

Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Policy 2021

The Link Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity, regulated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). All Members of the Board of Trustees of the exempt charity are also Directors of the company; the term 'Trustee' used in this Policy also means Director. This Policy applies to all Academies within the Link Academy Trust.

This policy was developed by the Link Academy Trust and pays due regard to;

- The *SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, July 2015*
- Part 3 of the *Children and Families Act 2015* and associated regulations

Trustee responsible for SEND: Jane Collings

CEO: Nicky Dunford

ATSSL – Academy Trust Safeguarding and SEND lead: Alex Waterman

Academy Heads/SENDCos:

Academy	Academy Head	SENDCo
Bearnes	Dan Turner	Becky Hawling (SENDCo Award)
Broadhempston	Jill Ryder	Jill Ryder
Cheriton Bishop	Alex Waterman	Alex Waterman (SENDCo Award)
Diptford	Jodie Churchward (SENDCo Award)	Jodie Churchward (SENDCo Award)
Drakes	Pete Halford	Robin Scott
Harbertonford	Anne Burns	Jade Morgan
Hennock	Vic Pooler	Vic Pooler
Ilsington	Samantha McCarthy-Patmore	Samantha McCarthy-Patmore
Landscope	Jill Ryder	Jill Ryder
Moretonhampstead	Lizzie Lethbridge	Rosina Kellman
Otterton	Pete Halford	Robin Scott
Stoke Gabriel	Alice Eeles	Lija Lewsey
Tedburn St Mary	Andy Keay	Jane Annear (SENDCo Award)
Widecombe	Des Stokes	Des Stokes
Yeoford	Alex Waterman	Vicki Gillon (SENDCo Award)

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This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing boards and the SENDCo and staff of each Academy and is subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Rationale

The Link Academy Trust will strive to ensure that provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs or disabilities. We will ensure that all staff in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to allow pupils with SEND to join in the activities of the school.

We provide all children with Quality First Teaching to ensure their individual needs are met. Quality First Teaching is that which is differentiated to meet the needs of the majority of pupils. Some pupils will need something **additional to or different from** what is provided for the majority; this is special educational provision and we will use our best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it.

Teaching and supporting pupils with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response. Meeting the needs of pupils with SEND requires partnership working between all those involved – Local Authority (LA), school, the Link Academy Trust Improvement and Inclusion Hub, parents/carers, pupils, children's services and all other agencies.

The staff and governors of the Link Academy Trust will also work to ensure that all SEND pupils reach their full potential, are fully included within the school community and are able to make successful transfers between educational establishments. This policy aims to support all members of staff in providing positive whole school approaches through our Quality First Teaching pathway towards the learning, progress and achievement of SEND pupils.

This policy is in line with our teaching and learning policy and Disability Equality Scheme and aims to support inclusion for all of our children. The responsibility for the management of this policy falls to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO); the day-to-day operation of the policy is the responsibility of the Executive Academy Heads or Special Educational Needs and Disability

Co-ordinators (SENDCo). The Local Boards, Executive Academy Heads and the Academy Heads/SENDCo will work together closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively.

Aims

To provide the structure for a pupil-centred process that engages the pupil, family, school and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality, needs-led provision that is consistent across the school. This is to ensure all of our pupils are able to access the same opportunities for learning and social development achieving maximum progress, fulfilling their potential and promoting their well-being.

Objectives

The SEND Policy of the Link Academy Trust reflects the principles of the *0-25 SEND Code of Practice (2015)*. The aims of this Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Policy are to:

