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Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

Scope and publication

This applies across all schools in Anthem Schools Trust (the Trust) and sets out our vision and principles for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It complies with all statutory requirements, including those relating to the legislation contained in the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. The Trust follows the statutory guidance within the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014 revised 2015) and this policy also takes into account the SEND & AP Review Green Paper: “Right Support, Right Place, Right Time” (2022) and subsequent SEND and AP Improvement Plan (2023).

Copies of the policy are available on request and are published on each school's website. It can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Vision

Anthem Schools Trust is committed to working collaboratively to create ambitious and successful schools where every child thrives, and with teaching and learning being at the heart of everything we do. We understand that ensuring every child accesses Inclusive High Quality First Teaching is fundamental to good outcomes for our students. One of our mottos within Anthem is ***every student, every lesson, all the time.***

Inclusion provides the purpose and meaning for everything.

**EVERY STUDENT
EVERY LESSON
ALL THE TIME**



The Every Student strategy is designed to put inclusion at the heart of the culture and values of every Anthem school. Everyone must believe that every student can achieve and surpass all expectations. To communicate and promote this message, we developed the image above to represent the [concept of inclusion inspired by an idea developed by Canadian academic Shelley Moore](#), in which she likens inclusion to bowling. In our design, each ‘pin’ represents a student, with layers of pins building up to represent the whole picture. *Every student, every lesson, all the time.*

We are clear that, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice, **every teacher is a teacher of SEND** and indeed **every leader is a leader of SEND**.

All Anthem schools have high aspirations for all students. We recognise that high expectations and authentic relationships create a positive learning culture for all. We aim to provide a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which harnesses students' curiosity and desire to learn about the world. We are committed to developing cultures, policies and practises that are all inclusive; learners will have a voice, they will receive acceptance, respect and warmth and know that these rights are extended without prejudice.

Working within the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice (2014), our aim is to provide a high-quality education for every Anthem student, in a nurturing and safe environment, which develops students' self-esteem and raises aspirations by encouraging children and young people with SEND to think about their life outcomes, including further or higher education, training or employment. We aim for students with SEND to fulfil their potential by achieving their best, becoming confident individuals and making successful transitions at every stage of their education. We will ensure we have a "Strengths Based" approach, building on what our students can do, and, where possible, their likes and interests, in order to support future learning. We will celebrate achievement regularly, with a strong positive praise culture.

We are committed to ensuring our schools develop a curriculum that has breadth and depth, and is challenging, engaging and enriching for all students, whatever their starting points. We seek to significantly improve the quality of learning and life experiences of students in all our schools, particularly those students who have a special educational need or disability. We are clear that, in order to ensure all of our students can access this curriculum, it is essential that we have an accurate and holistic understanding of individual need.

Principles

Our approach to SEND and learning disabilities will operate within the following six principles:

- Our schools will be places where all our students feel safe, feel they belong, feel they are liked and valued and are able to learn in order to meet their full potential.
- We have the highest expectations of all our children and all children, including those with SEND, will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- We will build partnerships between home and school and ensure students and their families are treated with dignity and respect and always have their views taken into account.
- We are committed to understanding our students' needs on an individual basis. We will aim to identify, as early and accurately as possible, any students with additional needs. This includes robust transition into our settings wherever possible.
- We will develop and utilise our resources effectively, including use of assistive technology, our staff skill and expertise and adaptations to environments, to make appropriate provision for students in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice.
- Where we currently do not have the resources, skill, expertise, or environment to meet a student's needs, our first response should always be: *What will it take to meet this student's needs?* We recognise that every student with SEND should have their needs met and these will normally be met in mainstream education.

Definitions

The following definitions are taken from the SEND Code of Practice 2014:

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 or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- have a disability which prevents 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 or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.

Post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) but the term SEND is used in the Code of Practice across the 0-25 age range and, for the purposes of meeting our statutory duties, across the Anthem Schools Trust.

The SEND Code of Practice describes four broad areas of SEND:

- Communication and Interaction (C&I), for example, Autism or speech and language difficulties.
- Cognition and Learning (C&L), for example, moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties, for example, anxiety, depression, emotionally based school avoidance or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, Hearing impairments or Physical Disabilities.

Special Educational Provision

A student has SEND when their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age. This means provision that goes beyond the adaptive teaching and differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of inclusive high quality, personalised teaching.

SEND Coordinator (SENDCo)

This is a member of staff at the school who has responsibility for coordinating SEND provision. The school SENDCo's name and contact details are available from the school website.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the SENDCo include:

- Working with the leadership team and SEND Anthem Community Council (ACC) member to determine the strategic development of SEND provision in their school.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND Policy.
- Coordinating the provision for students with SEND.

- Providing professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies to ensure that students with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Liaising with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after student has SEND.
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively.
- Liaising with parents/carers of students with SEND.
- Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the Local Authority.
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Working with the Headteacher and ACC members to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all students with SEND up to date.

