PACE Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND)

CVPS

Article 23 - A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

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SEND Policy

Our values and vision

At PACE Academy Trust, we are committed to ensuring that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are supported to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Our approach is rooted in the principles of the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognises every child's right to education, protection from discrimination and the opportunity to reach their full potential. By embedding the UNICEF Rights of the Child into our SEND policy, we affirm our commitment to equity, dignity and inclusion for all learners.

We ensure that every child has access to high-quality teaching and learning tailored to their individual needs. Article 2 states that no child should be treated unfairly or excluded because of their abilities or challenges. We work actively to remove barriers to participation and achievement.

Article 23 highlights the right of children with disabilities to receive special care and support. We aim to provide a nurturing environment where children with SEND are empowered to develop independence, confidence and a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

Article 12 states that every child has the right to express their views and be involved in decisions that affect them. We work in partnership with families, carers and external agencies to ensure support is holistic, respectful and responsive to each child's strengths and needs.

We believe that all our children have the right to a fully inclusive education by:

- ✓ Providing high-quality inclusive teaching, supported by appropriate interventions and strategies, so all children can achieve their full potential and develop a positive, confident attitude to learning.
- ✓ Adapting teaching, the curriculum and the learning environment in response to pupils' strengths, needs and barriers to learning and participation.
- ✓ Coordinating provision through regular liaison with the SENDCo, including updates to additional support plans, targets and tracking.
- ✓ Setting SMART targets so children with SEND experience a sense of achievement as these are reached.
- ✓ Increasing staff awareness and understanding of SEND issues through access to training.
- ✓ Building positive relationships with parents, carers and external agencies to support children with SEND academically, socially and emotionally.
- ✓ Creating an inclusive physical environment for all children.
- ✓ Reviewing and evaluating the impact of interventions and strategies to ensure they remain effective.

Across PACE Academy Trust, we make reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum, communication and the physical environment so pupils with SEND are not placed at a substantial disadvantage and can participate fully in school life. We provide access to a broad, balanced and appropriately challenging curriculum, supported by adaptive teaching, timely intervention and additional provision where required.

Our approach is preventative, collaborative and focused on building capacity. We invest in strong universal provision, provide early targeted support where barriers emerge and secure specialist advice

when needed. By pooling elements of our Inclusive Mainstream Funding, schools can access shared professional expertise, staff development and evidence-informed resources, while also developing provision that responds to their own contexts. Our aim is to support individual pupils and strengthen staff confidence, knowledge and inclusive practice across PACE.

Our principles of inclusion

Our approach is informed by the Department for Education's seven principles of inclusion. Across PACE, we will promote:

- ambitious leadership and governance that embeds inclusion;
- evidence-informed support that prioritises early intervention;
- high-quality adaptive teaching and a curriculum designed for all learners;
- enriching provision beyond the classroom that all pupils can access;
- a safe and respectful culture that fosters belonging, attendance and participation in learning;
- strong partnerships with families and wider services; and
- inclusive environments in which accessibility is continually improved.

These principles apply to the universal provision available to all pupils and to the targeted and specialist support provided where pupils require additional help to overcome barriers to learning and participation.

Aims of this policy

This policy supports inclusive practice across our schools. It outlines our approach to SEND and our statutory responsibilities, ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, can achieve their best possible learning outcomes and participate fully in the wider school community. Further information about how the policy is implemented in each school is set out in the school's SEND Information Report, published on the school website. Each school's inclusion strategy explains how the school identifies and responds to commonly occurring barriers to learning and participation, and how its Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation is used alongside wider resources.

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

~ Describe the framework in place to support all children to succeed, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

~ Ensure our schools implement national legislation and guidance relating to pupils with SEND.

~ Help pupils with SEND become confident and increasingly independent individuals who are able to participate fully in school life.

~ Strengthen the universal provision available to all pupils so that needs and barriers are identified and addressed as early as possible.

~ Provide timely, evidence-informed targeted and specialist support where pupils require additional help.

~ Ensure that resources, including core funding, notional SEND budgets and Inclusive Mainstream Funding, are used coherently and evaluated for impact.

~ Set out how our schools will:

- Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

- Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside all other pupils.
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best.
- Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil.

~ Explain the roles and responsibilities of those involved in supporting pupils with SEND.

