



Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Policy Number	EDE/POL/022	Issue Date	01/09/2025
Issue Number	007	Author	James Madine
School	Acorns School	Approver	Jo Sharpe
Headteacher	Paula Tankard	Regional Executive Headteacher/ Regional Director	David Joy

1. Introduction

Our group of independent special schools is committed to promoting social inclusion and developing capable, caring, creative, and confident pupils. We recognise that many of our pupils have complex needs, including emotional, behavioural, and social challenges, often following exclusion from mainstream or alternative provision. Our schools provide a safe, nurturing environment tailored to each pupil's unique needs, aligned with the National Curriculum and vocational pathways.

This policy is written in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2014, updated 2015 and 2020), the Children and Families Act 2014, and relevant statutory guidance, ensuring compliance with the OFSTED inspection framework.

2. Aim and Scope

The aim of this policy is to ensure effective identification, assessment, planning, and provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) across our schools. We strive to:-

- Deliver personalised education, behaviour, and personal development plans.
- Collaborate with pupils, families, carers, and professionals through a multi-agency approach.
- Ensure all staff are equipped with strategies to support diverse learning needs.
- Maintain high standards of record-keeping, monitoring, and review aligned with statutory requirements.

3. Definition of SEN

We support pupils with a wide range of needs, including but not limited to:

- Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
- General and specific learning difficulties (e.g., literacy and numeracy challenges).
- Communication and interaction needs.
- Physical and sensory impairments.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher / School Leadership

- Ensure the SEN policy is current and implemented effectively.

- Provide ongoing staff training and resources.
- Maintain oversight of SEN provision and compliance with legislation.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- Lead on day-to-day SEN provision and statutory processes.
- Chair the School Team Around a Child (STAC) meetings for assessment and EHCP review.
- Coordinate Annual Reviews and liaise with Local Authorities.
- Support staff development in SEN strategies.
- While independent schools are not legally required to appoint a qualified SENCo, Keys Group strives to ensure that every school has a suitably experienced SENCo or equivalent specialist to deliver the highest standards of provision.

Class Teachers

- Deliver differentiated teaching and personalised learning.
- Maintain awareness of pupils' SEN and contribute to Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- Collaborate with SENCo and support staff for effective provision.

Education Support Workers / Teaching Assistants

- Assist in implementing IEP targets.
- Provide tailored support sensitive to pupil needs.

Parents, Carers, and Social Workers

- Engage as active partners in education planning and review.
- Support learning and attendance.

Pupils

- Participate in setting and reviewing their learning targets.
- Engage in STAC meetings where appropriate.

The school follows clear protocols for managing exclusions or managed moves involving pupils with SEND, ensuring that decisions are made in line with statutory guidance and the pupil's EHCP. Alternative provision or reintegration plans are developed promptly to minimise disruption to learning.

5. Identification, Assessment, and Planning

School Team Around a Child (STAC) Process

- The STAC is a multi-disciplinary team involving school staff, SENCo, parents/carers, social workers, health professionals, and the pupil where appropriate.

- STAC meetings are convened for initial assessments, ongoing monitoring, and Annual Reviews of EHCPs.
- The team collaboratively reviews progress against EHCP objectives, adjusts provision, and sets SMART targets.
- Documentation from STAC meetings informs IEPs and statutory reviews.
- Our approach to supporting pupils with SEND follows the Graduated Approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review), ensuring ongoing, responsive provision tailored to individual needs.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

- IEPs are developed from EHCP objectives and STAC outcomes.
- Targets are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).
- IEPs are reviewed and updated regularly with input from all stakeholders.

Pupil voice is actively sought and incorporated in all stages of SEN planning and review, including STAC meetings and Annual Reviews. Pupils are supported to express their views and participate in setting and evaluating their learning and development targets.

6. Curriculum Access and Adaptation

- All pupils receive a broad, balanced curriculum tailored to their needs, including core subjects and vocational options.
- Adaptation in teaching and assessment ensures accessibility through differentiation and dynamic adaptation to pupils' evolving needs. Support is provided through in-class assistance, small group work, and individual interventions.
- For pupils with the most complex needs, the curriculum is personalised and adapted to develop communication, independence, and life skills. Specialist approaches, including use of assistive technology, sensory resources, and alternative communication methods, are integral to provision.

