



VISION
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

November 2025

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Approved by: Trust Board
Next Review Date: October 2026

1 Introduction

1.1 The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) policy is designed to meet both statutory requirements with regard to SEND and the day to day needs of our schools and their stakeholders (parents, LA, related agencies staff and students). At Vision Multi Academy Trust there are a number of key principles that underpin the approach to SEND in our schools. These are being person centred; developing confidence and resilience; encouraging aspiration and achievement; a strong focus on Inclusive High Quality Teaching; high expectations for all; supporting learners to overcome barriers to learning; use of individual support strategies; and a clear graduated approach.

2 SEND Core Values

2.1 Vision Multi Academy Trust has a 6 core values for SEND:

1 Vision Multi Academy Trust emphasises a ‘person centred approach’ which supports the resilience and well-being of our students. We value student and parental engagement thereby sustaining a welcoming, effective and inclusive school culture.

2 Our schools aim to provide an inclusive, supportive and positive learning environment. We aim to support all SEND learners to have the confidence and self-esteem to aim high, achieve their aspirations and maximise their full potential.

3 High quality adaptive teaching for individual students is the first step in responding to all learners including those that have SEND. We believe that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of inclusive ‘quality first’ teaching.

4 Our teachers have high expectations of all learners and aim to be fully equipped with the skills, enthusiasm and supportive attitude allowing our students to overcome any barriers to learning. We use individual support strategies outlined on a SEND ‘Pupil Passport’ and provide access to additional, targeted teacher input where needed.

5 We have a clear SEND identification and assessment approach to ensure standardised entry and exit criteria is used to identify additional needs at the earliest possible stage.

We aim to make effective use of external partnerships including links with primary schools and other specialist professionals.

6 Our aim is to promptly implement effective targeted support and provision for learners identified as SEND to improve the long-term outcomes for all our learners. We aim to use a graduated approach to ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ the support and interventions in place for our SEND Learners.

3 Aims of the SEND Policy

3.1 This policy document is produced in response to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 which provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures for schools. It relates to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The aim of the policy is to ensure that there are clear guidelines for all parties around SEND; that all pupils are given equal opportunity to develop their talents and abilities to their full potential both inside the classroom and outside. At all stages, the wellbeing of the individual is paramount; and that additional support is met when necessary. These aims are met by a whole-school approach to Special Educational Needs provision recognising that SEND is the responsibility of everyone and with all teaching staff taking responsibility for meeting individual needs and progress made towards outcomes. Other school policies reflect this approach. This policy aligns with the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF), ensuring that SEND provision contributes to the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, and personal development within our schools.

3.2 The policy outlines the actions that our academies should take to meet their duties in relation to identifying and supporting all children with SEND whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan as outlined in Section 6 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

3.3 This policy aligns with the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF), ensuring SEND provision contributes to the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, and personal development judgments.

4 The SEND Code of Practice 2015

4.1 The SEND Code of Practice 2015 reflects the aims of Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations that applies to children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children and young people. The associated regulations are:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The Children and Families Act 2014 (Transitional and Saving Provisions) (No 2) Order 2014

4.2 A 'young person' in this context is a person over compulsory school age and under 25. Compulsory school age ends on the last Friday of June in the academic year in which they become 16.

4.3 There is a clear focus in the SEND Code of Practice on the participation of children and young people and parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels. It emphasises high aspirations and a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people; and includes guidance on the joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care. There is also an emphasis on support that enables those with SEND to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood.

5 Definitions

5.1 *Special Educational Needs (taken from the SEND Code of Practice 2015)*

- 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 him or her.
- A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- Special educational provision is defined as provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other pupils of the same age by mainstream schools.

5.2 *Disabled children and young people*

Many children and young people who have special educational needs may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long

term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long term' is defined as a 'year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have special educational needs, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a child or young person requires special educational provision over and above the adjustments, aids and services required by the Equality Act 2010 they will be additionally covered by the SEND definition.