~ Make sure our expectations and practice is understood and implemented consistently by all staff.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinators, known as SENDCos, are responsible for the strategic development of SEND provision within their schools. They also work collaboratively across PACE to strengthen the overall quality of SEND provision across the trust.

Compliance with Statutory Duties

This policy is based on the statutory guidance Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Improve School Attendance. This policy is also based on the following legislation:

~ Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND.

~ The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND coordinators (SENDCOs) and the special educational needs (SEND) information report.

~ The Equality Act 2010, which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.

~ The Public Sector Equality Duty, which sets out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, including disability, and those who do not.

~ The School Admissions Code, which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care plan names the school, and the duty not to unfairly disadvantage children with a disability or special educational needs.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association. It has regard to current Department for Education guidance on developing inclusive mainstream provision and the effective use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund. This guidance is non-statutory, but schools receiving the funding must comply with the applicable conditions of grant.

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- School Inclusion Strategy
- Admission arrangements
- SEND Information Report
- The Local Offer
- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti Bullying and Anti-Discrimination Policy

- Equality Information and Objectives
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Allergy Safety Policy

SEND Local Offer

Every council must publish a local offer, setting out the support available for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families. This includes information about education, health and care provision. PACE schools are located in Croydon and Merton, and the local offers for these authorities can be accessed through the links below:

~ Croydon's local offer for SEND: Croydon Local Offer

~ Merton's local offer for SEND: Local Offer | Merton directories

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability

A child or young person will be defined as having a Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for ***special educational provision*** to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other pupils of the same age or
- A disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Long term means 'a year or more' and substantial is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'

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 in mainstream schools. This may include extra teaching sessions, adapted learning materials, specialist equipment, therapy or support staff.

Our schools will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities so that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

The 4 Areas of Need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into four broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than one area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected according to the pupil's area or areas of need at the relevant time.

Communication and interaction	Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall into this category.
Cognition and learning	Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: Specific learning difficulties, which impact one or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. Moderate learning difficulties Severe learning difficulties Profound and multiple learning difficulties, where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have: Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder. Suffered adverse childhood experiences. These needs can manifest in many ways, for example challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.
Sensory and/or physical	Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. **Pupils may have:** A sensory impairment, such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment. A physical impairment These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The PACE Strategic Lead for SEND

The Strategic Lead for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is responsible for shaping and overseeing the trust's vision, strategy, and standards for SEND provision.

Key responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing a cohesive SEND strategy that reflects the values of PACE Academy Trust, meets statutory requirements and promotes consistency and high-quality provision across all schools.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of SEND provision, including the inclusiveness of the physical environment, through data analysis, school visits and collaboration with school leaders.
- Supporting and developing SENDCos and inclusion teams across PACE through professional development, coaching and the sharing of effective practice.

- Ensuring all schools meet their legal duties under the SEND Code of Practice and relevant legislation, and that safeguarding procedures are robust, inclusive and consistently applied.
- Promoting pupil voice so that children with SEND are actively involved in decisions about their education, in line with the UNICEF Rights of the Child.
- Coordinating the PACE-wide approach to Inclusive Mainstream Funding, including the use of pooled resources, commissioned specialist services and shared expertise across schools.
- Supporting schools to develop inclusion strategies that respond to identified barriers to learning and participation, align with the seven principles of inclusion and include clear, measurable outcomes.
- Monitoring the implementation and impact of Trust-wide SEND and inclusion projects, using findings to inform future commissioning, professional development and school improvement.
- Promoting a coherent approach to universal, targeted and specialist provision across PACE, while recognising each school's context and needs.

The SENDCo

The SENDCo has the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the provision in school. The SENDCos provide guidance and support to all staff in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. They will:

~ Talk with parents or carers where a child may have special educational needs, discussing the child's needs, the provision already in place and any further support required.

~ Maintain regular, empathetic communication with parents or carers, making reasonable adjustments where needed to support effective engagement.

~ Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the coordination of provision for pupils with SEND, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

~ Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents or carers and external agencies to ensure pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.

~ Advise on the graduated approach to SEND support, including adaptive teaching and strategies appropriate to individual pupils.

~ Advise on the effective deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs.

~ Act as a key point of contact for external agencies, particularly the local authority and its support services, to secure appropriate provision.

~ Liaise with nurseries, previous settings and future education providers to share key SEND information and plan smooth, well-supported transitions.