7. Record Keeping and Reporting

- SEN records, including EHCPs, IEPs, and STAC meeting notes, are securely maintained and regularly updated.
- Progress is monitored systematically and reported to parents/carers and relevant professionals.
- Annual Reviews are conducted within statutory timescales.
- The school systematically monitors and evaluates the impact of interventions on closing gaps in pupils' learning and behaviour. Progress data, behavioural records, and wellbeing indicators are reviewed regularly to inform adjustments to provision and ensure effectiveness.

8. Partnership with Parents and Carers

- Open communication is encouraged through meetings, reports, and informal contact.
- Parents/carers are supported to contribute to planning and decision-making.
- Complaints related to SEN provision are managed through the school's Complaints Policy.

9. Training and Development

- Induction for new staff includes SEN policy familiarisation.
- Ongoing professional development addresses current SEN practises and legislative updates.
- All staff receive regular, updated training focused on supporting pupils with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs and challenging behaviours. Training includes evidence-based strategies for behaviour management, trauma-informed practice, and promoting positive mental health.

10. Equality and Inclusion

- All staff promote equality and respect diversity in race, faith, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure full participation of all pupils.

11. Admissions Policy

- Admissions for pupils with SEN who do not require an EHCP follow the same process as other pupils.
- For pupils without EHCPs, support from placing local authorities is expected to meet needs appropriately.

12. Supporting Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- EAL pupils receive targeted support to develop language skills alongside curriculum access.
- Language needs are assessed separately from SEN to ensure appropriate provision.
- Staff are trained to differentiate between EAL and SEN needs.
- Collaboration with families and language specialists supports EAL pupils' progress.

Appendix A: Localised Contact Details and Roles

School Name: Acorns School

Role	Name	Contact Information	Notes
Headteacher	Paula Tankard	Phone: 0161 449 5820 Email: Paula.tankard@keyseducation.ac.uk	Overall responsibility for SEN policy implementation
SENCo	Kerry Bernard	Phone: 0161 449 5820 Email: Kerry.bernard@keyseducation.ac.uk	Lead for SEN provision, assessment, and EHCP coordination
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Molly McCann	Phone: 0161 449 5820 Email: Molly.mccann@keyseducation.ac.uk	Responsible for safeguarding concerns
Chair of Governors	James Madine	Phone: Email: james.madine@keys-group.co.uk	Oversees governance of SEN provision
Local Authority SEND Officer	Stockport SEN Cheshire East SEN	Phone: 0161 240 6168 Email: specialeducation@stockport.gov.uk Phone: 01625 378042 Email: senteameast@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Key contact for SEN statutory processes
Educational Psychologist	Dr Hayley Lugassy	Phone: [Number] Email: Hayley.lugassy@keys-group.co.uk	Provides specialist advice and assessment
Health Professional Contact (e.g., CAMHS)	Stockport CAMHS Cheshire East CAMHS	Phone: 0161 716 5868 Phone: 01625 712042	Supports health-related SEN needs

Appendix B: School Team Around a Child (STAC) Meeting Protocol

Purpose

The STAC process is a collaborative multi-agency approach to assess, plan, and review the educational, health, and care needs of pupils with SEN or EHCPs. It ensures all relevant stakeholders contribute to personalised support and progress monitoring.

Membership

- SENCo (Chair)
- Class Teacher(s)
- Education Support Workers / Teaching Assistants as appropriate
- Parents / Carers
- Social Worker (if applicable)
- Health Professional(s) (e.g., Speech and Language Therapist, CAMHS)
- The Pupil (where appropriate)
- Local Authority SEND Officer (optional)

Meeting Frequency

- Initial assessment: Within 6 weeks of referral or EHCP issuance
- Review meetings: Termly or as required
- Annual Review of EHCP: At least once every 12 months

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Review of current EHCP outcomes and IEP targets
3. Presentation of progress data and observations
4. Discussion of any changes in needs or circumstances
5. Agreement on new or revised SMART targets
6. Identification of additional support or resources required
7. Planning for next steps and responsibilities
8. Scheduling next meeting

Documentation

- Meeting minutes recorded by SENCo or appointed note-taker
- Updated IEP reflecting agreed targets and actions
- Copies shared with all attendees and stored in pupil's SEN file

Appendix C: Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template

Pupil Details

- Name:
- Date of Birth: __
- Year Group/Class: __
- SEN Status: (EHCP / SEN Support / Other)
- Date of Plan:
- Review Date:

EHCP Outcomes Addressed

SMART Targets

Target	Specific Steps	Success Criteria	Resources Needed	Review Date	Progress Notes
1.					
2.					
3.					

