

Leading Learners Multi Academy Trust



Trust Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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Contents

1.0	Policy aims	3
2.0	Scope and purpose	3
3.0	Trust commitment	4
4.0	Definitions	5
5.0	Roles and responsibilities	5
6.0	Procedures	6
7.0	The graduated approach	7
8.0	SEND information report	8
9.0	Local offer	8
10.0	Accessibility plan	8
11.0	Looking Ahead: SEND Reform Readiness	9

1.0 Policy statement

1.1 This policy sets our vision at Leading Learners Trust for all pupils should receive their entitlement to a quality education, one that is appropriate to their individual needs, and promotes high standards and supports all to fulfil their full potential, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

1.2 This Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy aims to make clear our commitment to high quality education for all pupils, set out how our schools will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and explain staff roles and responsibilities in relation to SEND.

1.3 Each school within the Trust will publish a SEND policy, information report and an accessibility plan. These documents work alongside the Trust SEND Policy in order to ensure that each school's SEND provision is graduated, responsive and flexible in relation to their current cohort of pupils needs as well as compliant with their local authorities' procedures and processes.

1.4 Documents:

This policy makes reference to school policies/plans on:

- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Meeting Medical Needs Policy
- Trust Attendance Policy
- Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Child Missing in Education

2.0 Scope and purpose of this policy

2.1 Our Trust SEND policy covers all pupils. As part of the Trust's 'graduated response' this may be at a 'monitoring' level, SEND K or EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan).

2.2 This policy applies to all education staff, as well as professional services staff when considering reasonable adjustments, funding, and provision for learners with SEND.

2.3 To ensure all staff understand their role and responsibilities in relation to SEND and inclusion.

2.4 Trust's aim to achieve the core aims of this policy by:

- Designating a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision (the SENCO).
- Monitoring the progress of all children to facilitate early identification.
- Following the graduated approach as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

2.5 To support staff in schools, continuous training and sharing of knowledge is prioritised both within schools as appropriate, but also collectively across the trust and beyond to share specialism and expertise.

2.6 Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Care Act 2022
- DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026'
- DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

3.0 Trust commitment

3.1 Leading Learners Trust is committed to ensuring that every child, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), receives a high-quality education that empowers them to shape their own futures. We believe that true inclusion is not an afterthought but a fundamental part of our academy systems and culture. Through a combination of whole-school approaches and personalised, regularly reviewed support, we strive to remove barriers and create an environment where every child can thrive. Our commitment is driven by our core pillars—Inclusion, Equality of Opportunity, and Cultural Appreciation—ensuring that all children, regardless of their challenges, have the chances and choices they deserve.

Schools in our Trust will therefore:

3.2 Establish and maintain a culture rooted in **Inclusion, Equality of Opportunity, and Cultural Appreciation**, ensuring that all students' needs are met as part of the school's universal offer whenever possible. Individual needs are supported with dignity, without stigma, and with the highest quality provision, so that every learner can thrive.

3.3 Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils, families and other agencies work collaboratively and cooperatively in order to ensure the best offer for each pupil.

3.4 Ensure that the curriculum and wider opportunities of pupils is inclusive of all children and adapted where needed, especially for pupils with SEND.

3.5 Ensure that the approach for managing behaviour is inclusive for all children and not based on segregation, exemption or unintentional discriminatory disciplining of students with SEND.

3.6 Ensure all staff understand that SEND can increase vulnerability to abuse, as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and that students with SEND may need early help with safeguarding before their peers

4.0 Definitions

4.1 The following definitions are taken for the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

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

4.2 A child may have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age
- Have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties that prevent them from accessing the equal opportunities offered
- 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

4.3 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities and prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The trust board and local academy boards will:

- help to raise awareness of SEND issues at local academy board meetings
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within their school/Trust
- work with the leadership team and SENCO to determine the strategic development of SEND provision in their school/Trust

5.2 The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Ensure the SEND policy, report and accessibility plans are reviewed within specified timeframes and kept up-to-date in line with legislation updates.

- Work with the SENDCo and school governors 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 the provision and progress of learners with SEND and/or a disability
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- With the SENDCo, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the SENDCo, 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

5.3 The SENDCO will:

- Work with the headteacher and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- With the headteacher, 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
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Work with the headteacher and governing board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date

5.4 The Class teachers will be responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow the SEND portfolio of documents

6.0 Procedures

Each school will make explicit their arrangements for SEND and inclusion through their SEND policy, information report and accessibility plan, but all schools will be guided by these key principles.

6.1 Each school must ensure that there is a qualified teacher, designated as the SENDCO.

6.2 The SENDCO must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination or NPQ SENDCo within three years of starting the job.

6.3 Each school will meet its statutory duty to follow the graduated approach to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

6.4 Each school's leadership team should regularly review how the whole school provision is being used to meet the needs of children with SEND.

6.5 The quality of teaching for all children should be the school's main focus in professional development for teaching and support staff.

6.6 Each school will meet its statutory duty to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions, usually through the use of an individual health care plan detailing the type of support a child will need.

6.7 In some cases, a student with SEND may also require a level of personal or intimate care to be provided in order for them to access their entitlement to a full and quality education. Please refer to the school's Intimate Care policy for more information of the plans in place for these needs.