~ Work with the headteacher and governors to ensure the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

~ Ensure records for pupils with SEND are accurate, up to date and securely maintained.

~ Work with the headteacher to identify SEND-related staff training needs and include these within the school's continuing professional development plans.

~ Work with the headteacher to review and evaluate the breadth, quality and impact of SEND support available within or beyond the school.

~ Prepare and review information for the school's SEND information report and contribute to updates to this policy.

~ Work with the headteacher and teaching staff to identify patterns in SEND identification, compare these with relevant data and use findings to strengthen teaching and provision.

~ Ensure significant transitions and key changes for pupils with SEND are planned and managed carefully.

~ Work with the headteacher and relevant local authority to review local provision and contribute, where appropriate, to the development of the local offer.

~ When a pupil moves to another school or setting, ensure relevant SEND information, provision, reasonable adjustments and effective strategies are transferred securely and promptly.

~ Coordinate access to Trust-commissioned specialist services, ensuring requests are based on identified needs and appropriate evidence.

~ Work with class teachers and external practitioners to ensure professional advice, strategies and targets are implemented and reviewed for impact.

~ Use specialist involvement to strengthen staff knowledge and school capacity, as well as to secure direct support for individual pupils where appropriate.

~ Contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and annual evaluation of the school's inclusion strategy.

The PACE Trustees and Local Governing Bodies

PACE Trustees retain overall accountability for ensuring that PACE Academy Trust and its schools fulfil their duties towards pupils with SEND. Many duties are delegated to Local Governing Bodies, and together they are accountable for ensuring that:

- individual schools do all they reasonably can to secure the special educational provision pupils require;
- pupils with SEND are able to participate in school activities alongside pupils who do not have SEND;
- schools provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND;
- parents and carers are informed when special educational provision is being made for their child;
- accurate and up-to-date records are maintained of pupils' needs and the provision made;
- each school publishes and maintains its SEND Information Report, accessibility information and inclusion strategy;
- a qualified teacher is designated as SENDCo in each school and is given sufficient time, resources and support to fulfil the role effectively;
- resources, including core funding, the notional SEND budget and Inclusive Mainstream Funding, are used strategically to support pupils' progress, inclusion and participation.

Trustees and Local Governing Bodies will receive appropriate assurance that each school's published inclusion strategy meets the applicable Inclusive Mainstream Fund requirements, reflects identified barriers to learning and participation, and is being implemented, monitored and evaluated effectively.

They will seek assurance that pooled and school-level funding is being used for its intended purpose and that leaders can demonstrate the quality of implementation and the impact of provision on pupils.

Each school must have a Link Governor for SEND, who should meet regularly with the SENDCo to review and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision and contribute to plans for further development.

The Link Governor for SEND will:

~ Help raise awareness of SEND issues at board meetings.

~ Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school/across the trust and update the relevant governing board on this.

~ Work with the headteacher and SENDCo to support the strategic development of SEND policy and provision within the school.

~ Meet regularly with the Strategic Lead for SEND, focusing on how the Trust supports schools to develop effective practice and meet statutory requirements.

The Headteacher

The headteacher will:

~ Work with the SENDCo and SEND link governor to shape the strategic development of SEND policy and provision within the school.

~ Work with the SENDCo and governors to ensure the school meets its duties under the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

~ Maintain overall responsibility for the quality of provision, progress and outcomes for pupils with SEND.

~ Oversee the effective use of the school's notional SEND budget, local authority funding and any additional Trust funding to meet identified needs.

~ Ensure the SENDCo has sufficient time, resources and support to fulfil the role effectively.

~ Maintain a clear overview of the needs of pupils on the SEND register and how provision is matched to those needs.

~ Work with the SENDCo to identify SEND-related staff training needs and include these within the school's continuing professional development plans.

~ Work with the SENDCo to review and evaluate the breadth, quality and impact of SEND support available within or beyond the school.

~ Work with the SENDCo and teaching staff to analyse patterns in SEND identification and use findings to strengthen teaching and provision.

~ Ensure the physical environment is inclusive and accessible for all pupils.

~ Work with the SENDCo to advise the local authority where evidence indicates that a pupil may require an education, health and care needs assessment or an early review of an existing EHC plan.

~ Work with the SENDCo, wider leadership team and school business leader to develop, implement and evaluate the school's inclusion strategy.

~ Ensure Trust-commissioned specialist services are used effectively and that external advice, modelling and training are translated into consistent practice.

