DDAT

Derby Diocesan Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)Policy

September 2026

Approved by Trust Board on: 23rd October 2026

To be reviewed: September 2027

Definition

"A young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. Children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Where a young person is covered by SEN and disability legislation, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements should be considered as part of the SEN planning and review." CoP 2014

Vision

At DDAT we firmly believe that pupils get one chance at their education and that is why in DDAT the children come first. Every decision made has the child or young person at the forefront.

We want our children and young people to be able to 'experience life in all its fullness' and although this phrase is rooted in a Christian narrative (taken from John 10:10), irrespective of a faith perspective, that is what all of us want for our children. This has been borne out by the number of community schools that have chosen to join DDAT, signing up to the vision and values that have children at their core.

The vision of DDAT is that all children are fully included within the life of our schools. DDAT recognises and values neurodiversity. We believe that neurological differences are a natural part of human diversity and are committed to creating environments where neurodivergent pupils are understood, supported, respected and enabled to thrive. Through inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments and strengths-based approaches, we seek to remove barriers to learning, participation and belonging.

Our vision is '***to offer children and young people life in all its fullness'*** through- *Growing*: providing experiences rooted in faith, hope, and love; *Learning*: ensuring the highest academic standards; *Outward Facing*: valuing their contribution to the community and *Healthy*: providing safe spaces of welcome and belonging. This is so that they can:

- use skills, knowledge, and understanding to think for themselves and act for others (Learning)
- experience and enjoy diverse relationships (Outward facing)
- choose to journey in faith (Growing)
- be resilient, confident, and compassionate (Health)

DDAT schools will use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision required by pupils with SEND and work in partnership with families and external agencies to achieve agreed outcomes for children and young people.

Aims

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure all teachers are teachers of SEND.
- Promote an inclusive culture where barriers to participation, attendance, achievement and belonging are identified and removed wherever possible.
- Provide termly support for our SENDCOs to develop their knowledge, skills, and practice.
- Provide support, training, and guidance for all staff so that they can develop their expertise and knowledge.
- Ensure that our curriculums are inclusive, and adaptations are made where necessary so that pupils can fully understand and access the curriculum offer. Expectations will remain high so that all pupils will be able to achieve the best that they can.
- Work in close partnership with the full range of external agencies and the inclusion advisory service who can support the individuals and their families, including educational psychologists, speech and language therapists and paediatricians
- Ensure that our teaching staff know how to fully include pupils within their classrooms and understand how the learning environment can support and enhance the learning offer.
- Champion the rights of all our young people with SEND so that they know they are listened to, respected, and supported to achieve the best that they can.
- Ensure that every member of staff understands that they are a teacher of pupils with SEND in every interaction that is had.
- Constantly strive to seek solutions to problems for pupils with SEND and not give up on the individual.
- Strive to respond to feedback from all stakeholders to continually improve the offer that we provide in our school.
- Recognise and value neurodiversity, ensuring that neurodivergent pupils are understood, supported and enabled to thrive through inclusive practice and appropriate reasonable adjustments.

Constantly support our pupils at all stages of transition and ensure that Post 16 pathways and destinations are decided upon with the pupil.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation 2018

This policy is written with awareness of the DfE's ongoing SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan (2023) and with the DfE's February 2025 guidance on AP, with a focus on building a single national SEND and AP system, strengthening early identification and intervention, and ensuring families experience a more consistent and supportive SEND system.

It also reflects current DfE guidance on Whole School Approaches to mental health and wellbeing (2023), recognising the close interconnection between SEND and emotional or mental health needs.

This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 'SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years' (2015)
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2017) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'School admissions code'

This policy operates in conjunction with the DDAT SEND Strategy and the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

This policy recognises the ongoing national SEND reform programme, including the development of national SEND standards, strengthened inclusion expectations for mainstream schools, improved multi-agency working and reforms designed to deliver earlier intervention and improve consistency of provision across England.

