MAT SEND Policy

This policy has been adopted by the Board of Directors of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust and is applicable across all schools that make up the Trust. In line with the MAT's Scheme of Delegation, this Policy must be duly applied by each Local Governing Committee and the Headteacher of each school that is part of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust.

Where there are specific details or any discretions in the policy that apply to an individual school or Local Governing Committee this has been made clear within the wording of the policy.

This policy will be reviewed formally by the MAT Board of Directors in line with the agreed timetable for policy review or sooner as events or legislation changes require.

Date Adopted: October 2026

Date for Review: October 2027

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2026-27 changes to this policy:

- This is a revised policy to align the school approach to the proposed national changes.

1 Statement of intent

Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust values all pupils and celebrates diversity of experience, interest and achievement across all our schools. All pupils need to experience praise, recognition and success, and pupils with SEND have equal entitlement to this.

This policy outlines the framework for the Trust to meet its duty, obligation and principal equality values in providing an appropriate high-quality education for all pupils with SEND.

Through successful implementation of this policy, the Trust aims to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Promote equal opportunities and access to high quality teaching and learning
- Foster good relationships between pupils with SEND and pupils without SEND
- Work with parents to promote the best possible outcomes for pupils with SEND

The Trust will work with schools in ensuring that the following principles underpin this policy:

- The identification of children and young people's needs
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
- The involvement of children, parents and young people in decision-making
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment

2 Legal framework

This policy has been written as guidance for staff, parents/carers and children with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- SEND Code of Practice (which takes account of the SEND provisions of the SEND and Disability Act 2001) September 2014 (Last updated September 2024)
- Ofsted Section 5 Inspection Framework September
- Ofsted SEND Review 2010 "A statement is not enough"
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Bill 2011
- Children and Families Act 2014.
- York Local Offer: www.yor-ok.org.uk/families/Local%20Offer/sendlocaloffer
- Individual school SEND policies and reports
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Regulations 2024

3 Definitions

For this policy, a child or young person is defined as having SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provisions to be made for them (SEND Code of Practice 2014, p.15).

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The MAT reviews how well equipped we are to provide support across the following areas as identified in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice:

- Communication and interaction needs, including autism
- Cognition and learning needs
- Social, emotional and mental health needs
- Sensory and physical needs

4 Consulting and involving pupils and parents/carers

The Trust endeavours to put the pupil and their parents/carers at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

Schools within the Trust will have a discussion and conversations with the pupil and their parents/carers. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty.
- We take into account any concerns the parents/carers have.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.
- Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents/carers.

We will formally notify parents/carers when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

5 The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The pupil's class teacher and the SENDCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents/carers will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. Plan

In consultation with the parents/carers and the pupil, the teacher and the SENDCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded and will be made accessible to staff.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching**.**

The SENDCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

4. Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents/carers and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil.

The teacher and the SENDCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents/carers.

6 Levels of support

School-based support

Pupils receiving SEN support will be placed on the SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider the Trust's Graduated Approach to ascertain and plan further/and or different support. This is referred to as Universal, Target, Targeted Plus and Specialist.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The 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 school's notional SEND budget, and potentially 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.

7 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 (bespoke by school)
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Responding to questionnaires (Trust, School, Parent View)
- Monitoring by the SENDCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents/carers

8 Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil. However, they may need additional support.

Our approach to supporting pupils who are absent from school due to their SEND is set out in our attendance policy.

9 Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group.

10 Collaborative policy

The Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust SEN policy is a collaborative policy, involving all schools in the Trust who communicate with each other and work together to achieve more than any one school could achieve on its own.

The SEN leadership group comprises of SENDCos from each school and meets termly to share and develop policy, practice, solutions and answers.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following MAT policies:

- Admissions Policies
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Child Protection Statement
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

This policy operates in conjunction with the following individual school policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- SEND Policy
- SEN Report
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Pathfinder MAT Graduated Response

11 Roles and responsibilities

In Pathfinder, we understand that every teacher is responsible for SEND provision, with each individual headteacher having overall responsibility for their school, in ensuring that the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEND. The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility through the scheme of delegation to the Local Governing Body in each school.

