop the SEN policy and provision.
  - The Head Teacher will work with the SENCO and SEN Governor to develop the SEN policy and provision within the school. The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND.
  - The SENCO will be a qualified teacher and will hold, or be working towards, the National Award for SEN Coordination (NASENCO) or National Professional Qualification for SENCOs (NPQ SENCO) in accordance with statutory requirements.
  - The Trust Inclusion Lead and SENCO will co-ordinate the academy's approach to SEND provision and will undertake those duties set out in chapter 6 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
  - Class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of every pupil in their class and will work with the SENCO, LSAs and Intervention Leads to ensure the "assess plan do review" cycle is appropriately implemented to support any pupil with SEND.
- 3.2 The academy will work in partnership with pupils, teachers, parents and, where appropriate, other external agencies to ensure that individual learning needs are addressed within the context of the school curriculum.
- 3.3 Parents of pupils with SEN will be able to discuss the needs of their child with their child's teacher and/or the SENCO.

### **4 Identification & Assessment of SEN**

- 4.1 Information about previous special educational needs will usually accompany pupils upon entry to the academy and this will be used by the SENCO to make sure appropriate provision is continued.
- 4.2 This information is collated from the transfer of school files from the previous school or early years setting and during transition meetings which are held before students start at the academy. If necessary, a transition plan will be drawn up for each student with SEN.
- 4.3 Assessment and identification on entry includes reviewing data and, in conversation with teacher, providing an Early Response whereby a child is included on the school's provision map and progress monitored with class teacher. If concerns continue, all parties may decide to monitor through one planning.
- 4.4 Ongoing identification is also completed alongside the academy reporting process as data is collected and analysed. If a pupil has not made expected progress, then interventions will be put in place. If a member of staff identifies a pupil whose special

educational needs are not met by the normal differentiated programme of study, then the class teacher will work with the pupil setting clear targets and providing greater differentiation. If the situation improves then no further action is needed. If there is no improvement the SENCO will be informed.

- 4.5 At this point information will be gathered. The class teacher will inform the parents about the issue and there will be consultation and discussion around the proposed additional support for the pupil. Parents, and the pupil where appropriate, will be involved in sharing information and agreeing outcomes. It will be decided whether it is appropriate to further monitor the student. A one plan will be drawn up by teacher and SEN team with copies shared with all staff concerned with the pupil's progress.
- 4.6 Pupils and families will be supported to contribute their views throughout the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle and One Planning process.
- 4.7 If a parent/carer refers their child to the academy as they believe their child has special educational needs they should contact the SENCO, who will undertake investigations and appropriate assessments (with input from the relevant teachers) to see if they are achieving expected levels of progress. If the pupil is not making appropriate levels of progress then internal support will be implemented in accordance with paragraphs above.
- 4.8 When a pupil transfers to another educational setting, SEND records and relevant information will be transferred promptly to ensure continuity of support and provision.
- 4.9 Regarding applications for Disability Living Allowance, a tax free benefit which may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who
  - Is under 16
  - Has difficulty walking or needs more looking after as a child of the same age who does not have a disability.
  - Headteachers can report on mobility issues as observed at school but are unable to comment on care needs outside of school hours. Therefore, DLA applications need to be completed by parents/carers and those who know what level of care is required in the home environment. Staff will liaise with the Department of Works and Pensions, when required, as part of the application.

In all cases, where internal support is not effective in supporting the pupil, a referral to a relevant specialist (e.g. educational psychologist) will be completed with the parents' knowledge and information and strategies for support shared with all staff. ADHD and autism referrals will only be completed at the request of a GP or medical professional. This means that, when parents/carers provide referral paperwork, checklists and assessments to be completed by school staff, school will require a medical letter outlining the details of what is expected and to whom this information should then be sent. Completed paperwork will not be given to parents/carers to deliver.

If there are no concerns regarding the pupil's academic progress, then the academy will ensure appropriate differentiation continues in the classroom and interventions are put in place if appropriate. Attendance patterns, wellbeing concerns and behavioural presentation will be considered alongside academic progress when identifying possible special educational needs.

All staff teaching pupil on the SEN record will be made aware of the individual needs. Subject Leaders and the Special Needs team will help teachers when required to develop techniques

to support differentiation and ensure that appropriate resources are available as part of the academy's Professional Development Programme.

## **5 Reviewing**

- 5.1 All pupils regardless of needs are set targets. Data collated during the academy reporting process is analysed and strategies are put in place to support that that are not achieving as expected. All SEN interventions delivered outside the classroom have Specific, Measurable, Achievable Targets (SMART) set to ensure that progress is made. These are recorded using one plans and are monitored and reviewed against a time frame, agreed within the plan. If expected progress is not made, then the SENCO may refer to outside agencies such as an Educational Psychologist.
- 5.2 If a pupil has an Educational Health Care Plan an annual review is held in accordance with legal requirements.
- 5.3 If, as a result of appropriate progress, a pupil is removed from the SEN provision map, the pupil will continue to be monitored through the academy's usual systems such as pupil progress meetings, data analysis.

## **6 Complaints**

- 6.1 Parents who have concerns regarding SEND provision should initially discuss these concerns with the class teacher and SENCO. Where concerns remain unresolved, concerns may be escalated to the Headteacher and managed in accordance with the Trust Complaints Procedure.

## **7 Data Protection**

- 7.1 The Trust will process SEND information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

## **8 Policy Links**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- SEN Information Report (updated annually)
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Relationships and Behaviour policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- The Essex Local Offer