5.3 Reasonable Adjustments

All academies have duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. These duties are anticipatory – they require thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage. Academies also have wider duties to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. Where a child or young person is covered by SEN and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as part of SEND planning and review.

6 Broad areas of need

There are 4 broad categories of need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

6.1 Communication and interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum condition are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, social interaction and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

6.2 Cognition and learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate adaptations to the curriculum. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple

learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

6.3 *Social, emotional and mental health difficulties*

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. This behaviour may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Our academies have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils.

6.4 *Sensory and/or physical needs*

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties, which makes it even more difficult for them to access the curriculum or study programme than for those with a single sensory impairment. Information on how to provide services for deafblind is available through the Deafblind guidance.

Some children experience sensory processing difficulties, although this may also be a component of other conditions which feature under a differing broad area of need. Issues may occur when a child has a difficult time receiving and responding to information from their senses. Children who have sensory issues may have an aversion to anything that triggers their senses, such as light, sound, touch, taste, or smell. Other children may have difficulty with proprioception (the sense through which we perceive the position and movement of our body) or with the vestibular system (awareness of balance and spatial orientation).

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

7 The Local Offer

7.1 All academies must publish a link to the Local Authority Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be

available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available. The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

8 The School SEND Information Report

8.1 All academies must publish a SEND Information Report on their website. The information published should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and must include information about:

the kinds of SEND that are provided for

- i. policies for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the SENCO (mainstream schools)
- ii. arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEND and involving them in their child's education
- iii. arrangements for consulting young people with SEND and involving them in their education
- iv. arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes. This should include the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society
- v. the approach to teaching children and young people with SEND
- vi. how adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with SEND
- vii. the expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEND, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- viii. evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEND
- ix. how children and young people with SEND are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the school who do not have SEND
- x. support for improving emotional and social development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEND and measures to prevent bullying
- xi. how the school involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting children and young people's SEND and supporting their families
- xii. arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEND about the provision made at the school

9 Responsibilities of Vision Multi Academy Trust

9.1 *The Role of the Trust Board*

The Trust Board will ensure that in line with the SEND Code of Practice legal requirements for each school in the trust, there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO. They must ensure that the appointed SENCO has achieved a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of their appointment. The Trust Board will ensure that the National Award held by the SENCO is a postgraduate level 7 qualification, accredited by a recognized higher education provider. From October 2024, the NASENCO Award will be replaced by the NPQSENCO. New SENCOs must complete the NPQ for SENCOs within three years of appointment. Those who already hold the NASENCO qualification will remain compliant.

There should be a member of the Trust Board and Local Governing Body with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEN and disability.

9.2 *School responsibilities*

School leaders should regularly review how expertise and resources are used to address SEND can be used to build the quality of whole-school provision and raise attainment levels as part of their approach to school improvement. When appointing staff or arranging for them to study for a SENCO qualification, school leaders should satisfy themselves that the chosen course will meet these outcomes and equip the SENCO to fulfil the duties outlined in this SEND Code of Practice 2015.

All schools in Vision Multi Academy Trust will:

- i. Comply with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015.
- ii. Ensure SEND provision is provided for students with learning difficulties resulting from a range of needs, including Communication and interaction, Cognition and learning, Social, emotional and mental health difficulties and sensory and/or physical needs. Provision will vary according to the severity of need.
- iii. Enable every student, including those with special educational needs, has an entitlement to fulfil his or her potential.
- iv. Recognise its duty of care to all students, including those with special educational needs.
- v. Promote and encourage students to become independent in all aspects of life
- vi. Ensure that every student follows a curriculum that is suited to their ability and any particular needs they may have to enable them to enjoy and achieve.
- vii. Provide high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, as the first step in responding to pupils who have SEND.
- viii. Ensure the progress of all SEND students is tracked by all leaders & teaching staff as part of the school assessment cycle to ensure early intervention can be put in place.
- ix. Ensure the SEND provision for any student will be compatible with the efficient education of the other students at the school and the efficient use of the School's existing resources.
- x. Ensure the full inclusion of students with SEND in all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, extra- curricular activities and school trips.
- xi. Ensure that SEND Pupil passports are made readily available to all staff to ensure that identified needs are met and that individuals have access to adaptive teaching techniques, scaffolds or differentiated support to succeed in lessons and maximize their potential. The use of these should be subject to ongoing monitoring by leaders to ensure that needs are

being met in the classroom and that, where possible, SEND students are effectively supported to overcome barriers to learning.

