

# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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This SEN policy sets out our approach to SEN across The Propeller Academy Trust. To find out exactly how this policy is implemented in our schools, see the SEN information report on each school's website.

### 1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure the schools in our trust fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our trust will, across all of our schools:
  - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
  - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life
  - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
  - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
  - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
  - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

## 2. Vision and values

At all the schools in our trust, we will provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.

We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied.

## 3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes those with a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out governors' and trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out schools' obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

In our trust we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced, and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum, and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

## 5. Definitions

### 5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most 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

**Special educational provision** is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

## 5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

All schools in our trust will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

## 5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia</li> <li>• Moderate learning difficulties</li> <li>• Severe learning difficulties</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

AREA OF NEED	
Social, emotional, and mental health	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression, or an eating disorder</li> <li>• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder</li> <li>• Suffered adverse childhood experiences</li> </ul> <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive, or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment</li> <li>• A physical impairment</li> </ul> <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 Board of trustees

The board of trustees is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school
- Make sure that arrangements are in place in schools to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to changes in SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date records of the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on each school's website about how the schools are implementing their SEND policy, in a SEN information report

- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the schools' accessibility plans
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND
- Make sure that all pupils from year 8 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice

## **6.2 The chief executive officer (CEO)**

The CEO will:

- Work with the trustees, local governing boards and headteachers to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the trust
- Work with the trustees, local governing boards and headteachers to make sure the trust meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND across the trust
- With the Chief operations officer (COO), have responsibility for monitoring funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils

## **6.3 The headteacher**

The headteacher will:

- Work with the CEO and local governing board to develop and implement the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the CEO and local governing board to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND in their school, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SLT, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SLT, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SLT and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

## **6.4 Class teachers**

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SLT to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
  - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
  - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
  - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
  - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

### **6.5 Parents or carers**

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil with SEND will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Attend annual EHCP review meetings
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

### **6.6 The pupil**

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupils' views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

## **7. SEN information report**

Every school in the trust publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

## **8. Our approach to SEND support**

### **8.1 Levels of support**

#### **Education, health, and care (EHC) plan**

The EHC plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

### **8.2 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision**

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SLT
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

## **9. Expertise and training of staff**

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteachers and the SLT will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their school who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

## **10. Links with external professional agencies**

The trust recognises that we won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary our schools will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

## **11. Admission and accessibility arrangements**

The categories of SEN for The Propeller Academy Trust may include but are not limited to MLD (Fitzwaryn only), SLD (Fitzwaryn, Kingfisher and Bishopswood) and PMLD (Fitzwaryn, Kingfisher and Bishopswood).

### **11.1 Admission arrangements**

Except in the circumstances described below, the schools within the Academy Trust may not admit a child to the school unless an Education and Health Care Plan is maintained for that child and the school (or the predecessor-maintained school of the same name) is named in the child's EHCP.

Where the Academy Trust considers that there is a need to increase the planned number of places, the Academy trust must seek the approval of the Secretary of State.

The Propeller Academy Trust may admit a child without an EHCP if:

- (i)** They are admitted for the purposes of an assessment of his educational needs and their admission to the school is with the agreement of the local authority, the school and the child's parent
- (ii)** They remain admitted following an assessment under section 323 of the Education Act 1996
- (iii)** They are admitted following a change in circumstances with the agreement of the LA, the school, and their parents

If a child without an EHCP has been admitted to a PAT member school for the purposes of an assessment, the school may allow the child to remain at the school:

- (i)** Until the expiry of ten school days after the local authority serve a notice under section 325 of the education Act 1996 that they do not propose to make an EHCP, or
- (ii)** Until an EHCP is made.

Where the LA intend to name a PAT member school in an EHCP and have served a copy of the proposed EHCP on the school, the school must respond within 15 days. The PAT member school must consent to being named, except where admitting a child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children and where no reasonable steps may be made to secure compatibility. In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children the school must have regard to the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State to maintained schools.

If the Academy determines that admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, it must, within 15 days of receipt of the LA's notice, notify the LA in writing that it does not agree that the Academy should be named in the pupil's statement. Such notice must include matters the Academy relies upon in support of its contention that: (a) admitting the child would be incompatible with efficiently educating other children; and (b) the Academy cannot take reasonable steps to secure this compatibility.

Where the LA maintains an EHCP for a child under section 324 of the Education Act 1996 and a member school's name is specified in the statement, the school must admit that child to the school even if they consider that the school should have not been named in the child's EHCP.

Where a PAT member school considers that the school should not have been named in a child's EHCP, they may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the LA has acted unreasonably in naming the school and to make an order directing the LA to amend the child's EHCP by removing the name of the school. Where the Secretary of State makes an order to this effect, the school will cease to be under an obligation to admit the child from the date of the Secretary of State's order or from such date as the Secretary of State specifies. In specifying a date, the Secretary of State must take into account both the welfare of the child in question and the degree of difficulty caused to the school by the child's continued admission.

Where the Secretary of State determines that the LA has acted unreasonably in naming a member school in a child's EHCP the Academy must continue to admit the child until the school ceases to be named in the EHCP.

If a parent or guardian of a child in respect of whom a EHCP is maintained by the local authority appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) either against the naming of a member school in the child's EHCP or asking the Tribunal to name a school, the school agrees to be bound by the decision of the tribunal on any such appeal even if the decision is different to that of the Secretary of State.

Where the PAT member school, the Secretary of State, or the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) have determined that it should be named, the school shall admit the child to the school notwithstanding any provision of Annex 1 of the Supplemental Agreement of the individual Academy.

## **11.2 Accessibility arrangements**

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities

Our trust aims to treat all its pupils fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all pupils without discrimination of any kind.

We are committed to providing fully accessible environments which value and include all students, staff, parents, and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance, and inclusion.

Plans are available online on each school's website.

Our schools are also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

The trust supports any available partnerships to develop and implement the plan.

Our trust's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. The complaints procedure sets out the process for raising any concerns relating to accessibility in school.

## **12. Complaints about SEND provision**

Where parents have concerns about a school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the headteacher or the SLT. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our schools should be made to the CEO in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the trust's complaints policy [www.propellertrust.org](http://www.propellertrust.org).

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the trust's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

To find out about disagreement resolution and mediation services in our local area, [Resolving disputes, mediation, complaints and appeals | Oxfordshire County Council](#).

## **13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

### **13.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy**

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils needs at the start of the autumn term
- Pupils' progress and attainment
- Whether pupils feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

### **13.2 Monitoring the policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the CEO **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the board of trustees.

## **14. Links with other policies and documents**

This policy links to the following documents

- SEN information report (school specific, held on each school's website)
- Accessibility plan (school specific, held on each school's website)
- Behaviour policy (school specific, held on each school's website)
- Equality information and objectives (school specific, held on each school's website)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy (school specific, held on each school's website)
- Complaints policy