

Chorus Education Trust

SEND Policy

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Contents

1.	Aims and Objectives	3
2.	Vision and Values.....	3
3.	Legislation and Guidance	3
4.	Inclusion and Equal Opportunities.....	4
5.	Definitions.....	4
	Special Educational Needs	4
	Disability.....	5
	The 4 Areas of Need.....	5
6.	Roles and Responsibilities	6
	Trust Board and Governors	6
	Senior Trust Management	6
	Headteachers.....	6
	SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators).....	7
	Class Teachers.....	7
	Parents/Carers	7
	The pupil	7
7.	SEND Information Report.....	8
8.	Our Approach to SEND Support.....	8
	Early Identification and Assessment	8
	Consulting and Involving Pupils and Parents.....	9
	The Graduated Approach to SEN Support.....	9
	Review.....	10
	Levels of Support	10
9.	Expertise and Training of Staff.....	11
10.	Links with External Professional Agencies.....	11
11.	Admission and Accessibility Arrangements.....	11
12.	Complaints about SEND Provision	12
13.	Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements.....	12
14.	Links with Other Policies and Documents	12

1. Aims and Objectives

All academies within Chorus Education Trust hold a shared aim of outstanding achievement for all and believe that schools should be both aspirational and inclusive. Our support for all children within our care extends to those children with additional needs that require assistance to help them fulfil their potential.

Our Chorus Education Trust SEND policy aims to:

- Ensure all schools within Chorus Education Trust fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND.
- Support and make provision for pupils with SEND across all schools within the trust.
- Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life, allowing them to engage in activities alongside pupils without SEND.
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best by providing tailored support and interventions.
- Assist pupils with SEND in becoming confident individuals living fulfilling lives, with a focus on emotional and social development as well as academic achievement.
- Ensure successful transitions into adulthood for pupils with SEND, including preparation for further education, employment, and independent living (secondary schools).
- Communicate effectively with pupils with SEND and their parents/carers, involving them in discussions and decisions about support and provision to foster a collaborative approach.
- Ensure consistent understanding and implementation of the SEND policy by all staff through regular training and development.

2. Vision and Values

Chorus Education Trust is committed to:

- Providing all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their individual needs and promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential.
- Creating an inclusive environment where provision is tailored to the varied needs and abilities of pupils, ensuring that no child is left behind.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- Fostering a sense of belonging and community among all pupils, staff, and parents, regardless of their abilities and needs.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory SEND Code of Practice and the following legislation:

- **Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014:** Sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.

- **The SEND Regulations 2014:** Details local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education health and care (EHC) plans, SENCOs, and the SEND information report.
- **The Equality Act 2010 (section 20):** Requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.
- **The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010):** Schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people with and without protected characteristics.
- **The Governance Handbook:** Outlines governors'/trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- **The School Admissions Code:** Obligates schools to admit all pupils whose Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan names the school and not to disadvantage children with disabilities or SEND unfairly.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Chorus Education Trust strives to create an inclusive teaching environment offering all pupils, regardless of needs and abilities, a broad, balanced, and challenging curriculum. We are committed to:

- Making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum, and the school environment to ensure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.
- Providing a range of opportunities for all pupils to participate fully in school activities and the wider community.
- Promoting a positive attitude towards diversity and inclusion among pupils and staff.
- Ensuring that all pupils have access to high-quality teaching and learning experiences that are tailored to their individual needs.

5. Definitions

Special Educational Needs

Under the Children & Families Act 2014, a child/young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age; or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

Disability

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

All schools in our trust will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

The 4 Areas of Need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into four broad areas:

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate support A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional, and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have: • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.

AREA OF NEED	
Sensory and/or physical	Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Pupils may have: • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board and Governors

The role of the Trust Board and Governors is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the SEND policy and its impact on pupil outcomes.
- Appoint a governor with responsibility for SEND to ensure that SEND provision is given high priority in the schools' strategic planning. The SEN Governor will raise SEN issues at governing board meetings; monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN provision within the academy and work with designated senior leaders to develop the SEN policy and provision.