The responsibilities of the SEND ACC member include:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at ACC meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the ACC board on this.
- Work with the Headteacher and SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

The responsibilities of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team:

- Work with the SENDCo and Anthem Head of Inclusion to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of students with SEND within the school.
- Ensure that the current SEND report and policy are available on the school's website.

The responsibilities of the Anthem Head of SEND & Inclusion:

- Provide advice and support to the SENDCOs, Inclusion Leads and Headteachers on all matters of SEND.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within each school and update the relevant Headteacher and Director of Education on this regularly.
- Help to review the school's policy and provision for students with SEND, together with the Trust.

The responsibilities of the ACC:

- Have SEND as an area for focus visits and consider students with SEND in all aspects of school life.

- Meet with the SENDCo and students to discuss SEND provision in the school.
- Complete records of visits which are shared with the school leadership team.

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every student in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENDCo to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

Identification and assessment of need

It is essential that we understand every student's individual needs in order to ensure we can tailor their learning appropriately. In our schools we use a variety of both qualitative and quantitative measures to assess needs.

Transition meetings

We aim to gather as much information as possible about our students prior to them starting in our schools. Our SENDCos link with feeder schools and settings and meet regarding individual students and, at times, attend review meetings prior to students starting. In some cases, SENDCos or other staff may also meet with parents/carers, or carry out home visits, in order to ensure a holistic understanding of need.

Communication with parents/carers

Parents/carers and students will be consulted on all matters relating to the student's SEND provision. Parents/carers are also encouraged to participate as fully as possible in supporting their child's learning needs and request additional meetings with relevant staff to make this possible.

When identifying whether they need special educational provision, an early discussion with the student and their parent or carer will take place. These conversations will ensure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulty.
- Parents/carers' and students' views are taken into account.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the student.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the student's record, and copies given to their parent/carer. Parents/carers will be formally notified by the school when it is decided that a student will receive SEND support.

Communication with teachers

Class teachers will liaise with the SENDCo and also parents/carers should they have any concerns about a student having SEND. SENDCos will ensure that teachers are supported and given any necessary information about students' SEND and that teaching practices are appropriate.

SEND assessments/screening tests

For some students, specific assessments or screening tests for SEND may be carried out. We recognise that such screenings/assessments should not be regarded as a single event, or that they give a full picture of need, but will be used as part of a holistic assessment in a continuing process.

Outcome of tests

If the outcome of a test or any other circumstances gives us reason to think that a student may have SEND, we will report and consult with parents/carers as necessary and make recommendations.

Involvement of specialists

If in school assessment indicates that a student may have SEND which ought to be assessed by a specialist, we will ask parents/carers to agree to the student being formally assessed by, for example, a Local Authority educational psychologist, a paediatrician, a specialist teacher, a speech and language therapist, or other identified specialist.

Provision

Students known to have SEND

If a student is known to have SEND when they arrive at the school, the Headteacher, SENDCo, and Leadership Team should:

- Use information from the student's previous school to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for the student.
- Identify and focus attention on the student's skills and highlight areas for early action to support the student within the class.
- Ensure that ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback to all teachers and parents/carers about the student's achievements and experiences, and that the outcomes of such assessment form the basis for planning the next steps of the student's learning.
- Ensure that appropriate informal opportunities for the student to show what they know, understand and can do, are maximised through the pastoral programme.
- Involve the student in planning and agreeing targets to meet their needs.
- Involve parents/carers in developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and in school.

Graduated approach

The SEND Code of Practice recommends a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined, and revised with a growing understanding of a student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This 'graduated approach' is explained in the diagrams (Figs.1 and 2) and table below. However, each case will be considered on an individual basis and, where necessary, action taken outside of this approach.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.



Fig 1.

Stage of provision	Action involved
Assess	In identifying a student as needing SEND support, the class or subject teacher, working with the SENDCo and parents/carers, should carry out a clear analysis of the student’s needs.
Plan	The teacher and SENDCo should agree, in consultation with the parent/carer and the student, the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date of review. Individual Education Plans or Student Passports will be put in place and a clear date for review agreed.
Do	The class or subject teachers will remain responsible for working with the student. The SENDCo will support the main class or subject teachers in the further assessment of the student’s particular strengths and needs, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.
Review	The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the student’s progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support and interventions will be evaluated, along with the views of the student and their parents/carers. The support will be revised in light of the student’s progress and development in consultation with the student and parents/carers.

