

INVICTUS

Education Trust



Special educational
needs and disabilities
(SEND) policy
Draft

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This SEND policy sets out our approach to SEND across Invictus Education Trust.

To find out exactly how this policy is implemented in each of our schools, see the SEN information report on the school's website.

1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure the schools in our trust fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our trust will, across all of our schools:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition their next stage of learning or adulthood
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and values

To create a happy stimulating and caring learning environment where everyone feels valued and able to maximize their potential. ***'Every day, in every way, our children come first'***

At all the schools in our trust, we will provide all pupils with access to an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum.

We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes those with a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Academy Governance Guide](#), which sets out governance responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out schools' obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs

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

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

In our trust we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

Additional support will be given in the area of Careers:

- to ensure all students have equal access to a suitable work experience placements
- addition Careers support will be given to our SEND children, in line with Gatsby Benchmark

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND 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 of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

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

5.2 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.

5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

| AREA OF NEED | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communication and interaction | <p>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.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p> |

| AREA OF NEED | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cognition and learning | <p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p> |
| Sensory and/or physical | <p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p> |

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO

The SENCO of each school in the trust will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEND and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the trust's Director of Education, the school Headteacher and SEND academy committee advisor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided

- Liaise with the SENCo from the previous setting, eg primary or nursery provider, ensuring accurate information is obtained and acted upon in order to ensure a smooth transition upon arrival
- To ensure that an enhanced transition package is in place for any pupils joining the school, liaising with external professionals such as Autism Outreach, where appropriate
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEND and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution, in a timely manner
- Work with the Headteacher and academy committee to make sure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the Headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the Headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.2 Trust Board

The trust board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when their child's school is making special educational provision for the child
- Make sure that arrangements are in place in schools to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date records of the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on each school's website about how the schools are implementing their SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the schools' accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for each school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND
- Make sure that all pupils from year 6 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice, as we are in an Education Investment Area careers education will also be given to our primary aged children

6.3 The governance of SEND

The Trust has a lead trustee for SEND.

The SEND trustee is responsible for:

- Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision across the trust and updating the board on this. Scrutiny and monitoring is conducted by the board's education, standards and safeguarding Committee.

The school's academy committee associate link governor with responsibility for SEND is Mrs G Withers, she can be contacted via email at: gwithers@invictus.education.

The associate link governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at academy committee meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within their school and update the board on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in their school
- Support the trust's SEND advisory hub, contributing to the overall development of the trust's SEND provision

6.4 The Headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and academy committee SEND advisor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and trustees to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND in their school, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- With the academy committee SEND advisor:
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is scaffolded to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach (assess, plan, do review)
- 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 consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching

- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

6.6 Parents or carers

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

Schools will talk to parents and carers regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, to discuss activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parents/carers, the pupil and the school. Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information about the pupil's SEND and discuss the support provided. They will be:

- Meetings to be scheduled over the course of the year by someone who is aware of the child's needs and attainment. This will usually be either the SENDCO, a SEN teacher, a class teacher, a Head of Year or Pastoral Manager with support given by the SENDCO
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEND 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 an annual report on the pupil's progress

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

6.7 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 taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. SEN information report

Every 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

8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

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 scaffolded 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 SEND
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

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.

8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

Our schools will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we 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 / carers have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents. We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

8.3 The graduated approach to SEND support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEND, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The pupil's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. 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.

2. 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. This information will be recorded on our management information system and will be made accessible to staff in a pupil passport.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

We 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.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEND support

Pupils receiving SEND 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 SEND 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.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEND support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

9. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteachers/executive leaders and the SENCOs 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.

SENDcos across the Trust will meet to:

- share good practice
- review policy and procedures
- identify cross trust training needs
- compare data and provision across the four areas of need

Schools will deliver specific CPD around SEND within regular briefings, as well as staff meetings and Inset sessions.

10. Links with external professional agencies

The trust recognises that we will not be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary our schools will work with external support services including, but not exclusive to:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Dudley/ Sandwell and Birmingham Local Authority SEND team
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or pediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

11. Admission and accessibility arrangements

In accordance with legislation, a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be offered a place at the school named in the EHCP as the most appropriate to meet the child's individual needs.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, our oversubscription criteria at normal point of entry (Reception, Year 7 and Year 12) state that first priority for admission to all of the trust's schools is given to relevant looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. Thereafter, priority is given to children with a "serious and ongoing medical condition" where the school is the most appropriate school to meet the condition.

To ensure that the operation of any waiting lists when applying our oversubscription criteria avoids unfairly disadvantaging prospective pupils with a disability or special educational needs children on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the school's published admissions criteria and places that become available (below the published admissions number or any number that the school agree they can admit) between the point of allocation and the closure of the waiting list will be offered to children according to their ranking on this list, i.e. those ranked highest will be offered first.

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) plans name the school will be admitted. Applications for in-year admissions are co-ordinated by the local authority in all of our schools.

11.2 Accessibility arrangements

- The school offers differentiated tasks, materials and adaptive quality first teaching approaches for pupils with additional needs
- Seating plans are considered by class teachers with SEND pupils in mind
- Resources are tailored to the needs of pupils who require support to access the curriculum
- Specialist equipment/ auxiliary aids are made available to students who require them
- Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for all pupils with additional needs
- The curriculum is reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all pupils
- The following facilities are provided to help disabled pupils access the schools, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services:
 - Access to disabled toilets and parking bays
 - Elevator in the Business and IT Block.
 - Access to quiet space during unstructured times
 - The school building itself is spread over several blocks and though every effort is made some areas are currently difficult to access for wheelchair users
 - Auxiliary aids are made available such as large print, coloured paper/ books/ reading rulers, pencil grips, laptops, access to certain areas during structured and unstructured times (this list is not exhaustive and other aids maybe needed and provided if necessary)

The school's accessibility plan can be found under the Accessibility Policy on the school website.

12. Complaints about SEND provision

The trust has a set complaints procedure that is published on the trust website and each school website. A copy can be provided upon request.

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher/ form tutor/SENCO/headteacher. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made in line with our complaint's procedure.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

To find out about disagreement resolution and mediation services in our local area contact <https://prime-send.co.uk/> (01952 303038) or contact Dudley Sendiass on the following numbers: 01384 817373 or [07900 161363](tel:07900161363) or [07929 777744](tel:07929777744) or via the following website: www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/information-for-parents/dudley-sendiass/.

13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

13.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

13.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy CEO and schools SENDCos **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the trust board.

14. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy (Positive Conduct Policy)
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaint procedure