~ Promote inclusive provision as a whole-school responsibility, not solely the responsibility of the SENDCo or inclusion team.

~ Promote ambitious expectations for all children, including those with SEND

~ Ensure all teachers have the knowledge and understanding to take responsibility meeting the needs of children with SEND in their class.

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

~ Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is adapted to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach.
~ Monitoring the progress and development of every pupil in their class.
~ Retaining overall responsibility for a pupil's progress and provision, including where the pupil receives group or individual teaching away from the class.
~ Implementing and evaluating strategies recommended by the SENDCo and external

professionals, ensuring that specialist advice is connected to classroom teaching and the pupil's wider curriculum experience.

- ~ Engaging with relevant modelling, coaching and training and applying this learning within everyday teaching.
- ~ Working closely with teaching assistants and specialist staff to plan support, assess its impact and ensure it is connected to classroom teaching.
- ~ Working with the SENDCo to review pupil progress and agree any changes to provision.
- ~ Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEND information report.
- ~ Communicating with parents/carers regularly to:
- ~ Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them.
- ~ Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes.
- ~ Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.
- ~ Listen to parents' or carers' concerns and aspirations for the pupil.

Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development. Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will be given opportunities to provide information, express their views and participate in decisions about the pupil's SEND and support. They will be:

- ~ Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child (for children with an EHCP, parents will be invited to attend their child's annual review)
- ~ Asked to provide information about the impact of SEND support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs.
- ~ Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil.
- ~ Given an annual report on the pupil's progress.
- ~ Have their views considered in decisions about the pupil's support and provision.

The pupil

Pupils will be given opportunities to share their views about their SEND and the support they receive. Whenever possible, they will be involved in discussions and decisions about this support. This may include:

- ~ Explaining their strengths and difficulties.
- ~ Contributing to target or outcome setting.
- ~ Attending review meetings, where appropriate.
- ~ Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions.

Whenever possible, pupils' views will be taken into account when decisions are made about them,

Admission Arrangements for Pupils with SEND

The admission arrangements for each PACE school are set out in the school's admissions policy. Pupils with SEND, but without an EHC plan naming the school, are considered under the same published admission arrangements as other applicants. Admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria will not unfairly disadvantage a child because of SEND or disability.

Where a final EHC plan names a PACE school, the pupil must be admitted to that school. Pupils whose EHC plan names the school will be admitted in accordance with the statutory process and, where

required, before other places are allocated.

During consultation on whether a school should be named, the school will work constructively with the local authority and consider the pupil's individual needs, the reasonable adjustments required and the provision set out in the proposed EHC plan.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

PACE Academy Trust adopts a graduated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This approach recognises that children have different levels of need and that support should be proportionate, responsive and regularly reviewed. Provision is organised across three levels: Universal, Targeted and Specialist support.

Universal: Universal Provision forms the foundation of inclusive practice and is available to all pupils. This includes high-quality teaching, effective differentiation, reasonable adjustments, adaptive teaching strategies, an accessible curriculum, and a positive learning environment. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class, including those with SEND. Most children's needs are successfully met through universal provision, supported by strong classroom practice and early identification of barriers to learning.

Targeted: Where a pupil requires support that is additional to, or different from, that ordinarily available through universal provision, Targeted Support may be implemented. Targeted interventions are designed to address specific areas of need, such as communication and language, literacy, numeracy, social and emotional development, or physical and sensory needs. These interventions are usually time-limited, have clearly defined outcomes, and are regularly monitored and reviewed as part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.

Specialist: A small number of pupils may require Specialist Support when their needs are more complex, persistent or significant. Specialist provision may involve advice, assessment or direct intervention from external professionals such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, specialist teachers, health professionals or other agencies. For some pupils, this level of support may contribute to consideration of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment.

The graduated approach is a dynamic process. Pupils may move between levels of support depending on their changing needs and progress over time. The aim is always to ensure that support is timely, effective and proportionate, enabling every child to achieve their best possible outcomes while remaining fully included in the life of the school.

Schools use the definition of SEND and disability set out in the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010. We recognise the importance of early identification and have measures in place to identify children who are falling behind or experiencing difficulties with learning, development or participation at the earliest opportunity.
Early identification is supported by:

- Reviewing pupils' skills and attainment when they join the school, using information from previous settings or agencies where appropriate.
- Tracking pupils' progress and attainment termly.
- Concerns raised by parents, carers or external agencies.

