



SEND Policy

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1.0	March 2023	Alice Brown	Original Document
1.1	September 2023	Alice Brown	- Clarified two short terms as being three months - Added clarification about Outcomes and Learning Plans for EHCP students - Minor changes to ensure consistency of term Management Information System (MIS) across policies
1.2	December 2024	Alice Brown	- Updated SAST values and graphics - Updated references to publications e.g. Attendance - Clarified that a diagnosis does not automatically mean a child is placed on SEND register - Added note on monitoring/recording diagnosis in MIS if not SEND - Update DfE Census coding classification for 24/25 - Added note that cohort specific/bespoke enhanced provisions in SAST are not designated as formal SEN units or resourced provisions
1.3	September 2025	Alice Brown	Added appendix on “Documents” as all schools now on Arbor and SENCOs have agreed to implement a common approach
1.4	July 2026	Alice Brown	- Updated governor references, DfE publications - Moved data retention section from appendix to main body of policy - Deleted Arbor Appendix as some schools are transitioning to school drive solution

SAST SEND POLICY

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Introduction and Purpose

“Every School Leader is a Leader of SEND”

“Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEND”

This policy sets out SAST’s vision for children and young people who may have additional needs, and our expectations for all of our schools and staff including volunteers, who work with our pupils, parents and carers, professionals in health and social care and our local authority partners. It has been written to ensure that everyone is clear about the ethos, principles, procedures and practice for pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and those other vulnerabilities.

SAST schools are committed to the need to work relentlessly in establishing and maintaining inclusive communities, which are characterised by high ambition and flexibility of approach, so that every person can thrive, especially those who are vulnerable or at greatest disadvantage. We recognise the importance of equity and understand that inclusion is about children getting what they need as an individual, rather than everyone getting the same.

These principles are embedded in the Trust Values:



Legislation, statutory guidance and linked SAST policies

This policy complies with the legal frameworks, statutory requirements and relevant guidance laid out in the following:

- [The Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations \(2014\)](#)
including The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations (2014)
and the Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0 – 25 \(2015\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools DfE \(2018\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children \(2026\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools DfE \(2018\)](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0 – 25 \(2015\)](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(2015\)](#)
- Teachers Standards (2012)
- [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff \(2024\)](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance \(2026\)](#)

It should be read in conjunction with the following SAST policies and school documents:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SAST Admissions Policy
- SAST Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- SAST Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- SAST Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School
- SAST Children with a Social Worker, Children in Care and Previously in Care Policy
- SAST Attendance principles
- School Attendance Policy
- SAST Behaviour Principles
- School Accessibility Policy / Plans

Definitions

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

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 them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Have 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is **additional to** or **different from** that made generally for other children and young people of the same age by mainstream schools and early years' settings.

Disability

Many children and young people with SEND may also have a disability. A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as 'a physical or mental impairment, which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.

The Equality Act requires early years' providers, schools, colleges, other educational settings and local authorities to:

- Not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people;
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of extra aid services (for example, tactile signage or induction loops), so that disabled children and young people are not disadvantaged. This duty is 'anticipatory'.

In all SAST academies, pupils with SEND are recorded on a register so that provision to meet their needs can be planned for, assessed and reviewed. As pupils progress, they may no longer require special educational provision and may be removed from the register. Pupils will not be regarded as having SEND solely because their home language is different from the language in which they are taught.

Parent

In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this policy include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) with whom the child lives.

School

Within this policy, the term is used to refer to any nursery, primary school, secondary school or SAST learning centre establishment.

Aims and Principles

In SAST, we make our best endeavours to meet the needs of individual pupils by:

- ensuring that our practice reflects the SAST vision and values statements so that every child can flourish in a safe, happy and nurturing environment in which their contributions and unique talents are valued
- ensuring every pupil can access a curriculum for excellence, through which they experience challenge and enjoyment, breadth and depth, progression, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance
- being alert to changing needs in our children and young people
- ensuring all children have their individual barriers to learning identified as early as possible and with due regard to pupil and parent voice.
- focussing on children's strengths and what provision is needed to support them further, rather than what a child can't do or a diagnostic label
- responding to changing needs with appropriate adjustments and support, and through the provision of timely evidence-informed interventions, to ensure that the young people can develop their potential as individuals and thrive
- intelligently targeting the use of available resources, so that all learners including those with SEND and other vulnerabilities, are included in the curriculum and wider learning community
- accurately assessing and robustly tracking pupil's progress effectively
- striving to ensure that all children and young people receive the provisions set out in their Education, Health and Care Plan
- ensuring that children's views are valued and listened to so that they are involved in the meeting of their needs
- respecting, communicating effectively and working collaboratively with parents and carers
- working in partnership with other settings so that transition from one school to another is well planned and effectively supported

