

The Charter Schools Educational Trust Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

2026-27

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Approver(s)	Trust Board
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Summary of Changes:	• Significant re-drafting to all sections to develop a single Trust-wide Policy applicable to all schools.

1. Vision and Principles

1.1 The Charter Schools Educational Trust is committed to providing ambitious and inclusive education for all pupils. We believe that inclusion is achieved through the creation of environments in which every pupil can participate, belong and thrive.

1.2 The Trust maintains high expectations for pupils with SEND and recognises that effective inclusion requires schools to understand pupils' strengths and needs and to work collaboratively. Support should be responsive, proportionate and designed to remove barriers whilst preserving dignity, developing independence and enabling meaningful participation.

1.3 Schools will prioritise high-quality teaching and the use of reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils can access learning alongside their peers wherever possible. Additional provision should complement, rather than replace, opportunities for pupils to engage fully in school life.

1.4 The Trust will work in partnership with pupils, families, staff and external agencies to ensure that decisions are informed, collaborative and focused on long-term outcomes. Our aim is for pupils with SEND to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and independence required to thrive in education and beyond.

1.5 Our Mission is clear: to provide better futures for all children and young people. We work to improve the futures of thousands of children in London and beyond, particularly where young lives are adversely affected by social and educational disadvantage.

1.6 To achieve this, the Trust will:

- a) identify and respond to SEND at the earliest opportunity;
- b) promote a culture of inclusion in which pupils with SEND are valued, included and able to participate fully in school life;
- c) work in partnership with pupils, families, staff, governors, trustees and external agencies;
- d) maintain high aspirations and ambitious outcomes for all pupils with SEND; and
- e) prepare pupils with SEND for successful adulthood, employment, independence and lifelong learning.

1.7 The Policy is underpinned by the Trust values of:

- a) We are inclusive – We contribute to building a welcoming and healthy culture.
- b) We act with integrity - We lead by example, approaching our work with care, pride and humility.
- c) We achieve together - We strive for excellence, working collaboratively to respond to, learn from and embrace change.
- d) We are evidence-informed - We are ambitious for all and seek to close attainment gaps through better use of evidence.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all schools and educational settings within The Charter Schools Educational Trust.

2.2 The policy applies to:

- a) Early Years provision
- b) Primary schools
- c) Secondary schools
- d) Sixth Form and Post-16 provision

2.3 This policy establishes the Trust-wide framework for SEND provision and sets out the minimum expectations for all schools and settings within the Trust.

2.4 Each school will publish and annually review a SEND Information Report which sets out how the requirements of this policy are implemented within its local context and how pupils with SEND are supported within the school.

3. Policy Aims

3.1 The Trust will:

- a) Ensure compliance with relevant SEND legislation and statutory guidance.
- b) Promote a consistent approach to SEND across all schools.
- c) Support the early identification of SEND.
- d) Ensure that high-quality teaching remains the foundation of provision for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- e) Identify and remove barriers to learning, participation and belonging.
- f) Enable pupils with SEND to achieve ambitious educational, social and personal outcomes.
- g) Promote independence, dignity and self-advocacy among pupils with SEND.
- h) Promote meaningful participation by pupils and families in decision-making.
- i) Support successful transitions throughout education.
- j) Prepare children and young people with SEND for successful adulthood, independence, employment and community participation.
- k) Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision across the Trust.

4. Legislative Framework

4.1 This policy has been developed with regard to:

- a) Children and Families Act 2014
- b) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years
- c) Equality Act 2010
- d) Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- e) Keeping Children Safe in Education

- f) Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- g) Working Together to Safeguard Children

4.2 All schools within the Trust will use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by a pupil's identified special educational needs and disabilities.

5. Definition of SEND

5.1 A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

5.2 A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a) Have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children and young people of the same age.

5.3 The four broad areas of need identified within the SEND Code of Practice are:

- a) Communication and Interaction
- b) Cognition and Learning
- c) Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- d) Sensory and/or Physical Needs

5.4 These broad areas of need are used to support assessment, planning and provision. Pupils may present with needs across more than one area and the support provided will be determined by individual strengths, needs and circumstances rather than category alone.

6. Principles of Inclusive Practice

6.1 All schools within the Trust will maintain an inclusive culture and environment where diversity is valued and difference is respected.

6.2 Teachers will remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their classes, including those receiving additional SEND support.

6.3 High-quality, inclusive teaching will be the primary approach to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND.

6.4 Schools will make reasonable adjustments, where required, to ensure pupils with SEND are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

6.5 Support will be tailored to individual strengths and needs and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and proportionate.

6.6 Schools will actively promote the attendance, participation, belonging, wellbeing and achievement of pupils with SEND.