Class teachers will regularly assess pupils' progress and consider whether it:

- is significantly slower than that of pupils starting from a similar baseline;
- does not match or improve upon the pupil's previous rate of progress;
- does not close attainment or developmental gaps; or
- results in gaps widening over time.

Progress will be considered across academic learning and wider development, including communication, social interaction, emotional wellbeing, independence and participation. Slow progress or low attainment will not, by itself, mean that a pupil has SEND. Staff will consider other possible factors, including attendance, English as an additional language, disadvantage, safeguarding concerns, bullying, bereavement, changes in family circumstances and unmet medical or mental health needs.

Alongside identifying individual needs, schools will use classroom observation, assessment information, pupil and family engagement, professional advice and data on attendance, behaviour, attainment and participation to identify common barriers across the wider cohort. This analysis will inform the school's universal offer, targeted provision and inclusion strategy.

Before deciding that a pupil requires additional SEND support, the SENDCo and class teacher will review current classroom provision and consider any further adaptations needed to support progress.

Consulting and involving pupils and parents/carers

Our schools will put the child at the heart of decisions about special educational provision. When identifying whether a pupil needs special educational provision, we will hold an early discussion with the pupil and their parents or carers to ensure that:

- ~ There is a shared understanding of the pupil's strengths and difficulties.
- ~ Parents' or carers' concerns are considered.
- ~ The agreed outcomes for the child are clear.
- ~ Next steps are clearly agreed.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and shared with parents or carers. Parents or carers will be formally notified if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

Meeting the needs of pupils with SEND

Schools may provide adaptations, early help or time-limited targeted support to pupils who are experiencing barriers to learning or participation without automatically identifying them as having SEND or placing them on the SEND register. Support should not be delayed while a formal diagnosis or statutory assessment is sought.

Where a pupil requires special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for pupils of the same age, the graduated approach will be followed and the pupil will be recorded as receiving SEN support.

The SEND Register

The SEND register provides an up-to-date record of pupils receiving additional SEND support so that:

- Progress and achievements of pupils with SEND can be more closely monitored.
- There is an overview of the range and level of need across the school.

- School provision reflects, and is responsive to, the current profile of need.

Close monitoring of the register also provides evidence of the impact of the school's provision for pupils with additional needs.

School-based SEND provision

Once identified as requiring additional SEND support, pupils will receive targeted provision to remove barriers to learning and support access to the wider curriculum. This will be managed through the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do and review**, known as the graduated response. It follows the model described in the SEND Code of Practice and supports a growing understanding of the pupil's needs, the support required and the outcomes sought.

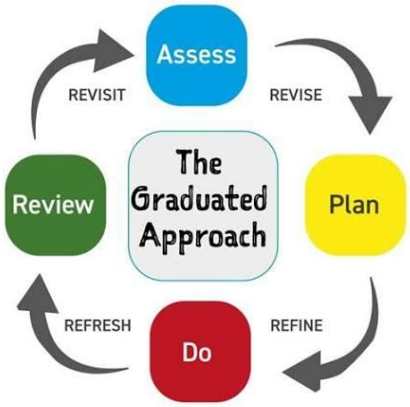
The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

The Graduated Response

The graduated response will be used to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place through successive cycles of assess, plan, do and review.

ASSESS

Once a pupil is identified as requiring additional SEND support, a more detailed assessment of their needs will be carried out. This will include discussions with parents or carers and the pupil, and may draw on assessments or reports from external agencies involved with the pupil, such as speech and language therapy.



Each pupil's needs will be considered against the four broad areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This will provide a detailed picture of the child's strengths and primary and secondary needs.

Schools recognise that individual pupils' needs may overlap across more than one area and may change over time.

PLAN

Schools will use assessment information to produce an additional support plan. All PACE schools use Edukey to create these plans and record provision. The plan will:

- Be outcome-focused.
- Outline the interventions, approaches and adaptations that will support progress towards the agreed outcomes.
- Set out how parents or carers can reinforce and contribute to progress outside school.
- Give details of the role and input of external agencies, where involved.
- Include the views of the child and their parents or carers.
- Be shared with key teachers and support staff so they understand the outcomes sought, the agreed support and any teaching strategies or provision.

- Be shared with parents or carers, with a clear timeframe for review.

DO

The class teacher retains overall responsibility for the pupil's progress and for implementing the agreed plan. This remains the case where the pupil receives group or individual teaching away from the class.

The teacher will work closely with teaching assistants and specialist staff to plan support, assess its impact, connect it to classroom teaching and make adjustments where needed. The SENDCo will support staff to assess strengths and needs, solve problems and implement provision effectively.
Staff delivering provision will liaise regularly so that progress, emerging concerns and any required refinements are identified promptly.

REVIEW

The progress of the child and impact of additional support or adjustments will be reviewed three times a year. Parents or carers will be invited to attend, along with pupils where appropriate.

Where the pupil's needs are more complex and they receive support from a range of specialist agencies, an additional review meeting will be arranged so that all key parties can contribute.
At the review, the following will be considered:

- The impact of each element of provision against the identified outcomes.
- The pupil's response to the support and, where applicable, their view of their progress.
  - Views of parents and specialist agencies (where required).

- Any refinements or adjustments needed to the support offered.

Where progress remains limited, including where this is identified through pupil progress meetings, further analysis and assessment will be undertaken to ensure provision matches the pupil's needs. Where appropriate, and with parental agreement, the SENDCo will make a referral to a specialist agency.

Education, Health and Care Plans

Where a pupil requires more support than can reasonably be provided through ordinarily available and school-based SEN provision, despite relevant and purposeful action through the graduated approach, the school and/or the pupil's parents or carers may request an education, health and care needs assessment from the local authority.

The school will provide clear evidence of the pupil's needs, the action already taken, the impact of provision and the views of the pupil and their parents or carers.
An EHC plan is a legal document that describes the pupil's education, health and care needs, the provision required and the outcomes sought. Where an EHC plan is issued, the school will deliver the specified provision and review the plan in accordance with statutory requirements. Full details of the process for requesting an EHC plan can be found on the SEND local offer websites for Croydon and Merton.

Removal from the SEND Register

If a pupil makes sufficient progress and achieves the outcomes set, they may no longer require additional SEND support. With parental agreement, their name will be removed from the SEND register. Progress will continue to be monitored through the school's termly tracking arrangements.

Masking

Masking refers to a child consciously or unconsciously hiding their difficulties or differences to fit in with peers or meet perceived expectations. This can involve suppressing behaviours, mimicking others or hiding signs of distress. Masking can make it harder for staff to identify a pupil's needs and may lead to increased anxiety, exhaustion or delayed support. We are committed to creating an environment where all pupils feel safe to be themselves and where staff can recognise and respond to signs of masking.

Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions

In line with statutory guidance, arrangements are in place to ensure that any pupil with a medical condition is able, as far as possible, to participate in all aspects of school life and achieve their academic potential.

These arrangements are set out in individual healthcare plans, which detail the type and nature of support available. The plans will be:

- Produced in collaboration with parents, pupils where appropriate, and health professionals.
- Shared with all relevant staff.
- Reviewed at least termly, or sooner where needs or support arrangements change.

Where a pupil with a medical condition also has a disability or SEND, the plan will be closely linked to provision for accessibility and additional educational needs, ensuring a coordinated approach.

Staff responsible for supporting pupils with medical needs, including administering or supervising medication, will receive appropriate ongoing training and support so they are competent and confident in their duties. This is particularly relevant for staff working with children in the Chipstead Valley Enhanced Learning Provision, where needs may be complex.

Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. Their right to education is the same as that of any other pupil, and the attendance ambition for these pupils is equally high. However, they may need additional support to attend regularly.

Our approach to supporting pupils whose attendance is affected by SEND is set out in our Attendance Policy.

Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to experience abuse than their peers, and additional barriers may affect the recognition of abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Further details about pastoral support for pupils with SEND, including support to overcome communication barriers, are set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Arrangements to support pupils with SEND moving into the school or moving to a different school

Schools are proactive in supporting successful transitions between phases of education, and this is a key responsibility of the SENDCo.

For pupils joining nursery, where applicable, or Reception, the SENDCo or Early Years Lead will gather information about identified SEND needs and the provision already in place.

Where the level of need is high, this may include visits to pre-school settings and information-sharing meetings with the child's family and other key agencies. A detailed transition plan may be developed to set out how the move will be managed, particularly where the child has an EHC plan.

