



**PONTEFRACT**  

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**ACADEMIES TRUST**

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY**

## CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2.0	LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND LEGISLATION.....	1
3.0	VISION AND PRINCIPLES.....	1
4.0	SUPPORT FOR DISABLED PUPILS .....	1
5.0	IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.....	2
6.0	A GRADUATED APPROACH.....	3
7.0	MANAGING PUPILS NEEDS ON THE SEND REGISTER.....	6
8.0	CRITERIA FOR EXITING THE SEND REGISTER .....	6
9.0	SUPPORTING PUPILS AND FAMILIES.....	6
10.0	SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS.....	7
11.0	SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING .....	7
12.0	MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEND.....	8
13.0	COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE .....	8

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Each school has a designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who can be contacted via the School directly.
- 1.2 Every teacher teaches every pupil, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We believe in raising the aspirations and expectations of pupils with SEND. We focus on the outcomes for pupils and overcoming barriers for learning. All pupils are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can:
- Achieve their best.
  - Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives.
  - Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education, or training.

## **2.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND LEGISLATION**

- 2.1 This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0–25 (Jan 2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:
- The Equality Act 2010.
  - SEND Code of Practice 0–25 years (Jan 2015).
  - Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at School with Medical Conditions (Dec 2015).
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2019).
  - Safeguarding Policy.
  - Accessibility Plan.

## **3.0 VISION AND PRINCIPLES**

- 3.1 Pontefract Academies Trust’s vision is ‘Where every child and young person makes outstanding progress’.

### **3.2 OBJECTIVES**

- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015).  
To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs.
- To continually monitor the progress of all pupils, to identify needs as they arise and to provide intervention and support as early as possible.
- To provide full access to the curriculum through quality first teaching and differentiated planning.
- To involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet the pupil’s additional needs.
- To involve the pupil in planning and in any decision making that affects them.

## **4.0 SUPPORT FOR DISABLED PUPILS**

- 4.1 All our schools are inclusive where we believe all pupils should attend as many mainstream lessons as possible, to allow them to be able to achieve and be successful.
- 4.2 Disabled pupils are supported initially by a series of transitional meetings in which school, parents/carers and other external bodies meet to discuss pupils’ educational needs and requirements. Risk Assessments are put in place and pupils are provided with extensive reasonable adjustments to allow them to be a successful member of the school community.

- 4.3 As an inclusive Trust, we believe that SEND pupils should have the same access to achievement as any other pupils in school. Disabled pupils:
- Attend mainstream lessons (where possible).
  - Have one to one support.
  - Are given passes to move around the school site freely.
  - Use lifts (where possible).
  - On occasion, engage in phased reintegration.
  - Are supervised at social times, if they choose to access this.
- 4.4 These and many other adjustments/interventions are used to allow them to have the same rights as other pupils in school.
- 4.5 Where possible, physically disabled pupils who struggle with mobility are educated on the ground floor or, if required, in an area which is accessible by a lift.
- 4.6 Disabled pupils usually travel to the School with parents/carers, however, some travel via school buses. Pupils who require additional support are met by support staff in reception at 9.00am and escorted to their form. These pupils will also be allowed to leave from reception 5 minutes before the end of the school day, if necessary.
- 4.7 Most SEND pupils attend mainstream lessons, as we believe pupils should have exposure to a mainstream curriculum. In some cases there may be a need for a more bespoke curriculum to be implemented, with specialised small group work put in place around literacy, numeracy and risk, resilience, wellbeing and life skills.
- 4.8 Physically disabled pupils attend form time and assemblies, and are fully immersed in school life. They have access to the same resources that non-disabled pupils have access to. There is a drive within school to encourage and track the number of disabled pupils attending extra-curricular activities and other forms of enrichment.

## **5.0 IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

- 5.1 The SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015) does not assume that there are rigid categories of Special Educational Need, but recognises that children’s needs can be described using four broad areas. These are:
- Communication and Interaction
  - Cognition and Learning
  - Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
  - Sensory
  - Physical
- 5.2 The SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015) makes it clear that “all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.”
- 5.3 Early identification of SEND pupils is important to us. The Trust will use appropriate screening and assessment tools, and ascertain pupil progress through:
- Evidence obtained by teacher observations and assessments.
  - Internal assessment (following the Trust’s regular and detailed calendar of tracking and assessment).
  - Screening and diagnostic tests.
  - Records and feedback from the family of schools.

- Information from parents.
- External exam results.
- External agency information.

5.4 Usually, it is a combination of the above rather than one single factor which is used to determine a pupil's SEND.

5.5 The purpose of identification is to work out what action the School needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. We believe that identifying needs at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the pupil.

5.6 A pupil has SEND when their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. This means provision that goes beyond the differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high quality, personalised teaching.

5.7 Assessments of progress are made every term and those pupils making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances, are identified. This can be characterised by progress which:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- Fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress.
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers.
- Widens the attainment gap.