6.7 The views, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be considered when planning, delivering and reviewing provision.

6.8 Support should promote independence, dignity and self-advocacy and should seek to reduce unnecessary dependency wherever possible.

6.9 Schools will seek to understand pupils' developmental strengths and needs and ensure that support is developmentally appropriate, proportionate and aligned to long-term outcomes.

7. Identification of SEND

7.1 Schools will identify SEND through:

- a) Ongoing assessment
- b) Teacher observation
- c) Information shared by parents and carers
- d) Pupil voice
- e) Progress and attainment information
- f) Information from previous settings
- g) Advice from external professionals
- h) Screening, diagnostic and assessment information where appropriate

7.2 Identification of SEND will not be based solely on attainment.

7.3 The identification of SEND is an ongoing process and schools will review pupils' needs regularly to ensure that support remains appropriate and responsive.

7.4 When considering whether a pupil has SEND, schools will also consider factors such as attendance, English as an Additional Language (EAL), disadvantage, safeguarding concerns, health needs and interrupted learning.

8. The Graduated Approach

8.1 All schools will follow the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

8.2 Assess - Schools will identify a pupil's strengths, needs and barriers to learning through a range of assessment information including attainment, progress, observation, pupil voice, family views and advice from external professionals where appropriate.

8.3 Plan - Appropriate outcomes, adjustments and support will be agreed with pupils and families. Planned provision should be proportionate, outcome-focused and designed to promote participation, progress and independence.

8.4 Do - Support will be implemented through high-quality teaching, reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions where required. Class and subject teachers will remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils with SEND.

8.5 Review - The effectiveness of provision and progress towards agreed outcomes will be reviewed regularly with pupils and families, and future actions agreed.

8.6 External Expertise – Schools will seek advice and support from external professionals where a pupil continues to experience difficulties despite appropriate support being implemented through the graduated approach.

8.7 The graduated approach will remain an ongoing cycle to ensure support responds to changing needs and continues to promote positive outcomes, participation, belonging and independence.

9. High-Quality, inclusive Teaching

9.1 High-quality, inclusive teaching is the first response to SEND and forms the foundation of provision for all pupils.

9.2 The Trust expects schools to adopt evidence-informed approaches to teaching and inclusion, drawing on the best available evidence to improve outcomes for pupils with SEND and other pupils who may face barriers to learning. The Trust's expectations regarding inclusive classroom practice are informed by the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on inclusive teaching and supporting pupils with SEND.

9.3 All teachers will:

- a) Set high expectations for all pupils.
- b) Adapt teaching in response to identified needs.
- c) Use assessment to inform teaching and learning.
- d) Promote participation, belonging and independence.
- e) Work collaboratively with support staff and specialists where appropriate.
- f) Use evidence-informed approaches to support access, engagement and progress.

9.4 Schools will use reasonable adjustments, adaptive teaching approaches and appropriate support to enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum, participate fully in school life and achieve positive outcomes.

9.5 Additional interventions will supplement, rather than replace, high-quality teaching and opportunities for pupils to learn alongside their peers wherever appropriate.

9.6 Support should promote independence, confidence and self-advocacy and should seek to reduce unnecessary reliance on adult support wherever possible.

9.7 Responsibility for the progress and development of pupils with SEND remains with the class or subject teacher, even where additional support is delivered by support staff or external professionals.

10. SEND Support

10.1 Where a pupil requires provision additional to or different from that ordinarily available through high-quality teaching, they may receive SEND Support.

10.2 SEND Support will be determined through the graduated approach and will be matched to the strengths, needs and outcomes of the individual pupil.

10.3 SEND support may include:

- a) Adapted teaching approaches in lessons
- b) Small group or individual interventions
- c) Specialist resources
- d) Assistive technology
- e) Pastoral support
- f) Specialist advice and guidance
- g) Reasonable adjustments

10.4 SEND Support should promote participation, belonging, independence and positive outcomes and should enable pupils to access learning and wider school life as fully as possible.

10.5 The impact of SEND Support will be reviewed regularly through the graduated approach, with adjustments made where necessary to ensure provision remains effective, proportionate and responsive to need.

11. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

11.1 Where a pupil's needs cannot reasonably be met through ordinarily available provision and SEND Support, schools and families may request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

11.2 For pupils with EHCPs, schools will:

- a) Deliver the provision specified within the plan.

- b) Work collaboratively with families and professionals.
- c) Monitor progress towards agreed outcomes.
- d) Participate in annual reviews.
- e) Support transition planning.
- f) Ensure provision is delivered in a way which promotes participation, belonging, independence and positive outcomes.

11.3 Annual reviews will be person-centred and will consider the pupil's progress, views, aspirations, strengths and ongoing support needs.

12. Partnership with Parents and Carers

12.1 The Trust recognises the important role of parents and carers in supporting children and young people with SEND. Effective partnership with families is central to achieving positive outcomes and securing appropriate support.

12.2 Schools will:

- a) Communicate regularly with families.
- b) Involve parents and carers in decision-making about SEND provision and support.
- c) Share information about progress, outcomes and provision.
- d) Seek feedback about support and provision.
- e) Work collaboratively with families to address concerns and overcome barriers to learning and participation.
- f) Ensure that parents and carers are informed about available support, services and pathways for accessing additional advice where appropriate.

12.3 Schools will seek to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity through open and constructive discussion with pupils, families and relevant professionals.

13. Participation of Children and Young People

13.1 Schools will ensure that children and young people are actively involved in decisions about their education, support and future aspirations.

13.2 Schools will:

- a) Seek, value and respond to pupil voice.
- b) Support self-advocacy.
- c) Encourage participation in reviews and planning meetings.
- d) Promote independence and confidence.

13.3 Schools will support children and young people to understand and communicate their strengths, needs and aspirations and to develop confidence as active participants in decisions that affect them.

14. Transitions

14.1 Schools will provide appropriate support to ensure successful transitions for pupils with SEND.

14.2 This includes transitions:

- a) Into Early Years provision
- b) Between year groups
- c) Between schools
- d) From primary to secondary education
- e) Into post-16 provision
- f) Into employment, training or further education

14.3 Transition planning will be proportionate to need, person-centred and focused on achieving positive outcomes.

14.4 Schools will work collaboratively with pupils, families, receiving settings and relevant professionals to ensure information is shared effectively and support is planned appropriately.

14.5 Transition support should promote confidence, participation, belonging and independence and enable pupils to prepare successfully for the next stage of education, training, employment or adult life.

15. Preparing for Adulthood

15.1 Schools will support pupils with SEND to prepare for successful adult lives by promoting independence, participation, aspiration and access to meaningful opportunities within and beyond school.

15.2 Provision may support the development of knowledge, skills and attributes including:

- a) Independence
- b) Communication skills
- c) Self-advocacy
- d) Resilience
- e) Social and emotional development
- f) Employability skills
- g) Community participation
- h) Decision-making skills

15.3 All schools will promote high aspirations and support pupils to achieve meaningful destinations in education, employment, training and community life.

16. Working with External Agencies

16.1 Schools will work proactively with external professionals where specialist advice, assessment or intervention is required to meet a pupil's identified needs and improve outcomes.

16.2

External partners may include:

- a) Educational Psychology Services
- b) Speech and Language Therapy
- c) Occupational Therapy
- d) Health Services
- e) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- f) Social Care Services
- g) Local Authority SEND Services

16.3 Schools will seek to ensure effective information-sharing and joined-up working between services where appropriate, with the aim of providing coordinated support for children and young people with SEND.

16.4 Schools will involve pupils and families in discussions with external professionals wherever appropriate and will consider their views when planning and reviewing provision.

16.5 Advice from external professionals will inform provision and planning but responsibility for meeting pupils' needs remains with the school.

16.6 Requests from parents, carers or professionals for specialist assessment or involvement will be considered on an individual basis. Decisions regarding referrals and the use of specialist services will be informed by evidence of need, the graduated approach and professional judgement. Schools may not always agree that specialist assessment or involvement is required and will explain the rationale for decisions made.

16.7 Schools will give appropriate consideration to advice and recommendations contained within privately commissioned assessments and reports. Where recommendations are adopted, this will be based on evidence of need, professional judgement, available resources and the individual circumstances of the pupil.

16.8 The purpose of assessment within schools is to identify and understand a pupil's strengths and needs so that appropriate support can be identified and provided. Support should be responsive to identified need and does not depend on specific medical or educational diagnosis.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

17.1 Trust Board

The Trust Board will:

- a) Ensure compliance with statutory SEND duties.
- b) Approve and review this policy.
- c) Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision across the Trust.

17.2 Trust Leadership Team

The Trust Leadership Team will:

- a) Provide strategic leadership of SEND across the Trust.
- b) Promote consistency and high standards of inclusive practice.
- c) Monitor outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- d) Support school leaders to develop SEND provision.
- e) Lead Trust-wide quality assurance, review and improvement activity relating to SEND.
- f) Facilitate the sharing of effective practice and professional development across schools.
- g) Analyse Trust-wide SEND data and identify priorities for improvement.
- h) Advise the Trust Board on SEND priorities, developments and emerging needs.
- i) Support the equitable allocation and deployment of resources to meet the needs of pupils with SEND across the Trust
- j) Provide opportunities for professional development, collaboration and the sharing of effective practice through Trust-wide SEND networks and development activities.

17.3 Local Governing Bodies

Local Governing Bodies will:

- a) Monitor the implementation of this policy.
- b) Hold school leaders to account for outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- c) Support the development of inclusive practice.
- d) Ensure that designated SEND link governors engage with relevant training, briefings and monitoring activities to support effective governance of SEND provision.

17.4 Headteachers

Headteachers will:

- a) Ensure implementation of this policy.
- b) Promote an inclusive culture.
- c) Ensure effective use of resources.
- d) Provide opportunities for staff training and development.
- e) Ensure that SEND remains a strategic priority within the school improvement agenda.
- f) Ensure appropriate deployment of staff and resources to meet pupils' needs.

17.5 SENDCo

The SENDCo will:

- a) Coordinate the day-to-day operation of SEND provision.
- b) Support staff in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND.
- c) Liaise with pupils, families and external professionals.
- d) Maintain the school's SEND register.
- e) Monitor the impact of SEND provision.
- f) Contribute to whole-school improvement through the development of inclusive practice.
- g) Support the implementation of the graduated approach.
- h) Ensure appropriate SEND records are maintained, reviewed and shared in accordance with data protection requirements.

17.6 Teachers

Teachers will:

- a) Remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their classes.
- b) Implement agreed support and reasonable adjustments.
- c) Monitor progress and contribute to reviews.
- d) Work in partnership with support staff, families and specialists where appropriate.
- e) Maintain high aspirations for pupils with SEND.
- f) Deliver high-quality inclusive teaching informed by evidence and professional judgement.

17.7 Children and Young People

Children and young people will:

- a) Share their views, wishes and aspirations where possible.
- b) Participate in decisions regarding their support and provision.
- c) Work with school staff and families to achieve agreed outcomes.

17.8 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will:

- a) Work in partnership with schools to support their child.
- b) Share relevant information about their child's strengths and needs.
- c) Contribute to planning and review processes.
- d) Raise concerns through the appropriate channels where required and engage constructively in attempts to resolve them.

18. Trust SEND Standards

18.1 These standards represent the Trust's minimum expectations for SEND provision across all schools and settings:

- a) Maintain an accurate and regularly reviewed SEND Register.

- b) Publish and annually review a SEND Information Report.
- c) Implement the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.
- d) Involve pupils and families in planning and reviewing support.
- e) Deliver appropriate SEND training for staff.
- f) Monitor the progress, attendance and participation of pupils with SEND.
- g) Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of SEND provision at least annually.
- h) Participate in Trust-wide quality assurance and improvement activities.
- i) Ensure that high-quality, inclusive teaching remains the foundation of provision for pupils with SEND.
- j) Use reasonable adjustments and adaptive teaching approaches to remove barriers to learning, participation and belonging.
- k) Promote independence, participation and positive outcomes for pupils with SEND.

19. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

19.1 The Trust will monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision through:

- a) School self-evaluation.
- b) Trust reviews and quality assurance activities.
- c) Pupil progress and outcomes.
- d) Attendance and participation data.
- e) Stakeholder feedback, including the views of pupils and families.
- f) Governance scrutiny.
- g) Evaluation of the impact of SEND provision and interventions.
- h) Evaluation of the quality of practice within schools.

19.2 Findings will be used to inform evidence-informed school improvement, professional development and the ongoing development of inclusive practice across the Trust.

19.3 Where areas for development are identified, schools will be supported and challenged to implement appropriate improvement actions.

20. Complaints

20.1 The Trust aims to resolve concerns regarding SEND provision as early, constructively and informally as possible through open communication and collaborative problem-solving.

20.2 Concerns should normally be raised with:

- a) The class teacher or subject teacher.
- b) The SENDCo.
- c) The Headteacher.

20.3 Schools will seek to engage with pupils, families and relevant professionals to understand concerns and identify appropriate resolutions where possible.

20.4 Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, parents and carers may follow the Trust Complaints Policy.

20.5 The use of the Trust Complaints Policy will not adversely affect a pupil's access to provision, support or educational opportunities.

21. Policy Governance and Review

21.1 The Trust Board is responsible for approving this policy and receiving assurance regarding its implementation across the Trust.

21.2 The Trust Leadership Team will oversee the implementation, monitoring and ongoing development of SEND provision across the Trust.

21.3 Headteachers are responsible for ensuring effective implementation of this policy within their schools.

21.4 SENDCos are responsible for supporting implementation, monitoring provision and contributing to ongoing evaluation and improvement.

21.5 This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, statutory guidance or Trust practice.

Related Documents

- School SEND Information Reports
- Accessibility Plans
- Equality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Trust Complaints Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Delegation of financial controls
- Scheme of Delegation