Senior Trust Management

The CEO and Director of SEND will:

- Support and monitor the implementation of the SEND policy and its impact on pupil outcomes within each school.
- Support Headteachers and SENCOs in the coordination of SEND provision within each setting.
- Regularly quality assure SEND provision within each school and support with strategic development and improvement.

Headteachers

Headteachers will:

- Develop the SEND policy and provision within their school, ensuring that it is implemented effectively.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND, ensuring that they receive the support they need to achieve their potential.

SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators)

The SENCo will undertake those duties set out in chapter 6 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015, including:

- Coordinate the school's approach to SEND provision, ensuring that pupils' needs are identified and met.
- Work with the Headteacher and SEN Governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Maintain and regularly review the SEND register, ensuring that all relevant information is up-to-date and shared with appropriate staff.
- Ensure the "assess, plan, do, review" cycle is implemented for all pupils with SEND, working closely with class teachers and other staff to monitor and support pupil progress.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those with SEND. They will:

- Work with SENCOs and teaching assistants (TAs) to implement strategies and interventions to support pupils with SEND.
- Ensure the curriculum is accessible and provide appropriate resources to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Plan and deliver high-quality teaching that meets needs of pupils through a graduated response.

Parents/Carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support.

They will be:

- Invited to SEND meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child.
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs.
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil.
- Given reports on their child's progress.

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be considered in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. SEND Information Report

Each school in the trust publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

8. Our Approach to SEND Support

Early Identification and Assessment

Early identification of pupils with SEND is crucial to their development and progress. The process involves:

Identification and Assessment of SEN:

Information about previous special educational needs will usually accompany pupils upon entry to the school and this will be used by the SENCO to make sure appropriate provision is continued.

This transfer of information is collated from the transfer of school files from the previous school or early years setting and during transition meetings which are held with all the feeder schools or early years settings, in the summer term, before pupils start at the school.

Staff will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. They will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

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

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a

special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, school staff will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. They will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether the school can provide it by adapting its core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is at the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN.
- They are known to external agencies.
- They have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure it gets relevant information before the pupil starts at the school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

Consulting and Involving Pupils and Parents

Parents and pupils are at the centre of the decision-making process regarding SEND provision. When identifying whether a pupil needs special education provision, staff will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. 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 have.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

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

The Graduated Approach to SEN Support

Once a pupil is identified as having SEND, a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach is implemented:

Assess:

The SENCO and class teacher analyse the pupil's needs through regular assessment and monitoring. The views of the pupil and their parents 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.

Plan:

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO 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.

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

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 SENCO 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.

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.

Review meetings, usually termed SEND Reviews, will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents 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 SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

Levels of Support

The levels of support provided are based on the specific needs of the pupils:

School-based SEN 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 involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

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.

9. Expertise and Training of Staff

Teachers and support staff will receive ongoing training to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to support pupils with SEND effectively.

SENCOs and leaders of SEND will receive specialist training and support to fulfil their roles effectively.

Headteachers and SENCOs alongside the Director of SEND will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their school who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

10. Links with External Professional Agencies

Wherever necessary, our schools will work with external professionals, including:

- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Specialist teachers for sensory impairments
- Health services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Social services and other relevant agencies

Collaboration with these professionals will ensure that pupils with SEND receive comprehensive and coordinated support.

11. Admission and Accessibility Arrangements

We will ensure that our admission and accessibility arrangements are inclusive and compliant with legal requirements by:

- Admitting all pupils whose Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan names the school.
- Making reasonable adjustments to the school environment and curriculum to ensure accessibility for pupils with SEND.
- Providing additional support and resources as needed to enable pupils with SEND to participate fully in school life.

12. Complaints about SEND Provision

Parents / carers are supported to refer to the Complaints Policy in regards to any issues with the SEND provision at their child's school. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the school in the first instance. If the issue is not resolved, they may escalate the complaint following the formal procedures outlined through the Complaints Policy.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

The implementation and effectiveness of the SEND policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by:

- The trust board and senior leaders, through regular reports and data analysis.
- Reviews of SEND provision in each school, led by the Director of SEND.
- SENCOs, through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress and provision.
- Feedback from parents, pupils, and staff to inform improvements and ensure the policy remains effective and responsive to pupil needs.

14. Links with Other Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy