



SEND POLICY

January 2026

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Contents

Introduction and Aims	3
Our aims	3
Definition of SEND	3
Roles and Responsibilities	4
Trust Board	4
Local Governance Committee (LGC)	4
Headteacher/Head of School	4
SENC0	4
Class Teachers	4
Graduated Response	4
Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)	5
Inclusion, Accessibility and Equality	5
young person and Parent Involvement	5
Monitoring and Evaluation	5
Statutory References	5

Introduction and Aims

Spark Education Trust is committed to providing an inclusive education that enables all young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), to achieve their potential.

This policy is written in compliance with:

- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2015, statutory)
- Equality Act 2010 (including Public Sector Equality Duty)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- Teachers' Standards (2012)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2025)
- Supporting young people at School with Medical Conditions (DfE, 2015, updated guidance).

Our aims

- To identify and support young people with SEND at the earliest possible stage.
- To ensure all young people have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
- To involve young people and parents in decision-making about SEND provision.
- To make reasonable adjustments where required to avoid discrimination.
- To work in partnership with Local Authorities and external agencies to meet statutory duties.

Definition of SEND

We follow the definition in the *Children and Families Act 2014*:

A young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision, namely provision that is different from, or additional to, that normally available to young people of the same age.

SEND is categorised under four broad areas (Code of Practice, 6.28):

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds overall accountability for SEND across the Trust. • Ensures compliance with statutory duties. • Monitors the impact of SEND provision through delegated committees.
Trust SENCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the Director of Education with responsibility for SEND to develop SEND policy and practice across the Trust • Provides support for Headteachers and SENCOs in providing a high quality of education for the learners with SEND in their schools • Liaises with external agencies including the Local Authority
Local Governance Committee (LGC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures implementation of the SEND policy at school level. • Monitors effectiveness and outcomes for young people with SEND. • Appoints a named SEND Governor.
Headteacher/Head of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures compliance with statutory duties within their school. • Ensures that their SEND Information Report is published on the school's website and updated annually • Oversees the strategic development of SEND provision. • Ensures that all staff receive CPD that supports them to meet the needs of all the young people in their class(es).
SENCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates SEND provision • Maintains the SEND register and oversees Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) processes. • Liaises with staff, parents, and external agencies.
Class Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible and accountable for the progress of all young people in their class, including those with SEND (Code of Practice, 6.36). • Implements high quality first teaching with appropriate adaptations, informed by learning passports, for young people with SEND

Identification

All schools use a variety of ways to identify SEND needs including TA and class teacher observations and input from specialist professionals. Parents and young people are fully involved in the identification process.

Graduated Response

Our Trust follows a graduated response (Assess – Plan – Do – Review) in line with the SEND Code of Practice (6.44). Identification may arise through teacher observation and assessment, progress meetings, parent/carer concerns or external professional advice. Young people identified as requiring additional support are recorded on the SEND Register.

Wave 1: High-quality First Teaching – high-quality, inclusive teaching for all young people, with adaptations made where appropriate to meet individual needs.

Wave 2: Targeted Support – time-limited, evidence-based small-group interventions to address specific gaps or emerging needs.

Wave 3: SEND Support – personalised interventions, increased individualisation of provision and involvement from external agencies where required.

EHCP – statutory assessment and provision for young people with complex or significant needs requiring long-term, multi-agency support.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

The Trust complies with the statutory 20-week process for EHCPs (Children & Families Act 2014). Annual reviews will be held in line with statutory requirements. Schools will ensure young person and parent/carer voice is central to the EHCP process.

Inclusion, Accessibility and Equality

In line with the Equality Act 2010, schools will make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled young people are not disadvantaged. Each school will maintain an Accessibility Plan and Schools will actively address potential barriers to participation, including curriculum, environment, and communication.

Young person and Parent/Carer partnership

Schools will consult parents regularly about their child's progress and provision. Learners' views will be sought and recorded as part of SEND reviews and planning.

All our schools will strive to develop a strong partnership between parents and the school SEND team. Resources are limited so it will not be possible to provide for their children everything that parents/carers would like.

Parents can also seek advice from the Local Authority's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). LA SEND caseworkers also support parents and school with identifying how best to meet each learners' needs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust Board and LGCs will monitor SEND provision through reports from schools, data on progress and outcomes, and young person/parent voice. The SENCO will provide an annual SEND report to the Local Governance Committee.

Statutory References

This policy is compliant with:

- Children & Families Act 2014, Part 3
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Regulations 2014
- Education Act 1996
- Teachers' Standards (2012)
- Supporting young people with Medical Conditions (DfE, 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2025)

SENCO Contact:

Miss Amanda McNaughton - 01642 750318 - amcnaughton@whinstone.org.uk

Link SEND Governor:

Mr Andrew Pengilley

School SEND Information Report (published annually):

<https://whinstone.org.uk/send/>

Local Offer:

Stockton Local Offer - <https://www.stocktoninformationdirectory.org/send-local-offer-directory-listings>

School Accessibility Plan:

<2021-Accessibility-Plan-Whinstone.pdf>

Arrangements for supporting pupils with medical conditions:

Whinstone follows the Trust's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and implements Individual Healthcare Plans and Special Care Posters where required.

[FINAL Supporting pupils with medical conditions and administering medication policy OCTOBER 2025.pdf](FINALSupportingpupilswithmedicalconditionsandadministeringmedicationpolicyOCTOBER2025.pdf)

Funding and Resourcing of SEND at Whinstone

Whinstone receives delegated SEND funding (the notional SEND budget) to meet the needs of pupils requiring additional support. This funding enables the school to provide high-quality, inclusive provision through adaptations, targeted interventions, specialist resources and staff training.

Where a pupil's needs require provision beyond what can ordinarily be delivered through delegated funding, the school may apply for High Needs Funding (HNF). HNF is not intended to fund individual 1:1 teaching assistant support; instead, it enables the school to strengthen its overall offer through additional or specialist provision, resources and access to external expertise.

Teachers may request resources to support pupils' needs, and the SENCO will identify and recommend additional resources where appropriate. These are funded through the school's notional SEND budget, with specific resources purchased for pupils with an EHCP or those in receipt of HNF where required.

Whinstone also accesses a wide range of local authority and trust-wide resources, including:

- Specialist Learning Team
- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Hearing and Visual Impairment Services
- Alternative Provision outreach
- School Nursing Team
- CAMHS and SEMH pathways

- Early Help and Social Care

This combination of delegated funding, targeted use of HNF and access to specialist services ensures provision is responsive, needs-led and sustainable.