- working in partnership with professionals and other agencies who provide specialist support and advice for children with SEND and other vulnerabilities
- ensuring that all children are able to participate fully in the life of our schools, and to play an active role in their school community
- provide ongoing professional development activities to all staff to ensure that all children receive high quality teaching

Identification of Special Educational Needs through a Graduated Approach

In line with the Code of Practice, all schools follow the graduated approach to a children's special educational needs or potential need. This support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised. This cycle enables us to have a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent reviews and more specialist expertise in successive cycles, in order to match support and interventions to the SEND of children and young people (Code of Practice, 2015).

In each school, teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, and schools have systems in place to ensure that special educational needs are identified as early as possible. These start by:

- providing high quality teaching
- regularly assessing pupils' progress and targeting specific areas of difficulty
- adjusting work for pupils who need this through adaptive teaching
- providing additional adult support as required to achieve curriculum outcomes

As necessary, schools will also:

- provide targeted, short term, monitored interventions which are modified in line with outcomes
- provide pastoral support as required

SEN Support

If a pupil continues to struggle with the curriculum despite the above support, schools will consider whether they have a special educational need. This is a process involving the class teacher, SENCO, parents and the pupil.

Initially, this may mean that a pupil is monitored more closely by the class/subject teacher, working in close collaboration with parents and with the advice of the SENCO. The pupil may be added to a "monitoring" register (Code M) for a period that would not usually exceed two short terms (three months). Teachers should begin to record the adjustments they are making to support the child and the impact of these.

If it is decided that a pupil has SEN and requires special educational provision (provision that is *additional to* or *different from* that made generally for other children and young people of the same age) they will be added to the SEN record under the category of SEN Support (Code K). Parents will be informed in writing when this happens. The provision given at SEN support will be individual to each child, according to their SEN but it could include:

- creating a pupil profile/learning passport, for the purpose of sharing strengths and the barriers to learning identified so far, with all adults who support the child in school
- implementing a specific programme for learning or personal development – outlined on a learning plan
- extra teaching input or support from a teacher or a Learning Support Mentor. This may include the pre-teaching certain key concepts
- working in a small group or supported to take part in class activities
- reviews and intervention from Specialist Teachers or other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists

Schools will set out the provision in a passport/APDR document, and regularly review the support being provided with the pupil and with their parents; and do so formally at least three times a year.

EHC Plans

Most pupils with SEN can be supported at the level of SEN Support. However, some pupils with severe, complex, and long-term SEN may need an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), especially if they have not made progress at SEN Support. If schools feel this is the case, they will discuss this with parents. Parents can also contact the class teacher/form tutor or SENCo if they feel their child might need an EHCP.

Schools will work with parents and other services to request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) where it is felt this will be beneficial and the legal threshold for requesting assessment is believed to have been met. Parents may also request that the Local Authority undertakes this assessment themselves. Further details about the assessment process and EHCPs can be found on Dorset's Local Offer, Somerset's Local Offer or Wiltshire's Local Offer. Applications would be made to the Local Authority where the child lives.

EHCPs are written and issued by the Local Authority following an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA). It is important to bear in mind that not all requests for assessment are agreed; and not all assessments lead to the issuing of an EHCP.

If an assessment leads to a draft EHCP being issued, the local authority will then consult schools to see if they can meet the needs identified (during the assessment process) through the provisions laid out in the plan. When an appropriate setting is identified, this will be named on the plan.

Once a final EHCP is issued, the SEN Register will be adjusted to reflect this (Code E). EHCPs must be reviewed at least annually there-after (or at least every six months for children under 5 years of age).

Schools will regularly review progress towards achieving the outcomes detailed on an EHCP, through learning plans which break these down into smaller steps. These learning plans will be shared with parents and regularly reviewed.

Other factors

Sometimes other factors can affect a pupil's progress but are not considered to be a special educational need, for example: attendance and punctuality, ill health, English as an additional language, being in the care of the local authority, behaviour (where there is no underlying SEN) and bereavement. These needs will be addressed appropriately using other processes or strategies.

Further explanation of the graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do and Review) may be found in each individual school's SEND Information Report.