- Ensure the *Equality Act 2010* duties for pupils with disabilities are met
- Enable pupils with SEND to have their needs met
- Collate evidence and make detailed and timely applications to Devon County Council for Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Fulfill the obligations specified in EHCPs
- Take into account the views of the pupils with SEND
- Encourage good communication and genuine partnerships with parents/carers of children with SEND
- Facilitate full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the foundation stage and the National Curriculum, for pupils with SEND
- In conjunction with the Medical Policy, make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions and to have regard to statutory guidance supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Implement the graduated approach to meeting the needs of pupils using the assess, plan, do, review process
- Develop a culture of inclusion valuing high quality teaching for all learners, with teachers using a range of effective differentiation methods
- Encourage a culture amongst the school community of acceptance of pupil differences, including neurodiversity
- Employ a collaborative approach with learners with SEND, their families, staff within school, other external agencies including those from health and social care
- Set appropriate individual learning outcomes based on prior achievement, high aspirations and the views of the learner and family
- Share expertise and good practice across the school and local learning community,
- Make efficient and effective use of school resources
- Have regard to the *SEND Code of Practice (2015)* for the identification, assessment, support and review of special educational needs.

Identifying and supporting SEND

Definition of SEND

Pupils have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him/her, namely provision **which is additional to or different from** that normally available in a differentiated curriculum. The Link Academy Trust regards pupils as having a SEN if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, or
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions
- c) A child under compulsory age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (*Section 20 Children and Families Act, 2015*)
- d) A child is identified as being gifted and talented.

Pupils must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

The Link Academy Trust will have regard to the *SEND Code of Practice 2015* when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEND and ensure that parents/carers are informed by the individual academies that SEND provision is being made for their child.

There may be times in a pupil's school career when they are identified as having SEN. These pupils will be provided with intervention and/or support that is **additional to or different from** the normal differentiated curriculum supported by Quality First Teaching. This may be on an ongoing basis or for a limited time. Many pupils with sensory and/or physical disabilities may require adaptations, made as reasonable adjustments under the *Equality Act 2010*.

Areas of SEN

Under the *SEND Code of Practice 2015* pupils identified as having a SEN will be considered within one or more of the following categories of need:

- Cognition and Learning; for example, dyslexia and dyspraxia
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health; for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Communication and Interaction; for example, autism spectrum disorder or speech and language difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical; for example; visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties and epilepsy
- Moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties.

How we identify and Support Pupils with SEN

The progress made by all pupils is regularly monitored and reviewed. Initially, concerns registered by teachers, parents/carers or other agencies are addressed by appropriate differentiation within the classroom and a record is kept of strategies used on the provision map (the provision map is the individual plan put in place by the school to address pupil needs). This can be then used in later discussions if concerns persist.

All pupils' attainment and achievements are monitored by their teacher who is required to provide Quality First Teaching and learning opportunities differentiated for individual pupils. Where a pupil is making inadequate progress or falls behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the class teacher if:

- Progress is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Progress fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress

- Attainment does not close the gap between the child and their peers
The attainment gap widens. Ongoing additional support will be provided to pupils with SEND to enable these pupils to maintain progress and attainment.

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

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

Where pupils continue to make inadequate progress despite support and Quality First Teaching, the class teacher will work with the school's SENDCo to assess if a pupil has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support. Details of assessment tools and materials used across the Trust can be found in **Appendix 1**.

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

The Graduated Response

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, we will take action to support effective learning by removing barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach – assess, plan, do, review.

For pupils with low level special educational needs the cycle of assess, plan, do and review will fit into the regular termly assessment and planning cycle for all pupils. These are known as Pupil Progress meetings. For those pupils with more complex needs or for whom a more frequent cycle needs to be employed additional meeting dates will be set and will include the termly Pupil Progress meetings.

When a pupil has made sufficient progress in their area of need that they no longer require any provision that is **different from or additional to** that which is normally available as part of high quality and differentiated teaching they will no longer be seen as requiring SEN support. At this point, through discussion and agreement with parents/carers, the pupil will be removed from the school's SEN register.

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHC)

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of the pupil, the child has not made expected progress, the school or parents/carers should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. The evidence gathered through regular review of the Graduated Response, provision maps and Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings (meetings where parents/carers speak with the staff and professionals working with their child) will help the LA in determining when this statutory assessment of needs is required.