Roles and Responsibilities

SENDCO

- Working under the delegated authority of the HOS to determine the strategic development of SEND provision within school
- Ensure that the school has up to date SEND policy, accessibility plan, information report and link the local offer and that these are accessible on the school website
- Successful implementation of DDAT SEND systems and procedures
- Oversight and coordination of individual provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those with EHCP's
- Provide guidance to staff, parents, and agencies to ensure that SEND pupils receive appropriate support and high-quality provision
- Advise on all aspects of SEND support
- Effective use of the SEND budget and resources to effectively support pupils
- Ensure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) relating to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Keeps accurate records of all SEND pupils

DDAT SSIO for SEND

- Oversee, advise and support SEND provision across all DDAT schools
- Quality-assuring SEND provision across all DDAT schools

Headteacher/ Executive Headteacher

- Work with the SENDCO and DSN to determine the strategic development of the SEND provision in their school/s
- Overall responsibility for the provision and progress of SEND pupils
- Ensure there is a consistent methodology to the provision of SEND in their school/s
- Ensure that funding is used effectively to enable pupils with SEND to access the whole school offer

Teachers

- The progress and development of SEND pupils under their responsibility
- Working closely with the SENDCO, other staff and agencies to plan, implement and assess the impact of SEND interventions
- Following school/DDAT SEND policies and procedures

Types of SEND

There are four main types of SEND:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- SEMH
- Sensory or physical needs

Schools will assess pupils on entry and will be alert to evidence of Special Needs which commonly include:

- Progress that is significantly slower than peers starting from the same baseline in line with FFT and in some cases through Brackenfield assessment data
- Failure to close or widening attainment gap between them and peers
- Poor social skills, language development or behaviours expected of their age

Consulting Pupils and Parents

Schools must effectively liaise with parents and pupils (where possible) when planning SEND provision. These promote:

- An accurate understanding of areas of relative strength and support needs
- Communication with parents and pupils
- Shared understanding of agreed targets, outcomes, and provision

Nature of Support

There amount of support offered to SEND pupils is reflective of their individual needs. The least intensive of these are changes made within normal timetabled lessons such as personalised teaching resources, smaller group sizes, and support from teaching assistants or other specialist staff. More intensive support may comprise specialist SEND classes or the use of inclusion advisory service or professionals.

Curriculum

At DDAT we believe that all pupils must have access to an ambitious and knowledge-rich curriculum. We want all our pupils to learn ***'the best that has been thought and said***.' This vision applies equally to pupils with and without special education needs and disabilities (SEND). It is our responsibility to ensure that all pupils with SEND are equipped with the knowledge, skills, experiences, and support to enable them to develop as individuals who can lead full and meaningful lives. No ceiling will be put on the expectation of what can be achieved without constraint or cap to their ambition. Pupils with SEND will be enabled to participate in all aspects of school life alongside their peers wherever reasonably possible.

We want parents and carers to feel supported, listened to, and valued and actively choose our schools as they trust us to provide for their pupils. At all times we will be reflective of our practice and seek to improve so that we provide the very best education possible for our pupils.

Our DDAT aims for all our schools to provide its pupils with a substantial, broad and balanced curriculum, ensuring that they are fully immersed in knowledge, skills, vocabulary, opportunities, responsibilities and experiences relevant to the world in which they live.

Each school is unique and has developed its own curriculum intent. As a DDAT we believe that it is essential to recognise what is important to each individual school's

identity; their pupils and communities. Our curricula do not look the same because our schools are all different. We support each other in curriculum implementation and schools work well together as well as with our School Improvement Team to improve shared priorities.

Each school will promote regular and effective strategies to enable pupils to communicate from the EYFS where adults will promote high-quality dialogue and interactions linked to their learning so that they all achieve positive progress and outcomes.

Adaptations to the Curriculum and Learning Environment

There are many adaptations that can be made to meet the individual needs. These commonly comprise:

- Adapted teaching and learning pedagogy (such as the 5 a day teaching model) or curriculum content based on individual tracking of pupil's progress through FFT and in some cases the Brackenfield assessment system
- Staffing support such as working with pupils on a 1-1 or small group basis, timetabling
- specialist staff to work with specific pupils or groups of pupils
- Use of specialist resources such as laptops, coloured overlays, larger fonts or similar
- In some examples a more nurture based short term provision to consider the individual needs of our pupils. Where pupils need additional support, capacity within the hubs, trust and external provision will be investigated to best meet their needs. This may include additional nurture provision, managed moves and external therapies such as Forest Schools

Supporting Social and Emotional Development

DDAT schools strive to ensure that all SEND pupils play as full a role as possible in the extended provision of schools, and that no pupil is excluded from taking part in activities because of their needs. This includes extra-curricular activities or clubs, visits, or residentials

DDAT schools consider the provision required to enable pupils to feel supported each and every day through planning for unstructured times, personalised provision, coaching for staff on supporting specific emotional needs through interventions such as Thrive and ELSA and assessing pupil's needs to plan bespoke next steps.