Types of Need

The Code of Practice (2015) outlines four broad areas of Special Education Need:

- Cognition and Learning
 - including difficulties with memory, processing and other executive functions; Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia); Moderate, Severe or Profound learning difficulties
- Communication and Interaction
 - including autism; speech, language and communication needs
- Social, emotional and mental health
 - including managing emotions, anxiety, ADHD, attachment, Tourette's Syndrome
- Sensory and/or physical needs
 - including vision/hearing impairment, sensory processing needs, physical disability

The purpose of identification is not to fit pupils into one of these categories but to work out what additional action, if any, the schools need to take, to address a child's particular needs in any of those categories. SAST staff will always work closely with parents, the child and external professionals to ensure a clear picture of the whole child, not just the special educational needs of the child. SAST schools believe in a strengths and person-centered approach as this allows the school to put the best provision in place to meet the needs of each individual child.

It is important to note that some children may have a diagnosis, such as dyslexia or autism, but may not require special education provision in school. These children are able to thrive with high quality teaching and reasonable adjustments alone. As such, they will not be on the school SEN register. However, a note of diagnosis may be placed on the child's school record and their progress should be monitored carefully. It may be appropriate to put a learning passport in place. If a need for additional support arises then special education provision should be put in place.

Data Retention

Schools must transfer files promptly and securely, when a student leaves their setting for another. Copies should not be retained once the transfer is complete. However, if a school is the final setting, then records must be retained until the student has reached the age of 25 + 6 years (i.e. they are 31 years old).

Archive records should be regularly reviewed and documents securely disposed of when the retention period has expired.

Responsibilities

Schools

- Leaders in each school setting will ensure that the quality of teaching, and learning opportunities for pupils with SEND, and the progress made by those pupils are given the highest priority. There will be high ambition for pupils with SEND and leaders will ensure they are not provided with a reduced curriculum.
- Schools will designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision (the designated SENCO), who will undertake any mandatory training required in line with current legislation.
- The SENCO has responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of the policy and procedures and for managing and deploying school resources effectively as outlined in the Children and Families Act (2014) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability: Code of Practice (2015).
- Each school setting will prepare and publish a SEND Information Report in accordance with the Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
- All teachers recognise and accept that SEND is their responsibility; taking full responsibility for the progress of the children and young people with SEND whom they teach.
- Class and subject teachers, supported by the SENCO and Senior Leadership Team, will make regular assessments of the progress for all pupils and identify appropriate actions, particularly those making less than expected progress, given their age and prior attainment. Equal consideration will be given to personal development and academic progress.
- Across our schools, staff will employ a variety of screening and assessment tools in order to investigate, identify and build on information received from parents, previous settings, class teachers, or professionals. This could lead to pupils being placed on a 'SEND support' register.
- As part of the early identification and screening processes, schools will consider any evidence that the young person may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments for them. (This duty is anticipatory – a diagnosis is not required before adjustments can be made).
- Schools will inform parents and carers when they are making special provision for their child and will then work in partnership with them to establish support needed and professional specialist input, to secure best outcomes. At all times, the views, wishes and feelings of parents and children will be given due regard.
- Schools will ensure that a graduated approach using the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle (as set out in paragraphs 6.44-6.56 of the SEND Code of Practice) is in place for all young people on 'SEND Support'.
- All students on the SEND Register will have a learner profile/passport and APDR plan in place. These will outline their special educational needs and the strategies or interventions in place to meet these needs, along with recognition of their individual strengths.

- For all children and young people on 'SEN Support', schools will make arrangements for an appropriate member of staff, with input from the SENCO as appropriate, to meet with the parents or carers at least three times a year to review progress and support.
- After consultation with the parent or carer and the child or young person, schools will request the local authority to undertake an Education, Health, Care needs assessment for any child or young person for whom they believe this is necessary.
- Schools will make best endeavours to meet the needs of young people with SEND including delivering the provisions set out in an EHCP. Where there are significant difficulties in delivering the provision, the local authority must be advised at the earliest opportunity as the legal responsibility for securing the provision rests with them.
- Schools will work with relevant local authorities in a timely manner to undertake reviews of EHCPs, so that they are conducted within the statutory timeframes and so that they take into account the views of the child or young person and those of the parent or carer.

Local Governance Committee

- Each Local Governance Committee (LGC) will nominate one local governor (LG) to be a SEND representative.
- The role of the LG for SEND is to provide assurance to the LGC that the school is meeting its statutory responsibilities: that they are making their 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of those pupils identified as having special educational needs and disabilities.

In order to do this, the LG will:

- need to understand the school's legal obligations with regard to children who have, or may have, special educational needs and disabilities;
- have a broad understanding of the type and level of identified need at the school and know how this compares to the local and national data;
- be familiar with how the school identifies students with additional needs and provide assurance that this is in line with the SAST SEND policy;
- be familiar with how the school meets the needs of students, including those at SEN Support and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and provide assurance that this is in line with the SAST SEND policy.

This knowledge and assurance will usually be gained and discharged through regular visits to the school to meet with the SENCO and/or Headteacher/Head of School.

- In addition, the LG should
 - support the headteacher in reviewing the annual statutory SEND Information Report.
 - raise any concerns with the SENCO and headteacher;
 - raise and support awareness of SEND issues in meetings.

It is important to note that the LGC should be aware of the school's overall processes, needs and provision, but not the specifics of individual cases.

SAST Central Team

- Adopting a Trust wide approach to SEND and Inclusion through this and other associated policies.
- Working collaboratively with schools, using a balance of support and challenge, to support schools in identifying strengths and areas of development, to inform best practice and priorities for improvement in relation to children with SEND and other vulnerabilities.
- Where a school is identified as having significant weaknesses or areas for development, provide or broker additional support leading to effective and consistently good practice to meet the needs of learners with SEND.
- Work with local authority partners to support SAST schools in meeting their best endeavours duty, and to deliver the provisions laid out in Education, Health and Care plans.
- Ensure the school income recording clearly reflects all high needs top up/pupil specific funding received by the establishment, enabling all strategic leads, Headteachers/Heads of School and the finance team to carefully plan, monitor and account for pupil specific expenditure.
- Work with Headteachers/Headteachers to ensure that recruitment, training and resources are swiftly organised where these are required/specified in Education, Health and Care plans

SAST Board of Trustees

- Nominate a Trustee to have a special interest in SEND.
- Provide a voice for children with SEND at Trust Board Level, helping to raise awareness of needs and strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- Oversee strategic SEND matters across the Trust's schools, including fulfilment of all statutory requirements.
- Monitor the appropriate implementation of this policy across the Trust.

Appendix 1: Recording

When children are monitored for SEND, added to the SEND Register as SEN Support, or have an EHC Plan in place, their SEN Status must be updated accordingly. SENCOs are responsible for checking that the MIS has been completed correctly and reviewing this regularly (at least termly).

Note of Diagnosis

Some children may have a diagnosis, such as dyslexia or autism, but have no requirement for *additional to/different from* provision as their needs can currently be met through high quality teaching and reasonable adjustments. As such, they will not be on the school's SEND register, but may have a pupil passport and may be being monitored. If so, they *may* be on the school's monitoring list (coded M) for longer than two terms. Their diagnosis should be noted on the MIS.

On the school SEND Register

When placing a child on the SEND register, schools will record the primary Broad Area of Need and the DfE category. They will also add notes to the register to indicate any formal professional diagnosis that have been made, or screening that has undertaken. The school SEND register will be shared with relevant staff on a termly basis or whenever it is updated.

In the school Management Information System (MIS)

When a child is added to/removed from the school SEND register, this should also be recorded in the school's Management Information System (MIS)

The DfE requires schools to record the pupil's main or primary need (Rank 1) and, if appropriate, their secondary need (Rank 2). If the pupil has an EHCP it is very important that the main primary need (Rank 1) matches the information on the plan. From January 2025, the areas to be used are:

DfE Code	DfE Description
SPLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
PMLD	Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty
DS	Down Syndrome
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
HI	Hearing Impairment
VI	Vision Impairment
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
PD	Physical Disability
OTH	Other Difficulty
NSA	SEN Support but no specialist assessment of type of need.

If the school *suspects* a child or young person has dyslexia or other specific learning difficulty, perhaps because of the results of a screener, then this may be categorised on the MIS as “Specific Learning Difficulty”. Where children have a formal professional diagnosis, this will be recorded in the Notes facility.

The “No Specialist Assessment” category will only be used when no assessments have yet been undertaken (either in school or externally) and so the broad area of need is not yet known. For example, where a child transfers into the school shortly before census day.

The ‘Other’ category should only be used if the child can’t come under one of the other areas.

Census - Enhanced Provision

Several SAST schools are currently operating cohort specific and bespoke enhanced provisions in order to meet the complex needs of children on their school roll. These are not designated as formal SEN units or resourced provisions and so there is no need to complete this indicator on the DfE census return.