- xii. Maintain the highest standards of behaviour and that all students are encouraged to develop independence with regard to their behaviour. The Positive Discipline system applies to all students including those with SEND. Extra support will be given to those identified with a SEND that may present with behaviour issues outside of the learning environment.
- xiii. Work in partnership with parents to ensure every student with SEND is well supported.
- xiv. At all stages of the special needs process, the school will keep parents fully informed and involved and parents are encouraged to make a full and active contribution to their child's education.
- xv. Where appropriate, engage with external agencies to ensure the delivery of effective SEND provision.
- xvi. Provide training to all staff on special educational needs, both in relation to individual students and particular types of needs. This training includes induction for new members of staff as well as on-going Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- xvii. Comply with the Equality Act (2010) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) in addressing any student's SEND.
- xviii. Where appropriate, will make reasonable adjustments for a student with special educational needs.
- xix. Seek to ensure the most effective and efficient deployment of resources when supporting students with SEND.
- xx. Give support, advice and reinforcement as well as share information and agree targets in order to enable progress when working with parents of students with SEND.

9.3 ***SENCO Responsibilities***

Each school has a SENCO that is lined managed by an SLT lead for SEND who is responsible for:

- ensuring all academies operate within the agreed framework.
- ensuring all academies' practice is regularly reviewed to incorporate the most current approaches. Training is provided to staff to refresh and update their practice as appropriate.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's SEND Policy.
- Arranging necessary SEND support for students and directing staff where appropriate in relation to this.
- Coordinating SEND Assessments, Statutory EHC Assessments, Annual Reviews, and Testing for Access and is responsible for overseeing the Whole School SEND Provision Map.
- Maintaining close links with Multi-Agency Teams to maintain effective partnerships with external agencies and professionals
- Working in partnership with colleagues, pupils and outside agencies to set, monitor and review short-term objectives on the individual Pupil Passports and SEND Provision Overviews.
- Overseeing the records of all pupils with SEND, ensuring they are kept up to date.

- Liaising with and advising colleagues on matters pertaining to SEND.
- Coordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- Overseeing the graduated approach paperwork to ensure a consistent 'Assess, Plan, Do Review' model is used to inform provision. This includes SEND referrals and concerns, SEND Assessment Trackers, Pupil Passports, Individual SEND Provision Overviews, SEND Intervention Planning and Recording.
- Ensuring the statutory requirements for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are met including provision mapped out in the document, organising and leading Annual Review meetings and writing Annual Review documents.
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with SEND.
- Managing work with external agencies including the Educational Psychology Service.
- Providing professional guidance and delivering SEND related CPD to secure Inclusive High Quality Teaching.
- Ensuring pupils are set appropriate targets.
- Where necessary attend professionals and agency meetings for learners on the SEND register including PEPs and Early Help meetings.
- Liaise with Pastoral staff to ensure that all needs of SEND students are met including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community.
- Monitor and analyse cohort, attendance, behaviour and progress data for SEND as well as conducted reviews other areas of operation and practice. Where requested to report on, this should be made available to the Head teacher, Trust Board, Local Governing Body and Vision Multi Academy Trust.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Adaptive: Providing professional guidance and delivering SEND related CPD to secure Inclusive High Quality Adaptive Teaching.

9.4 Teachers' Responsibilities

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEND, and the progress made by pupils, should be a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. School leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCO, should identify any patterns in the 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.

Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with SEND will be able to study the full national curriculum. All teachers are expected to use the individual SEND student information made available to them to inform the planning and delivery of lessons. This includes EHCPs, Pupil Passports, APDR cycles and professionals' reports.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Recording additional provision implemented with reviewed impact data.