Stage of provision	Action involved
Involving specialists	<p>Where a student continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions, the school will consider involving specialists after discussing the matter with the student's parents/carers.</p> <p>If no progress is being made, it should be considered whether a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment should be made to the Local Authority.</p> <p>EHC needs assessments will apply to very few students and usually only if highly specialist provision is required. Needs assessments involve parents/carers, schools an educational psychologist and any other professionals involved such as speech & language therapists, paediatricians, CAMHS professionals and social workers.</p>
Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)	<p>The Local Authority issues EHCPs based on evidence provided by above agencies. An EHCP is a legal document which sets out a child's needs and the provision required to meet those needs.</p> <p>Annual reviews of the EHCP take place, at which it is decided whether to keep, amend or cease the plan.</p>

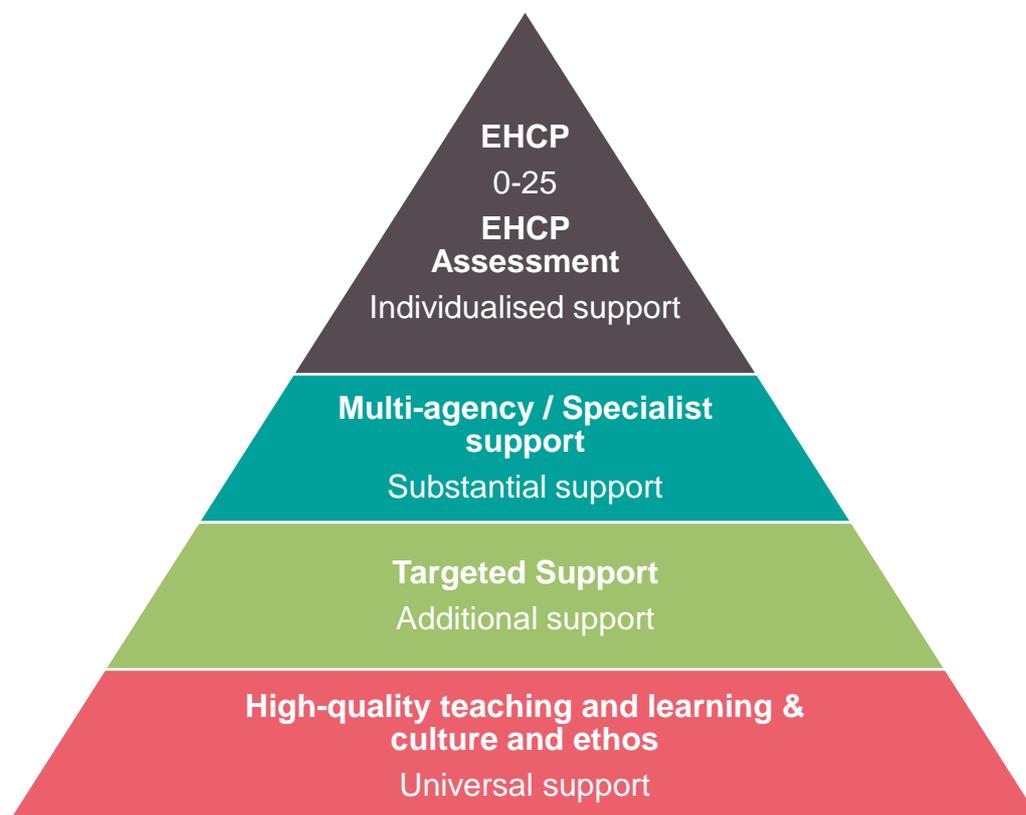


Fig.2: School's graduated approach to supporting pupils with SEND.

Education Health and Care Assessments and Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)

Education Health and Care Needs Assessments

The school (as well as the parents/carers) can ask the LA to arrange an assessment of the student. The school will always consult with parents/carers before exercising this right. If the LA decides not to proceed with an assessment (this decision is usually made by a multi-agency group), parents/carers (but not the school) do have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Provision under the Education Health and Care Plan

Where a student has an EHCP, we will ensure that the provision specified in the EHCP is delivered by the school and other relevant professionals. We will cooperate with the LA to ensure that annual reviews of EHCPs are carried out as required.

The voice of the student

All students should be involved in making decisions where possible right from the start of their education. The ways in which students are encouraged to participate should reflect the student's evolving maturity.

Participation in education is a process that will necessitate all students being given the opportunity to make choices and to understand that their views matter. Confident young people, who know that their opinions will be valued and who can practice making choices, will feel safe, secure, and supported throughout their educational experience.

At Anthem, we encourage students to participate in their learning by:

- Regular target setting in line with school policy.
- Participation in their termly review meetings, or Annual Review of EHC Plans.
- Participation in transition planning.
- Being involved in decision making.
- Student Voice activities.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents and carers of a student on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the student's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child.
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the student's needs.
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the student.
- Given an annual report on their child's progress.

We always aim to work within a culture of mutual respect and our school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about a student.

Admissions

The Trust supports the guidance as set out in the admissions arrangements for all our schools.