Where a pupil is then assigned Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the LA must review the plan every twelve months as a minimum. Schools have a duty to co-operate, so all schools will hold annual review meetings on behalf of the LA and complete the appropriate paperwork for this process.

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

Pupil progress is continuously tracked, with data collated termly. Where pupils are not making sufficient progress additional information is sought and appropriate action taken. We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Seeking pupil voice regarding their views
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Undertaking monitoring via the SENDCo
- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHCPs
- Holding regular review meetings with parents/carers and pupils.

Additional training, advice and support will be provided to teaching staff where necessary in order to facilitate pupil progress and to meet pupil needs.

Supporting Pupils and Families

We value and accept the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with parents/carers, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified properly and met as early as possible.

At the Link Academy Trust we endeavour to support parents/carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported and taken seriously should they raise a concern about their child
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their child's education
- Understand procedures and documentation
- Make their views known about how their child is educated
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making process about special educational provision.

Parents/carers of a child with SEND support will have the opportunity to meet with the class teacher and/or the SENDCo throughout the year to review progress. The SENDCo is happy to meet with parents/carers, with prior arrangement, whenever possible.

Parents/carers are encouraged to seek help and advice from independent information advice and support services, including Devon Information and Advisory Service (DIAS, <https://devonias.org.uk/>). These services are able to provide impartial and independent advice, support and information on SEND.

Parents/carers are also encouraged to visit the Devon County Council Local Offer website (www.devon.gov.uk/send). This website provides valuable information about different agencies, services and resources for children and young people with SEND and their families, in addition to school resources and information.

Partnership with External Agencies

The Trust is supported by a wide range of different agencies and teams. The individual academy SEND Information report details which agencies the academy has worked with in

the last 12 months. This report can be found on the individual school websites and is updated bi-annually.

Transition

We endeavour to make sure periods of change are carefully managed in a sensitive way to provide continuity of high-quality provision and reassurance to pupils and families. Our processes for transition are explained further in **Appendix 3**.

Adaptions to the Curriculum and Learning Environment

We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for SEN

The Link Academy Trust Improvement and Inclusion Hub, SENDCO, ATSSL and other Senior Leadership Team members provide regular CPD to other staff in school, addressing specific aspects of meeting the needs of pupils with SEND.

- All staff have regular CPD meetings. The progress of all pupils including those with SEND is a core aspect of the appraisal process and appraisal targets will look at how to develop staff skills in meeting individual pupil needs as necessary.
- Teaching assistants are engaged in ongoing training whereby their role is developed.
- External trainers are brought in periodically to address more specialist training needs such as dealing with specific medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy) or to train staff in the use of specific interventions.
- Peer support and guidance is available daily for all staff in school and some of the best training development occurs through professional dialogue with colleagues when looking at meeting the specific needs of a pupil.

Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with SEND is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the Local Board, CEO, ATSSL, Academy Head and SENDCo, all members of staff and those involved in governance have important responsibilities.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has responsibility under the guidelines laid down in the *SEND Code of Practice* to:

- Ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCo for the school who will achieve the National Award within 3 years of appointment
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the Trust schools and update the Standards and Curriculum Committee and Trustees
- Work with the Trust SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the schools.
- Conduct an annual Trust wide SEND monitoring visit and report to Trustees

Local Board

The Local Board endeavours to follow the guidelines as laid down in the *SEND Code of Practice* (2015) to:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at local board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within each school and update the Standards and Curriculum Committee and Trustees on this.

CEO/ATSSL

The CEO and Academy Heads have responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for children with SEN. The ATSSL will keep the Local Boards fully informed on SEND issues. The Academy Heads will work closely with the ATSSL, SENDCo and the Governors with responsibility for SEND.

Academy Head/SENDCo

In collaboration with the ATSSL and Local Board, the Academy Head/SENDCo determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of pupils with SEND.