Schools will work proactively with families and relevant agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance, including emotionally based school avoidance, anxiety-related attendance difficulties and other factors affecting access to education.

Assessing and Reviewing Progress

DDAT schools follow a four-part review process: Assess: Plan: Do: Review. DDAT schools operate a graduated approach to SEND support consisting of:

- Quality First Teaching
- SEND Support
- Specialist Support
- Education, Health and Care Plan Provision

Early identification of SEND is of paramount importance and helps to secure progress. If a concern is raised regarding a pupil's progress, attainment or access to the curriculum the Class Teacher will follow the school referral procedures. This process is known as the known as the Graduated Response and begins an Assess, Plan, Do and Review cycle.

The Graduated Response has a clear and structured approach to identifying and responding to Special Educational Needs.

Assess

In line with school procedures, the Class Teacher will carry out or request additional assessments of a pupil to identify an area of need.

Plan

Once the assessment part of the process has been completed, the pupil's needs are determined in a consultation meeting with staff and parents. Actions will be agreed and, if appropriate, an IEP (Individual Education Pan) will be created, and the pupil will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils are identified as requiring SEND Support. This is a dynamic list that pupils can be added to or removed from at any time, depending on how appropriate it is to their needs. The SEND register will be managed following guidance from the SEND Code of Practice.

Do

The Class Teacher will take responsibility for ensuring any agreed actions are carried out. The Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) will support all staff and pupils in implementing the agreed plan.

Review

The effectiveness of support and intervention is reviewed regularly throughout the year. Impact will be measured through progress, parent, pupil and staff feedback. Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, the school will offer alternative intervention and will consider involving specialist agencies. Permission from parents/carers will be sought before any specialists are contacted.

As part of this process, DDAT schools will monitor the number of pupils who are currently recorded on the SEND register and reflect on the impact of the provision of SEND and whether or not they remain as requiring SEND support.

The SENDCO completes the 'assess' stage by analysing:

- Teachers' observation and assessments
- Progress, attainment, and behaviour data
- Development in comparison to peers and national data

- The views and experience of parents and pupils• Information and advice from external support agencies

Where a pupil is removed from the SEND Register following sustained progress, their progress will continue to be monitored through the school's assessment and reporting processes.

Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP's)

"SEN support should be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes. Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs." CoP 6.63

These are appropriate for pupils with high levels of need and formally sets out the support that pupils will receive to support these needs. Pupils and parents are strongly encouraged to be active participants in this process. Pupil views are to be gathered, considered and discussed as well as the parents. They are encouraged to contribute to the decision-making process.

External Agencies

DDAT schools utilise the services of external agencies and the inclusion advisory service where appropriate who include:

- Educational Psychologists
- Child Health Services (Doctors, School Nurses)
- CAMHS
- LA Social Care Team
- Special Schools and Alternative Provision providers

SEND Information Report

1. Each school will make explicit their provision for SEND and inclusion in the publication of their statutory SEND Information Report, in line with guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the SEND Regulations 2014.

2. The SEND Information Report will be published on the school website and updated annually, with any changes made during the year to be updated as soon as possible.

3. The contents of the SEND Information Report are prescribed by law in the documents mentioned in this policy.

4. Each school will ensure that their SEND Information Report is easily accessible and set out in clear, straight forward language.

5. The SEND Information Report should include relevant named contacts who are available at the school.

6. The SEND Information Report must include information on the school's contribution to the Local Offer (see section below) and information on where the Local Offer is published.

7. SEND-related personal information will be processed in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy and applicable UK GDPR requirements

Local Offer

1. Each Local Authority has a statutory duty to produce a 'Local Offer' detailing information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for pupils who have SEND or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHCP, in their area.

2. Schools have a statutory duty to cooperate with the Local Authority in the development and review of the Local Offer.

3. Each school will comply with their Local Authorities guidance on how schools should contribute to the Local Offer in their area, including ensuring that it is published appropriately - within or alongside the SEND Information Report.

Accessibility Plan

1. All schools have a statutory duty, under section 10 of the Equality Act 2010, to produce an Accessibility Plan detailing how they are going to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in their curriculum, improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated benefits, facilities and services and improving delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily available to pupils who are not disabled.

2. The school has responsibility for allocating adequate resources to ensure the furtherment of the Accessibility Plan.

3. The SENDCO, along with the leadership team and SEND Governor, will take overall responsibility for producing and maintaining the Accessibility Plan, including at least annual review of progress made.

Supporting Pupils Moving Between Phases and Preparing for Adulthood

We share information with schools, colleges, or other settings SEND pupils transfer to, agreeing in advance with parents' what information will be shared. Schools will arrange transition days or taster events prior to transfer so pupils feel familiar and comfortable with their new setting.

Staff begin to prepare for the transition earlier in the year so that any strategies that have been in place are consistently applied and information is shared accurately on the needs of individual pupils to optimise a smoother transition to the next phase.

Staff Training

Each SENDCO has obtained or is studying for a professional qualification to support their work and allocated additional non-contact time to effectively fulfil their duties. They access termly network meetings and bespoke CPD linked to research and school SEND priorities.

SENDCO's manage a team of teaching assistants who have all received training in how to effectively support SEND pupils. Staff access training through the NCSL where there is a 'watchlist' of SEND focussed themes that include adaptive teaching, scaffolding, retrieval practice and regulation strategies. They also provide regular SEND training, updates to teachers and share the agreed DDAT strategy including the 39 weeks of SEND with teaching staff.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of SEND Provision

Provision of SEND pupils is evaluated through:

- Reviewing progress data at data collection points through FFT and where relevant Brackenfield assessment data
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Feedback from pupils
- Informal monitoring by the SENDCO, other staff or agencies
- Annual reviews (pupils with EHCP's)
- DDAT audit of SEND provision

Raising Concerns and Making Complaints

If a parent or carer has concerns about the SEND provision their child is receiving, they should initially raise this with the class teacher or SENDCO. Most issues can be resolved at this level through discussion and mutual understanding.

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, the parent or carer should follow the school's individual Complaints Policy, which is published on the school website. Each DDAT school maintains its own complaints procedure, and it is expected that concerns are addressed promptly and respectfully in line with this guidance.

Parents may also seek independent advice and support from services such as the Derbyshire Information, Advice and Support Service for SEND (DIASS) or Derby SENDIASS, depending on the local authority area.

Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis with Trust SENDCo's, headteachers, the local academy committees and in conjunction with the Trust board. Any changes to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

The Trust SEND governor will oversee the implementation of the policy through meetings with the named DDAT SEND officer and Deputy CEO.

The local academy committee named governor will monitor the implementation of the SEND policy. The named SEND Governor will monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision and support strategic development of provision across the school.

All members of staff will ensure this policy is implemented. New members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

Potential use of Alternative Provision(AP)

In line with the DfE's SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (2023) and the national direction for a single, integrated SEND and AP system, DDAT schools recognise the role of Alternative Provision (AP) as part of a tiered graduated response for pupils whose needs cannot be fully met within the mainstream classroom.
Where in-school interventions and support have not sufficiently met a pupil's needs, a short-term, evidence-informed placement in Alternative Provision may be considered. Such placements will be:

- Clearly time-bound
- Focused on achieving specific outcomes
- Regularly reviewed in partnership with the pupil, family, school staff, and the provider

The ultimate goal will always be reintegration into the pupil's mainstream setting, wherever appropriate.

DDAT schools remain fully responsible for the pupil's education, safeguarding, progress, and outcomes throughout any AP placement. To support this:

- All AP providers will be quality-assured, including checks on registration (where applicable), safeguarding practices, and curriculum
- suitability.
- Schools will only commission provision that meets the academic, social, emotional, and safeguarding needs of the pupil.
- Reintegration planning will include clear targets, transition support, and personalised timetables to ensure a smooth and supported return to school.

Parents and pupils will be fully involved in all stages of decision-making. Their views, aspirations, and concerns will be central to any planning and review processes related to AP.

This approach aligns with DDAT's inclusive vision and commitment to ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, receive high-quality, consistent, and supportive education tailored to their individual needs.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2027