



BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

SEND policy

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy

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1. **Aims and objectives**

Our SEND policy aims to set out how, across the Bath & Wells Diocesan Academies Trust (BWMAT), we will:

- Ensure that all pupils with SEND are identified early and receive high-quality, evidence-informed support that enables them to achieve and thrive.
- Provide a clear, consistent and trust-wide approach to identifying, assessing and meeting SEND, including clear expectations for universal provision (quality-first teaching), targeted support and specialist provision.
- Ensure pupils with SEND access the same broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum as their peers, with adaptations and reasonable adjustments made where necessary.
- Secure close partnership with parents/carers and pupils; make sure the pupil's voice is central to decisions; and meet statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice.
- Ensure trust leaders, governors and trustees have transparent oversight of SEND resourcing, impact and strategic improvement.

Measurable success indicators (examples the trust will use):

- Reduction in the gap between pupils with SEND and their peers for attainment and progress.
- All schools publish an up-to-date SEN information report and Inclusion Strategy, and these are reviewed annually.
- Evidence of improved pupil outcomes for targeted cohorts as shown in provision mapping and review cycles.

2. **Vision and values**

BWMAT believes inclusion is central to excellent education. We accept unconditionally all children into school life, celebrate identity and difference, and place a clear emphasis on strengths-based, child-first language. High-quality universal teaching is our first response to need; additional layers of support are deployed when required. Leaders across the trust will work collaboratively through SEND Hubs to share expertise, scale effective practice and ensure proportionate use of resources.

3. **Legislation and guidance**

This policy complies with:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Regulations 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE/DHSC).
- Equality Act 2010 (including Public Sector Equality Duty).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (current edition).

- DfE guidance and publications relevant to SEND, including the schools white paper Every child achieving and thriving and related guidance on the Inclusive Mainstream Fund.
- The trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

(References and links are listed in the Sources section.)

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

All schools in the trust will:

- Provide reasonable adjustments so pupils with disabilities are not disadvantaged.
- Ensure pupils with SEND are able to engage in all activities alongside their peers.
- Use inclusive language and focus on what provision pupils need rather than what they cannot do.
- Monitor access, participation and outcomes for relevant groups and evaluate the impact of provision.

5. Definitions

Special educational needs (SEND)

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

Four broad areas of need (SEND Code of Practice):

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Special educational provision is education or training that is additional to, or different from, that generally provided for children of the same age.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The board of trustees

The board is accountable for statutory duties and will:

- Ensure the trust has a clear, effective SEND policy and Inclusion Strategy and that these are implemented across all schools.
- Monitor the use and impact of funding including the notional SEND budgets and any Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocations.
- Ensure there is a named trustee or trustee lead with specific oversight of SEND.
- Make available governance information required by the Academy Trust Handbook and governance guidance (attendance, register of interests, scheme of delegation).

6.2 Chief Executive Officer

- Provide strategic leadership for SEND across the trust and ensure adequate resources and capacity.
- Ensure the trust-wide approach supports schools to meet statutory duties and deliver inclusive practice.

6.3 Trust Wide SEND Leader (policy owner)

- Maintain and update this policy, lead on SEND impact and compliance.
- Lead the trust SEND Hubs and coordinate cross-school training, moderation and quality assurance.

6.4 Executive Headteachers/Headteacher / Head of School

- Ensure the day-to-day operation of the policy in their school.
- Make sure the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to fulfil responsibilities and the role sits within the Senior Leadership of the school.
- Oversee the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding, and advise the LA where an EHC needs assessment is required.
- Work with the trust to shape local inclusion priorities and use inclusive mainstream fund resources where allocated.

6.5 The SENCO

Each school will appoint a qualified SENCO. The SENCO will:

- Lead the graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review).
- Advise and support colleagues to adapt classroom teaching and make reasonable adjustments.
- Coordinate provision, maintain the SEND register and individual records, and liaise with external agencies.
- Ensure parents and pupils are involved in planning and reviewing provision.

6.6 Class teachers

- Responsible for high-quality, adapted teaching and for the progress of all pupils in their class.
- Work with SENCO and support staff to review pupil progress and adjust provision.
- Communicate with parents/carers about progress and outcomes.

6.7 Teaching assistants and specialist staff

- Deliver targeted interventions as planned and evaluated by teachers/SENCO.
- Record impact and provide feedback for review cycles.

6.8 Parents/carers and pupils

- Parents/carers will be consulted and involved at all stages of assessment and provision.
- Pupils will be encouraged to express their views and be active participants in setting outcomes.

7. **SEND information report**

Each school must coproduce and publish an SEN information report on its website that sets out how the policy is implemented locally, including:

- Details of the SENCO and how to contact them.
- Admission arrangements for pupils with SEND.
- The school's approach to identification, assessment, support and review.
- How resources are deployed and how parents can access support.

The trust will maintain oversight of the currency and quality of each school's SEN information report and Inclusion Strategy.