The principal responsibilities for the SENDCo include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND pupils and reporting on progress
- Ensure any statutory requirements set out in EHCPs are met and coordinating EHCP reviews
- Advising on the graduated response to providing SEND support – assess, plan, do, review
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Monitoring relevant SEND CPD for all staff in collaboration with the Improvement and Inclusion Hub Manager
- Overseeing the records of all children with SEND and ensuring they are up to date and comply with Data Protection requirements
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with SEND
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Being a point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for pupils with SEND
- To lead on the development of high quality SEND provision as an integral part of the school improvement plan
- Working with the ATSSL, Academy Head and the Local Board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the *Equality Act* (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

All Teaching Staff

Each teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCo to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision

- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

Pupils with Medical Needs

Pupils with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Health Care Plan, compiled in partnership with parents/carers and, if appropriate, the pupil themselves.

Staff who administer medicine complete training and are approved by the School Nurse as competent. All medicine administration procedures adhere to the Trust's *Policy Supporting Pupils' Medical Conditions in School and Administration of Medicines* (2017) and DfE guidelines included within *Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2014*.

SEND Information Report

The school will ensure that the SEND information is accessible on the school website. Academies have a legal duty to publish information on their websites about the implementation of the policy for pupils with SEND. The information published will be updated bi-annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible. Details on the information required can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Monitoring and Accountability

Accessibility

The Trust is compliant with the *Equality Act 2010* and accessibility legislation. All academies work hard to develop their accessibility and the schools' accessibility plan detailing how this is being developed can be accessed from the individual websites.

Storing and Managing Information

Pupils' SEND records will be kept in accordance with the DfE guidance contained in *Statutory Policies for Schools* (2015).

(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284301/statutory_schools_policies.pdf)

Responding to Complaints

In the first instance, parent/carers complaints about the provision or organisation of SEND are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy. If there continues to be disagreement with regard to SEND provision, the LA should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons with a view to avoiding or resolving disagreements between the parents/carers and the school. This includes access to mediation before tribunal. Parents/carers have a right to appeal to a SEND tribunal at any stage.

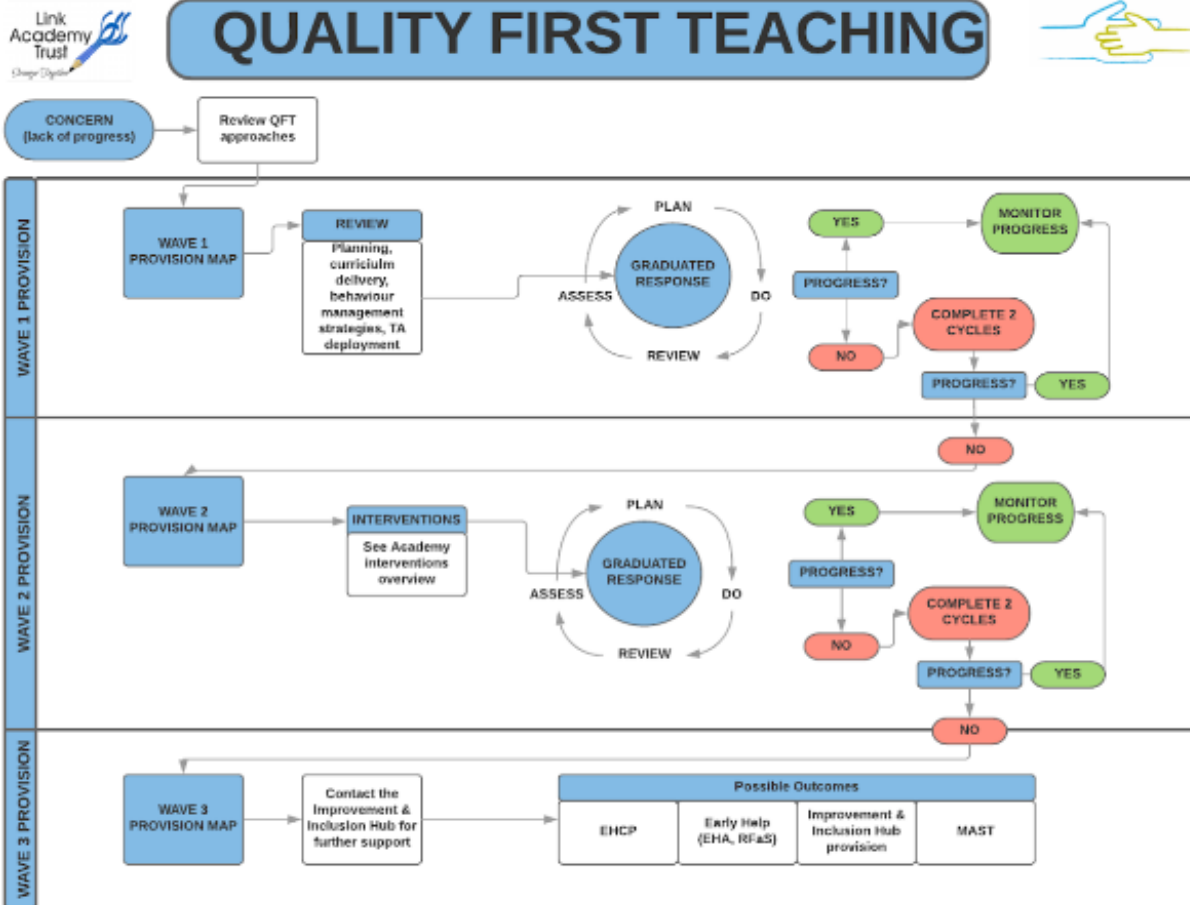
This Policy will be reviewed by the Standards and Curriculum Committee on an annual cycle and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Reviewed by Standards and Curriculum committee : April 2021