Individual schools will:

- Appoint a Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) - A designated teacher in each school who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of their individual SEND policy and who has, or is working towards, a recognised NPQSEN qualification

SENDCos in each school will:

- Oversee the day to day running of SEN of their SEND policy and provision in school
- Consult and liaise with staff, parents and carers, the MAT, external agencies and appropriate professionals
- Ensure that support and resources are coordinated and targeted appropriately, and that all are informed and updated about children on the SEN register
- Produce an annual SEND report to the Local Governing Committee which is published on the school website and is available to parents following guidance from the 2014 SEN Code of Practice
- Work closely with individual class teachers to ensure appropriate support and understanding; and
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Support and plan for effective transition between settings; liaising with appropriate bodies, including parents, as necessary
- Be a key point of contact with external agencies
- Work with the head teacher and governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010)
- Ensure that the school keeps accurate records of pupils with SEND and these are held in line with GDPR and the Code of Practice

Class teachers will:

- Ensure that they have a clear understanding of the SEN provision for pupils in their class
- Provide updates to their school SENDCo as appropriate
- Support each child's individual need through the setting of goals that enable each child to flourish
- Be accountable for the outcomes and progress of each child

- Be aware of prior knowledge and capabilities and plan and deliver teaching that builds on this
- Adapt teaching, scaffold and challenge to respond to the strengths and areas of need for each child
- Understand the factors that may cause barriers to learning and how to overcome these
- Ensure that support staff are provided with clear guidance on goals and objectives to allow SEND children to thrive
- Oversee the provision for a child with SEND in their class including any support staff

The Board of Trustees will:

- Ensure that SEND provision is an integral part of the academy development plan
- Have regard for the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 2014
- Be fully informed about SEND issues so that they can play a part in the school's self-evaluation process
- Ensure that the quality of SEND provision is regularly monitored; and
- Identify a trustee to be the person responsible for SEND for this person to link with MAT SENDCo
- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled children and young people.
- Invest in whole-school and targeted training for staff

The MAT SENDCo will provide:

MAT Support

- Advise SENDCos on CPD
- Support schools in need, for example when the SENDCo is absent from work.
- Support SENDCos who are new to the post
- Advise schools on appropriate courses of action for supporting pupils with SEND
- Advise school SENDCos on monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision for pupils with SEND
- Bulletins for MAT Heads and SENDCos including updates
- Developing resources to support schools
- CPD for practitioners including TAs
- Attendance at National Conferences on behalf of the MAT – to be cascaded to all SENDCo
- Attendance at Local Conferences – as above
- Monitor attendance of SEND children with the support of each school
- Monitor and review SEND provision across the MAT including EHCPs
- Support SENDCos in implementing local and national changes

MAT Central Support

- Analyse patterns and distribution of SEND need across all schools – leading to training
- Develop a MAT strategic overview of SEND
- Focus on resources appropriate to need, mapped across the MAT
- Data analysis of all schools - trends, patterns and progress
- SENDCo review meetings across all schools – monitor provision and practice MAT wide

- Promote - every teacher a SEND teacher
- Develop partnerships with other MATs
- Develop a MAT strategic overview of SEND identification, provision, training and development
- Participation in MAT SEND review
- Support MAT during Ofsted
- Work alongside MAT Inclusion Lead
- Support SENDCos in preparation for and during inspections

Additional school support is available outside this remit, at an additional cost to individual schools for:

- Monitor of SEND register and associated paperwork
- Discussions with parents/carers
- Support and monitor SEND provision across school including impact and planning needs
- Signpost families to the correct support
- Attendance at FAM meetings
- Lead with writing RSAs
- Liaise with external agencies
- Recommend and identify appropriate intervention strategies
- All other associated SENDCo responsibilities under the agreed job description

To access this additional support, headteachers should contact the primary strategic lead in the first instance.

12 Collaboration

The Trust and the schools that make up the Trust work in partnership with the relevant local authority/ authorities for each school within the Trust. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Contributing to, signposting to and following the Local Offer
- Collaborating with the Local Authority to review the Local Offer
- Creating a Graduated Response
- Working with wider professionals to fulfill statutory requirements

13 Glossary of terms

SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDCo	Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator
FAM	Fair Access Meeting
RSA	Request for Statutory Assessment
NPQSEN	National Qualification for Special Educational Needs Coordination