8. **Our approach to SEND support (the graduated approach)**

We adopt the 4-stage graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review):

Assess

- Teachers will monitor all pupils and use assessment information (including baseline and ongoing formative assessment) to identify concerns.
- Where concerns persist despite high-quality teaching, the SENCO and teacher will carry out a clear analysis of need, involving parents and the pupil.

Plan

- The teacher, SENCO and parents will agree outcomes and actions. These will be recorded in a pupil passport, IEP or school-based support plan and on the school's management information system (MIS).
- Plans will state expected outcomes, responsibilities and review dates.

Do

- The class teacher retains responsibility for the pupil; interventions are linked to classroom teaching.
- The SENCO will support implementation and advise staff.

Review

- Impact will be evaluated against outcomes at the agreed review date. Records of reviews will be kept and next steps agreed.

9. **Levels of support, funding and the Inclusive Mainstream Fund**

- School-based SEND support: funded from the school's notional SEND budget. Pupils receiving this support should be on the school SEND register and coded appropriately on returns.
- EHC plans: where needs cannot be met from school resources alone, an EHC needs assessment may be requested from the LA.

- Inclusive Mainstream Fund and SEND reforms (DfE white paper 2026): the Trust and schools will use any allocated Inclusive Mainstream Fund funding to strengthen the universal and targeted offer, fund evidence-based interventions, and develop local collaborative SEND arrangements. The Trust will ensure transparency and governance for use of these funds and publish an Inclusion Strategy that explains deployment of inclusion resources.

10. Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

- Early identification is a priority. Schools will use baseline information, day-to-day formative assessment, and screening tools appropriate to age and need.
- Slow progress or lower attainment alone does not automatically indicate SEND; staff will consider other likely causes (attendance, EAL, health, bereavement).
- Where needs are unclear, the school will consult with external specialists promptly.
- For children joining the school with existing SEND, the school will work with previous settings and external agencies to put support in place at admission.

11. Consulting and involving pupils and parents/carers

- Schools will place families at the centre of decisions and keep them informed at each stage.
- Parents/carers of pupils on the SEND register will be offered termly review meetings (or more frequently where needed).
- Pupils will be supported to contribute to reviews and to set and monitor their own outcomes where appropriate.

12. Interventions, provision mapping and quality-first teaching

- Universal provision: All pupils, including those with SEND, must benefit from high-quality, ambitious teaching. The trust emphasises “quality-first” practice first.
- Targeted provision: evidence-based, time-limited interventions should be linked to classroom practice and recorded on a provision map with clear success criteria and impact measures.
- Specialist provision: where required, schools will commission appropriate specialist support and ensure effective handover and integration of specialist recommendations into classroom practice.

13. Expertise, training and use of external agencies

- The trust will provide ongoing training via the SEND Hubs and use central capacity to build school-level expertise in common needs (language, behaviour, cognition).
- Schools will access external specialists (educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, CAMHS, specialist teachers) where needs require.

- The trust will ensure the SENCO role has adequate time and CPD to meet statutory expectations.

14. Transition and admissions

- Admissions: the Trust and its schools will follow the School Admissions Code and will admit pupils whose EHC plans name the school before other allocations.
- Transition planning: schools will plan transitions between phases or placements carefully, sharing information and arranging additional transition support where necessary.

15. Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

- Schools will publish accessibility plans that set out how they will improve access to curriculum, environment and information.
- Reasonable adjustments and auxiliary aids will be provided so pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage.

16. Attendance and safeguarding

- Pupils with SEND may have complex barriers to attendance. The Trust's attendance policies will reflect this and schools will work with families, medical and external partners to secure safe attendance.
- Pupils with SEND are at higher risk of abuse; safeguarding practice must be adapted where necessary to ensure communication and access needs do not prevent disclosures or referrals. Any case-specific safeguarding concern must be handled immediately by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

17. Complaints about SEND provision

- Parents/carers should raise concerns first with the class teacher or SENCO. If unresolved, follow the school's complaints procedure.
- Information about disagreement resolution and mediation for EHC plans should be included in each school's SEN information report.

18. Monitoring, evaluation and governance

- Trustees will receive an annual SEND impact report that includes:
- Numbers and categories of pupils on SEND registers across the trust.
- Progress and attainment data for pupils with SEND.
- Use and impact of SEND funding (including Inclusive Mainstream Fund where applicable).
- The Lead for SEND will review the policy annually and more frequently if statutory guidance changes.

- The trust will publish governance information required by the Academy Trust Handbook (register of interests, attendance, scheme of delegation, minutes on request subject to exclusions for confidential items).

19. Links with other policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Local school SEND information reports.
- Accessibility plan.
- Behaviour policy.
- Safeguarding / Child protection policy.
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy.
- Equality and Diversity policy.
- Attendance policy.
- Complaints policy.
- School admissions policy.

Sources

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years, Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care. (DfE). ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))
- Every child achieving and thriving (schools white paper) and related SEND reform material, Department for Education, 2026. ([gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))