5.8 It can include progress in areas other than attainment, for instance, where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs, in order to make a successful transition to adult life.

5.9 Our schools identify the needs of pupils by considering the needs of the whole pupil, not just the special educational needs of the pupil. The following are not SEND but may impact on progress and attainment:

- Disability (the SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015) outlines the "reasonable adjustment" duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation – these alone do not constitute SEND).
- Attendance and Punctuality.
- Health and Welfare.
- Being subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan.
- EAL.
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant.
- Being a Child in Care.
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman.

## **6.0 A GRADUATED APPROACH**

6.1 Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from Teaching Assistants or specialist staff. The identification of SEND is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. All teachers, supported by the Senior Leadership Teams, assess progress of all pupils every term.

The Senior Leadership Teams regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement, by classroom observations and termly progress meetings. 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.

- 6.2 Where pupils are falling behind or making inadequate progress, given their age and starting point, they will be placed on a focused and carefully monitored intervention programme. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the SENCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the School about the pupil's progress. Pupils will be identified as being SEND and recorded on the register if they have a diagnosed condition or an additional need identified. Pupils will have a series of intervention based on three waves of our school offer. This information gathering will include an early discussion with the pupil, their parents/carers and teachers, developing a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents'/carers' concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the pupil and the next steps. Consideration of whether special educational provision is required starts with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents/carers. This then helps determine the 'different from' or 'additional to' support/provision that is needed. The overriding purpose of this early action is to help the pupil achieve the identified outcomes and remove any barriers to learning. When it is decided that a pupil does have SEND, the decision is recorded in the School's SEND register and the pupil's parents/carers are informed that special educational provision is being made.

### 6.3 **SEND SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS**

When a pupil is identified as having SEND, our aim is to remove their barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place, which is recorded on the pupil's record. This SEND support takes the form of a four-part cycle, known as the graduated approach, which supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This draws on more detailed approaches and more specialist expertise in successive cycles, in order to match interventions to the SEND of the pupil.

### 6.4 **ASSESS**

In identifying a pupil as needing SEND support, the SENCO, with support from the teacher, carries out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs in the form of a one page profile/Supporting Me to Learn Plan. This draws on teachers' assessments and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experience of parents/carers, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. We take any concerns raised by parents/carers seriously and compare to our own assessment and information on how the pupil is developing. This assessment is reviewed regularly. This will help ensure that support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their impact is developed.

### 6.5 **PLAN**

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This will be recorded on their one page profile.

The support and intervention provided is selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil. Parents/carers will be made fully aware of the planned support and interventions.

#### **6.6 DO**

The class teachers remain responsible for working with the pupil in class on a daily basis, even when the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching. They work closely with support staff or specialist teachers to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENCO supports the class teachers in the further assessment of the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

#### **6.7 REVIEW**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions, and their impact on the pupil's progress, are reviewed every term, along with the views of the pupil and their parents/carers. This then feeds back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class teacher, working with the SENCO, revises the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with parents/carers and the pupil.

#### **6.8 REFERRAL FOR AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHC PLAN) AND MY SUPPORT PLAN**

- 6.8.1 Where, despite the School having taken relevant and purposeful action through the SEND Support process to identify, assess and meet the needs of the pupil, the pupil has not made expected progress, the School or parents/carers should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. If they identify that additional funding and support are needed from the Local Authority High Needs Block, the School will then complete a 'My Support Plan', which will lead to an EHC assessment and, if successful, an EHC Plan. A My Support Plan will also be implemented if they feel that additional support is needed from an external agency, such as CIAT, SALT, EP, SENDIS, etc. This will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the pupil, are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning provision and identifying resources, is required. The decision to make a referral for an EHC Plan will be taken at a progress review.
- 6.8.2 The application for an Education, Health and Care Plan will combine information from a variety of sources including, parents/carers, teachers, SENCO, social care, health professionals and educational psychologists.
- 6.8.3 Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. The decision will be made by a panel, which will include people from education, health and social care, about whether or not the pupil is eligible for an EHC Plan. Parents/carers have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.
- 6.8.4 Where a pupil has an EHC Plan, the Local Authority must review that plan, as a minimum, every 12 months. The Local Authority can require schools to convene and hold annual review meetings on its behalf. The 'assess / plan / do/ review' cycle will still continue, and further agencies and professionals may get involved.