Our schools do not discriminate against the admission of students on the grounds of a special educational need and/or disability, where their differing abilities can be catered for within a mainstream setting and/or within the existing physical layout of the school buildings.

A student with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), previously known as a Statement of Educational Needs, who has an Anthem school named within their EHCP, will be given priority over other students, as detailed in the Local Authorities' Admission codes. Admission arrangements for all other students can be found in each school's Admissions Policy.

The Accessibility Policy and plan outlines how the Trust will consider any issues which may be barriers to student' participation in school life.

The SEND Information report

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 2014 and the SEND Regulations 2014.

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.

Each school will ensure that their SEND Information Report is easily accessible and set out in clear, straight forward language. The SEND Information Report should include relevant named contacts who are available at the academy. It must also include information on the school's contribution to the Local Offer and information on where the Local Offer is published.

The Local Offer

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 children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHCP, in their area.

As a 'partner body or agency', schools have a statutory duty to cooperate with the Local Authority in the development and review of the Local Offer. Each school will comply with their Local Authority's 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 – in the form of an Academy Offer.

The Academy Offer takes the form of a provision map detailing each school's provision at each stage of the graduated response, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2014. The SENDCo, along with the leadership team and SEND ACC member, will take overall responsibility for liaising with the Local Authority and maintenance of their Academy Offer and their school's contribution to the Local Offer.

The LA has a parent partnership service called SENDIASS for the parents/carers of any child with SEND that provides advice and information about matters relating to special educational needs and

disabilities. Refer to the Local Authority's Local Offer information on their website for full information on Parent Partnership Services.

Examinations

Students with SEND may be eligible to apply for Access Arrangements to complete internal examinations and public examinations. Parents/carers are asked to liaise with your child's class teacher or the SENDCo in good time with respect to this.

Use of Data and Record keeping

Records of SEND support

It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The provision made for students with SEND should be recorded accurately and kept up to date. As part of any inspection, Ofsted will expect to see evidence of student progress, a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEND support provided. Ofsted publish more detail about their expectations in their inspection guidelines.

If parents/carers and the school decide that a student should receive additional support, or to apply for an assessment or an Education Health and Care Plan, the school will work with the parents/carers and other agencies as appropriate.

Schools are required to keep clear records of a student's needs, the provision put in place for them and the difference that support makes. This record will include:

- Outcomes of assessments.
- The short-term targets set for or by the student.
- The teaching strategies to be used.
- The provision to be put in place.
- When the plan is to be reviewed.
- Success and/or exit criteria.
- Student outcomes.

Progress will be reviewed at least termly, usually half termly, with the class teacher and parents/carers, with support from the SENDCo. Where a student is receiving SEND support, the school will talk to parents/carers regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss any planned interventions and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent/carer, the student, and the school.

The SENDCo has responsibility for ensuring that records are properly kept and available as needed.

Records from previous schools

Primary schools are required to transfer records to secondary schools for all students within 15 school days of students ceasing to be registered at the school. The school will make full use of this information in determining the provision for students with SEND.

Funding for students with SEND

All mainstream schools are provided with resources to support those with additional needs, including students with SEN and disabilities. Most of these resources are determined by a local funding formula, discussed with the local Schools Forum, which is also applied to local academies. Schools and academy sixth forms receive an allocation based on a national funding formula.

Schools have an amount identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget. This is not a ring-fenced amount, and it is for the school to provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of its budget.

It is for schools, as part of their normal budget planning, to determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of students with SEN. The SENCO, Headteacher and ACCs or proprietor should establish a clear picture of the resources that are available to the school. They should consider their strategic approach to meeting SEN in the context of the total resources available, including any resources targeted at particular groups, such as the student premium.

This will enable schools to provide a clear description of the types of special educational provision they normally provide and will help parents/carers and others to understand what they can normally expect the school to provide for students with SEN.

Schools are not expected to meet the full costs of more expensive special educational provision from their core funding. They are expected to provide additional support which costs up to a nationally prescribed threshold per student per year. The responsible local authority, usually the authority where the child or young person lives, should provide additional top-up funding where the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual student exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold.

Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents/carers have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher or SENCO. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents/carers are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school will be handled in line with the school's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the students themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of [the SEN Code of Practice](#).

To find out about disagreement resolution and mediation services in our local area, please contact SENDIASS (The Special Education Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service). This information will be in your Local Offer. Please see the SEND report on the school website.

Monitoring, evaluation and review of SEND in Anthem schools

The Trust will, on at least an annual basis, consider and report to parents/carers on the effectiveness of the school's work on behalf of students with SEND and may wish to consult support services used by the school, other schools and parents/carers.

The Trust will advise the school as to whether any amendments to the policy are required.

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to a range of other policies and documents including:

- Accessibility Plan.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- SEND information report.
- Administration of Medicines Policy.
- Whole-school Equality Policy.
- School Behaviour Policy.