Strategies and Support

- Detail teaching strategies, interventions, and support staff involved
-

Pupil and Parent/Carer Involvement

- Pupil's comments: __
 - Parent/Carer comments: __
-

Signatures

- SENCo: __ Date: __
- Class Teacher: __ Date: __
- Parent/Carer: Date: __
- Pupil (if appropriate): Date: __

Appendix D: Complaints Procedure for SEN Provision

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Parents/carers should initially raise concerns with the Class Teacher or SENCo.
- The school will endeavour to resolve issues promptly and amicably through discussion.

Step 2: Formal Complaint to Headteacher

- If unresolved, a formal complaint can be submitted in writing to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will investigate and respond within 15 working days.

Step 3: Governing Body Review

- If dissatisfied with the Headteacher's response, parents/carers may escalate the complaint to the Governing Body's Complaints Panel.
- The panel will review the case and provide a final decision within [20] working days.

Step 4: External Resolution

- If the complaint remains unresolved, parents/carers may seek advice from the Local Authority SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) or consider mediation and/or appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

Contact Information for Stockport SENDIASS

- Phone: 0161 240 6168
- Email: stockportsendiass@togethertrust.org.uk
- Website: togethertrust.org/community-support/sendias

Contact Information for Cheshire East SENDIASS (CEIAS)

- Phone: 0300 123 5166
- Email: ceias@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- Website: ceias.cheshireeast.gov.uk/home

Appendix E: Annual Review Process and Documentation

Purpose

To ensure that Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) remain relevant and effective in meeting the pupil's evolving needs by conducting statutory annual reviews.

Process

1. Scheduling

- The SENCo schedules the Annual Review at least 2 weeks in advance, ensuring all relevant parties are invited.
- Invitations are sent to parents/carers, the pupil (where appropriate), teaching staff, local authority SEND officer, health and social care professionals, and any other relevant agencies.

2. Preparation

- The SENCo collates reports from the pupil's teachers, support staff, and external professionals.
- Parents/carers and the pupil are encouraged to provide their views and contribute to the review documentation.

3. Review Meeting

- The SENCo chairs the meeting, ensuring all voices are heard.
- Progress towards EHCP outcomes and IEP targets is discussed.
- Any changes in needs, provision, or placement are considered.
- SMART targets for the coming year are agreed.

4. Post-Review

- The SENCo prepares a written report summarising the meeting outcomes, recommendations, and agreed actions.
- The report is circulated to all attendees and the local authority within two weeks.
- If amendments to the EHCP are required, the SENCo liaises with the local authority to initiate changes.

Documentation Templates

- Annual Review Invitation Letter
- Review Meeting Agenda
- Review Report Template
- Updated IEP Template

Appendix F: Transition Planning Guidance

Purpose

To support pupils and their families in managing key educational transitions smoothly and effectively.

Key Transition Points

- Early Years to Primary School
- Primary to Secondary School
- Secondary to Post-16 Education, Training, or Employment
- Transitions within or between specialist provisions

Procedures

1. Early Planning

- Transition planning begins at least 6 months before the anticipated change.
- The SENCo coordinates multi-agency meetings including parents/carers, the pupil, current and receiving settings, and relevant professionals.

2. Transition Meetings

- Review current EHCP outcomes and support.
- Identify additional support needs during transition.
- Develop a personalised transition plan with clear roles and timelines.

3. Support Strategies

- Visits to new settings.
- Social stories and visual aids.
- Introduction to key staff members.
- Gradual integration programmes where appropriate.

4. Documentation

- Transition Plan template detailing actions, responsibilities, and dates.
- Updated IEP reflecting transition support.

Appendix G: Supporting Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Identification and Assessment

- Pupils with EAL are identified on admission and assessed for language proficiency.
- Language needs are monitored separately from SEN, ensuring accurate identification of additional learning needs.

Provision and Support

- Tailored language support is provided to develop English skills alongside curriculum access.
- Teaching staff differentiate learning materials and activities to support language acquisition.
- Specialist support from language tutors or external agencies is accessed as needed.

Staff Training

- Staff receive training to distinguish between EAL needs and SEN.
- Strategies for supporting EAL pupils are embedded in teaching practice.

Collaboration

- Close communication with parents/carers to support language development at home.
- Liaison with specialist EAL services and community resources.

Monitoring and Review

- Regular review of EAL pupils' progress in language and curriculum areas.
- Coordination with SEN provision if additional needs are identified.