## **7.0 MANAGING PUPILS NEEDS ON THE SEND REGISTER**

- 7.1 A pupil who has been identified as having SEND and is on the SEND register, either under the category of SEND Support or EHC Plan, has their progress carefully monitored every term by the teacher, SENCO and Senior Leadership Team. This then highlights any areas of concern or underachievement, taking into account the pupil's difficulties, and action is taken, identifying which wave of support the pupil is receiving. Alongside this, the pupil will have their own one-page profile/Supporting Me to Learn Plan, which identifies their barriers to learning, needs, clear outcomes and incorporates the 'assess/ plan/ do/ review' graduated approach set out by the SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015). The class teachers are responsible for maintaining, updating and evidencing progress according to the outcomes described in the plan. Alongside the one-page profile, some pupils will have a personalised provision timetable, which shows when the pupil is receiving provision that is in addition to or different from their peers. These will both be reviewed as part of the 'assess / plan / do / review' process every term, involving a meeting with the parents/carers and pupil. The SENCO may also be in attendance. If they identify that they are unable to fully meet the needs of a pupil through their own provision arrangements, they can then refer to external agencies and professionals, to complete a My Support Plan.
- 7.2 Pupils and parents/carers are involved at every part of the process, their considerations and views will be taken into account and termly review meetings will be arranged. The teacher, parent and pupil will be fully aware of their role in meeting the outcomes and helping the pupil overcome their barriers to learning.

## **8.0 CRITERIA FOR EXITING THE SEND REGISTER**

- 8.1 The SEND register is a flexible register. The register will be reviewed three times a year by the SENCO and Senior Leadership Teams. If pupils, when having received appropriate identified support, begin to make good progress and close the gap with their peers they can come off the SEND register, in consultation with parents/carers. If pupils' needs are being managed successfully within the classroom, with no different from or additional to support, then the pupil no longer needs to be classed as SEND Support. All pupils with a diagnosis will remain on the register regardless of support received.

## **9.0 SUPPORTING PUPILS AND FAMILIES**

### **9.1 THE VOICE OF THE PUPIL**

All pupils should be involved in making decisions, where possible, right from the start of their education. The ways in which pupils are encouraged to participate should reflect the pupil's evolving maturity. Participation in education is a process that will necessitate all pupils being given the opportunity to make choices and to understand that their views matter. Confident, young people, who know that their opinions will be valued and who can practice making choices, will feel safe, secure and supported throughout their educational experience.

- 9.2 At Pontefract Academies Trust, we encourage pupils to participate in learning by:

- Regular target setting in line with the School's policy.
- Participation in the Annual Review of EHC Plans.
- Participation in transition planning.
- Being involved in decision making.
- Pupil Voice activities.



- 9.3 The School's SEND Information Report is available on our website for parents/carers to access. The School has links with other agencies which support families and pupils. Admission arrangements can be found in the School's Admissions Policy.
- 9.4 A transition process takes place for those pupils moving into school, moving between classes and into secondary school/Post 16 education. Arrangements are made for all pupils but an enhanced transition package, where necessary, will be put in place for those pupils who have Special Educational Provision, adapted to the needs of the pupil.
- 9.5 The Local Authority has a Parent Partnership Service, for the parents/carers of any pupil with SEND, which provides advice and information about matters relating to SEND.

## **10.0 SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

- 10.1 Our schools recognise that pupils within school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some pupils with medical conditions may be disabled and, where this is the case, the School will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 10.2 Some may also have Special Educational Needs (SEND) and may have a statement or Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan, which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision and the SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015) is followed. Specific personalised arrangements are put in place in our schools to support pupils with medical conditions.

## **11.0 SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- 11.1 The mental health and wellbeing of all members of Pontefract Academies Trust (including staff, pupils and parents) is fundamental to our philosophy and ethos 'achievement without excuses, our people matter, excellence as standard, pupils come first, stronger as one'.
- 11.2 The Trust is committed to developing a whole school positive mental health and wellbeing ethos, which raises awareness and understanding, and reduces stigma amongst pupils, staff and parent/carers. The Trust aims to help young people express their feelings, build their confidence and emotional resilience, and therefore their capacity to learn. Teaching pupils the signs of poor mental health and self-help techniques, to support good mental health, is key, as well as providing support at an early stage in school.
- 11.3 The culture within our schools promotes pupils' positive mental health and wellbeing, and avoids stigma by:
- Having a whole-school and Trust approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, within an ethos of high expectations and constant support.
  - Having a committed staff community that sets a whole-school culture of positive mental health and wellbeing, support and value.
  - Having a robust regime of continuing professional development (CPD) for staff.
  - Having a pupil group of healthy minds champions.
  - Working closely with pupils, parents and carers.
  - Whole school promotion of building individual resilience and tenacity, through the use of pupil levels in all areas of the curriculum.

11.4 Where staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health, they should discuss this with key individuals and, where appropriate, make a safeguarding referral to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **12.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEND**

12.1 We regularly and carefully monitor and evaluate the quality of provision we offer all pupils. The School reports the effectiveness of SEND provision to the Executive Leadership Team and the School Performance Review Board.

## **13.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

13.1 Our schools' Complaints Policies can be found on individual school websites. If a parent or carer has any concerns or complaints regarding the care or welfare of their child, after having spoken to the SLO, SENCO, class teacher(s) or Learning Manager, they can then request an appointment with a member of the School's Senior Leadership Team, who will be able to advise on formal procedures for complaint.