- Working closely with any teaching assistants or special support assistants to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how these can be linked to inclusive classroom teaching.
- Working closely with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and decide on any changes to provision.

10 SEND Identification & Assessment

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers will make regular assessments of 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 the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

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 SEN. 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. 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.

Following early discussion with parents and pupils regarding identification of the need of special education provision, we will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEN support and be placed on the SEN register.

10.1 In line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, Vision Multi Academy Trust has developed a clear whole school approach to identifying and responding to SEND. Our aim is to maintain a structured assessment process that ensures early identification and intervention of SEND. Through our clearly defined and staged assessment programme we are able to identify any additional needs at the earliest possible stage and promptly implement effective provision to improve the long-term outcomes for all our learners.

10.2 Alongside this model of early identification, referrals for SEND support and assessment can be made at any time in a learner's school career by staff and/or parents where there are significant concerns with attendance, behaviour or progress through submission of a SEND Referral Form to the SENCO and where deemed appropriate, SEND Assessments will be conducted (See 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' model below).

10.3 The SENCO, where appropriate, will work closely with local High Schools and parents/carers to ensure SEND students are correctly identified and supported during their period of transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

10.4 The SENCO will refer a student to an external agency but will only do so after consulting with and obtaining the consent of parents.

10.5 Parents can request an assessment for an EHC plan and should liaise with the SENCO about the process and if this is appropriate for to meet the needs of their child.

11 SEND Support and Provision

11.1 In line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 our academies implement a structured 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' model. The 'Graduated Approach' is implemented and cycles of APDR are formally recorded and shared with parents.

11.2 A SEND register exists for each school and is maintained by the SENCO. Students on the register are categorised as K for SEND support and E for those with an EHC Plan in line with the SEN Code of Practice. The SEND Register is available on Arbor and the school network and is accessible to all appropriate staff. The SEND Register is a fluid document that is constantly updated and the numbers of students on the register and the information contained will be subject to change. The SEND Register details a breakdown of the various needs within the school.

11.3 Each School has a Whole School Provision Map which provides a comprehensive overview of all support, intervention and provision that has been accessed by learners on the SEND register. Data should be inputted and maintained by key staff including teaching assistants, special support assistants and teachers. The provision map includes information about individual pupils and the interventions they are receiving, including their start & end dates as well as baseline data and impact. The Whole School Costed Provision Map is monitored by the SENCO.

11.4 All K students on the SEND register have an Individual Pupil Passport which includes an overview of strengths, needs and recommended support strategies. Details of the provision for E students is outlined in their EHCP, this will contain the targets, provisions and both long term and short-term outcomes.

11.5 Pupils with SEND are encouraged to contribute their views about their learning, support and progress where possible. Their perspectives are gathered through regular pupil voice activities, review meetings and informal discussions. The views of pupils inform planning, target-setting and evaluation of SEND provision, ensuring that support remains person-centred and effective.

11.6 The effectiveness of SEND provision is evaluated through:

- Progress data for pupils with SEND, including attainment, attendance and behaviour.
- Pupil and parent/carer feedback.
- Review of individual outcomes in Pupil Passports and EHCPs.
- Quality assurance of teaching, interventions and provision mapping.
- Findings from these evaluations inform future planning, professional development and resource allocation.

12 Inclusion

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class.

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN.

This will be differentiated using adaptive teaching strategies for individual pupils. We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Curriculum adaptations
- flexible groupings,
- 1:1 work,
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Making adaptations to our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary and texts, reading instructions aloud, styles of delivery etc.
- Use of technology

Where necessary, alternative specific intervention and additional resources (including staffing) may be put in place to ensure students with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, extra- curricular programme and school trips. Specialist support assistants, teaching assistants and outside professionals may be deployed to support pupils on a 1:1 basis or in small groups. Any decisions in relation to the above will be taken by the appropriate people, including the Headteacher and SENCO.

13 Complaints

If a parent has a complaint about a special educational needs matter, s/he should follow the procedures laid down in the Trust's Complaints Policy.