6.8 In some cases, a student with SEND may require a level of physical support in order to fully access their entitlement to a quality education. In these circumstances, an individualised risk assessment should be considered. Risk assessments should be written collaboratively by the most appropriate staff member.

6.9 In some cases, a student with SEND may require special consideration and support in order to be able to evacuate the building in an emergency such as a fire. In these circumstances, a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) should be in place for them.

6.10 Whenever there is known risk associated with a pupil, including any arising from a special educational need or disability (for example, use of specialist equipment), an individualised risk assessment should be considered. Risk assessments should be written collaboratively between the most appropriate staff member.

6.11 All students will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum - leadership teams, teachers and support staff will set high expectations for every student, taking into account but not limited by their prior attainment.

6.12 Schools will work cooperatively and supportively with their local authority in order to meet their statutory duties regarding SEND and inclusion.

6.13 Academies will work cooperatively and supportively with other agencies, for example CAMHS and Educational Psychology, in order to ensure that the needs of students with SEND are fully understood and met.

6.14 School's will ensure the views, wishes and feelings of the student and their parent / carer, including supporting them to participate fully in decisions, are kept front and centre at all times.

7.0 The graduated approach

7.1 Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the children in their classroom, including where pupils access support from Teaching Assistants.

7.2 The identification of SEND is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. High quality teaching, adapted for individual students, is the first step in responding to children who have or may have SEND.

7.3 Trust and school leaders regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, considering the training needs and support of all staff to have a holistic view of a child's needs to align with early identification of SEND and a graduated response. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

7.4 In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the SENCO will consider all the information gathered from within the school about the child's progress. This information gathering will include an early discussion with the child, their family and teachers, developing a good understanding of the child's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents/carers' concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the child and the next steps.

7.5 When it is decided that a child does have SEND, the decision is recorded on the schools SEND register and the child's parents/carers are informed that special educational provision is being made.

7.6 In line with the Code of Practice, all schools follow the graduated approach to a learners' special educational needs. This support should take the form of "a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child's needs and of what supports the learner in making good progress and securing good outcomes." This is referred to as Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR):

Assess: Teaching and support staff, working closely with the SENCO, draw on a range of information (progress, attainment, behaviour, attendance, student voice, parent / carer voice, and outside agency advice) to fully understand the student's needs.

Plan: Strategies, including for both in lessons and through discrete interventions where appropriate, the intended outcomes and the needs being addressed are shared with teaching and support staff, as well as with the parent / carers.

Do: Classroom teachers remain responsible for working with the student to work towards the identified outcomes. Where interventions are being delivered in small groups or 1:1, teachers, the SENCO, and support staff should work closely together to ensure continuity and consistency.

Review: The effectiveness of the strategies is reviewed regularly and feeds back into assessment of the student's needs to inform a new cycle of support and intervention.

8.0 SEND information report

8.1 Each school will make explicit their provision for SEND and inclusion in the publication of their statutory SEND Information Report, in line with guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and the SEND Regulations 2014.

8.2 The SEND information report will be published on the school website and updated annually, with any changes made during the year to be updated as soon as possible.

8.3 Each school will ensure that their SEND Information Report is easily accessible and set out in clear, straight forward language.

8.4 The SEND information report must include information on the school's contribution to the local offer and information on where the local offer is published.

8.5 The SEND information report must include information on where to find the school's accessibility plan and what will be detailed within that plan.

9.0 Local offer

9.1 Each local authority has a statutory duty to produce a 'local offer' detailing information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHCP, in their area.

9.2 As a 'partner body or agency', schools have a statutory duty to cooperate with the local authority in the development and review of the Local Offer.

9.3 Each school will comply with their local authority's guidance on how schools should contribute to the local offer in their area.

10. Accessibility plan

10.1 All schools have a statutory duty, under section 10 of the Equality Act 2010, to produce an accessibility plan detailing how they are going to increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in their curriculum, improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated benefits, facilities and services, and improving

delivery to disabled students of information which is readily available to students who are not disabled.

10.2 The accessibility plan must be in writing, take the views of students and their parents / carers into account, and be regularly reviewed.

10.3 The school has responsibility for allocating adequate resources to ensure the advancement of the accessibility plan.

10.4 Each school will comply with this statutory duty by publishing an accessibility plan in the form of a rolling development plan detailing strategies, timeframes, financial requirements and persons responsible over a three-year period.

10.5 The SENCO, along with the leadership team will take overall responsibility for producing, maintaining and monitoring the accessibility plan, including at least annual review of progress made.

11. Looking Ahead: SEND Reform Readiness

The Trust is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive education that anticipates the upcoming national SEND reforms. The government's new Education for All framework will phase in major legal changes between September 2029 and September 2030, including new National Inclusion Standards and a transition toward digital Individual Support Plans (ISPs). While our academies continue to operate strictly under the current Children and Families Act 2014 and the active SEND Code of Practice, we are actively preparing for this future rollout. The Trust will continue to invest in staff training, monitor national guidance, and adapt our practices ahead of the statutory deadlines to ensure a smooth transition for all our pupils.

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis by Leading Learners Trust