

SEND

SEND is an acronym standing for Special Educational Needs and/or Disability.

An official definition is this: *A child is identified in this category where their learning difficulty calls for special educational provision that is different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.*

Key principles in our Trust

- To prepare for those with SEND, is to prepare for all. If you get it right for a child with SEND, you will get it right for all children.
- Every child must have access to an equitable high-quality education.

As governors and trustees, it is our responsibility to ensure our curriculum is accessible to all children in our schools.

Our legal responsibility

If a child has SEND but does not have an EHC plan, an Educational, Health and Care plan, the government makes these statements which apply except in specific circumstances.

- The child **MUST** be educated in a mainstream setting.
- Schools **MUST** consider applications as part of normal admissions procedures.
- Schools **MUST NOT** refuse to admit a child because they do not feel able to cater for those needs.
- Schools **MUST NOT** refuse to admit a child because they do not have an EHC plan

Therefore, every school must be able to accommodate children who will need extra help, which may include a range of physical limitations,

social, emotional, and mental health needs, as well as cognitive challenges.

Policies

There must be a SEND policy in place in every school, and this will be provided by the Trust. The policy will require personalisation, to include local details such as the names of the school SEND coordinator, and the SEND link governor.

As governors, ask yourself how you know this policy is in place, implemented, and effective.

Quality First Offer versus SEND Support

These terms refer to the two levels of support that are managed within our schools.

Quality First Offer is the requirement that all teachers will set high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.

A detailed description of the Quality First Offer is available in the SEND information report which we must publish every year on our school websites. It covers actions that could be taken to help students in the following areas:

- Communication and interaction.
- Social, emotional and mental health.
- Cognition and learning needs.
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

If progress is not improving, despite the Quality First Offer actions, then the possibility of introducing further actions will be reviewed. This approach will follow a graduated response. Part of the graduated response will be to investigate the need for SEND support.

SENDCO's Role

The Designated Teacher responsible for the support of all children in the school with special needs is referred to as the SEND coordinator, or SENDCO.

The SENDCO is a critical role in providing the necessary support for our children. Some key obligations are:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of which children have special needs, and how best to support them in class.
- Support the training of teaching staff in techniques to support different challenges a child may have, for example limited eyesight or hearing, dyslexia, or an autism spectrum diagnosis.
- Train and support teaching assistants so that children with SEND receive the extra help they need to access the curriculum, and to ensure that the teacher's attention is not disproportionately diverted from the rest of the class.
- Support parents and carers in developing the skills and techniques they can use to support their child's education and wellbeing.
- Applying for extra funding when appropriate.
- Ensure that files relating to SEND are kept safely and securely, and that they are appropriately transferred at time of transition from one school to another.

The SEND governor or trustee

Local Governing Boards (LGBs) should have a SEND governor. Note that the legislation uses the word *should*, not must. Whilst it is not legislatively required, the Southport Learning Trust requests that each LGB has a SEND governor, and has also appointed a trustee to

support this area across our schools. We recommend that these individuals attend SEND training, and keep their training up to date (at least every two years would be best.)

A SEND governor's key functions are to:

- Meet regularly with the SENDCO to review key aspects of the role.
- Support the SENDCO by reviewing the statutorily required annual SEND reports.
- Support any internal audits of the SEND offering in your school.
- Ensure correct policy, training, and practice are robust and operational.
- Assure the LGB board of the effectiveness of SEND delivery within the school.

Governance as assurance

For any child requiring SEND support, there is a four-step process that will be followed.

Assess – Explore the situation, including discussing the situation with the child and the parents or carer.

Plan – Create a support plan in collaboration with staff and family. The plan may include actions to be followed at home.

Do – Follow the plan under the guidance of the SENDCO. The plan will be updated with progress and other comments, which can be used during the review phase.

Review - The plan will be reviewed at least once a term with the child and the parents or carer. During the review, the plan may be amended to ensure improved outcomes.

Our governance role is to assure that this process is robust and effective. The SEND governor might explore the process periodically, and seek to

understand how any weaknesses that emerge are addressed.

Some important questions

Keeping the child in mind is especially relevant for children who have additional challenges.

- How well are they doing academically?
- What about their social targets, such as making friends, or participating in extra-curricular activities?
- Are they happy?

Also consider the planning aspect:

- Is the money we are spending delivering the best value for the child? How do we know?

Required and recommended reading

Essential reading:

These can be found on Gov.UK. Please ensure you are using the most recent versions.

This document includes details of our legal obligations, such as publication of reports [SEND code of practice: 0-25 years](#)

Also worth reading is the [Guide to the 0-25 SEND code of practice](#)

Recommended reading:

Sefton SEN and Inclusion Service (SENIS) deliver support to our schools. This is their website. [Sefton SEN and Inclusion Service](#)

For any comments or questions, please contact

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Website

<https://www.southportlearningtrust.org/>



Enhancing Governance

Governance and SEND

Article 6 in a series

Reviewed October 2022