Approved by the Board of Trustees: 24 May 2021

Appendix 1

INCLUSION: QFT PATHWAY



Appendix 2

**For SEND report please see individual schools
Follow the links below**

https://www.bernes.thelink.academy/website/send_1/548768

<http://cheritonbishop.thelink.academy/website/send/433260>

http://www.diptford.thelink.academy/website/send_1/550554

http://www.harbertonford.thelink.academy/website/send_1/550886<http://www.hennock.thelink.academy/website/send/394755>

<http://www.landscope.thelink.academy/website/send/388441>

http://www.stokegabriel.thelink.academy/web/send_1

<http://tedburnstmary.thelink.academy/website/send/388938>

http://yeoford.thelink.academy/website/send_1/550680

<https://www.broadhempston-primary.devon.sch.uk/send/>

<http://www.otterton.thelink.academy/website/send/548812>

http://www.drakes.thelink.academy/website/send_1/549162

<http://www.ilsington.thelink.academy/website/send/520043>

http://www.widecombe.thelink.academy/website/send_1/548956

http://moretonhampstead.thelink.academy/website/send_1/555151

Appendix 3

Transition

YEAR 2019/20	Transition support for all pupils	Additional transition support for pupils with SEND	Individual transition support for pupils with complex/specific needs.
Pre-admission	Home visits by class teachers Induction stay and play sessions - 6 over the summer term - parents welcome to stay	Meetings with other childcare providers i.e. nursery staff with responsibility for SEND	Suitable managed induction as appropriate in order to ensure needs are met
Year-to-year transition and in-year admissions	Mixed age classes New children invited to attend 'taster days' Visits to new classes towards the end of the academic year	Additional meetings with parents and pupils offered	Teachers transfer information internally and via Provision Mapping. Class teachers, teaching assistants and SENDCo meet to discuss needs SENDCo meets with staff from new school to ensure needs are fully understood and requirements to meet

			needs are in place
Transition from school eg: to Y7 or to new primary school	Transition work in summer term for all Y6 pupils Y6 teacher meets teachers from other schools and in-depth discussions take place about children transferring Teachers meet with pupils prior to starting their secondary school Children attend induction days at their new school	Discussions between both SENDCos prior to entry. SEND children have extra visits to new school	Enhanced personal transition/induction planned for individual children as appropriate Spring & summer term TAF meetings to involve secondary school