For pupils moving to secondary school or another setting, the SENDCo will contact the receiving school to share relevant information. Where the child has significant needs or an EHC plan, transition meetings with parents or carers, the pupil, representatives from the receiving school and other key professionals may be held to support continuity of provision.

Funding and Resources

PACE schools use their core funding, including notional SEN budgets, to support inclusive practice and make provision for pupils with SEND. School leaders decide how resources are deployed in response to pupils' needs, statutory requirements and school improvement priorities.

Additional funding linked to individual pupils, including funding connected with EHC plans where applicable, will be used in line with relevant arrangements and to deliver the specified provision.

Funding decisions will be informed by identified need, the barriers pupils experience, the evidence supporting the proposed approach and the intended impact on learning, participation, wellbeing and inclusion.

Inclusive Mainstream Funding and our approach to inclusion

PACE Academy Trust is committed to strengthening inclusion across all schools so that pupils with SEND receive timely, effective support and can participate fully in learning and wider school life. Our approach combines high-quality adaptive teaching, early identification and intervention, access to specialist expertise, targeted support and continuing professional development for staff.

The Trust uses core school funding, including each school's notional SEN budget, alongside its Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation. A significant proportion of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund is pooled across the Trust, enabling schools to commission specialist services collectively, secure greater consistency and make effective use of available funding. Schools also retain access to funding to develop provision that responds to their own context and priorities.

The Trust's approach strengthens provision at three connected levels:

- Universal provision, which develops staff knowledge, adaptive teaching and inclusive classroom practice for all pupils.
- Targeted provision, which provides additional, evidence-informed support for pupils experiencing identified barriers to learning or participation.
- Specialist provision, which provides access to assessment, advice and intervention from appropriately qualified professionals where required.

For 2026–27, the Trust's pooled investment includes behaviour and neurodiversity support through Adapt to Learn, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy through Words First, and reading and spelling support through Nessy. These services offer pupil support, observation, professional advice, modelling, staff training, consultation and engagement with parents and carers.

Trust-commissioned specialist services are intended to build school capacity as well as provide direct support. School staff will work alongside external practitioners to understand pupils' needs, implement

recommended strategies and embed effective approaches within everyday teaching.

The Trust will also provide opportunities for shared training, staff consultation, parent and carer engagement and collaborative professional learning. This supports early intervention and enables staff and families to receive practical advice before difficulties escalate.

Training

We are committed to ensuring that every child and young person with SEND receives a high-quality, inclusive education. Central to this is the continuous professional development of staff across our schools.

We recognise that effective SEND provision relies on knowledgeable, confident and compassionate practitioners. Our Trust-wide approach prioritises regular, evidence-informed training for all staff. This includes:

- Induction training for new staff on inclusive practice and the graduated approach to SEND.
- Ongoing professional development tailored to specific roles, including SENDCos, classroom teachers, support staff and leadership teams.
- Access to specialist expertise, including external professionals, to deepen understanding of complex needs and effective practice.
- Collaborative learning opportunities across the Trust, such as SEND networks, peer observations and shared resources.
- Evaluation and impact monitoring to ensure training strengthens inclusive practice and improves outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Working with external professional agencies

PACE Academy Trust commissions and works with external professional agencies to strengthen universal, targeted and specialist support across its schools. This includes provision relating to behaviour and neurodiversity, speech, language and communication, occupational therapy and other specialist areas of need.

External practitioners may support schools through observation, assessment, consultation, modelling, direct work with pupils, meetings with parents or carers, staff training and advice on strategies and provision. The nature and level of involvement will be determined by the pupil's needs, identified barriers and intended outcomes.

The involvement of an external professional does not remove the class teacher's or school's responsibility for the pupil's progress and provision. Teachers, SENDCos and external practitioners will work collaboratively to ensure that recommendations are practical, connected to classroom teaching and reviewed for impact.

Where appropriate, schools may also work with educational psychology, specialist teaching services, physiotherapy, school nursing, paediatric services, children and young people's mental health services, education welfare services and social care.

Each school will publish an inclusion strategy on its website in line with the Inclusive Mainstream Fund conditions of grant. The strategy will explain:

- the commonly occurring barriers to learning and participation identified across the school's cohort;
- the evidence-informed activities being implemented to alleviate those barriers;

- the intended outcomes;
- the associated budgeted costs;
- the evaluation of activity undertaken during the previous academic year.

The strategy will show how the school uses its Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation alongside core funding and the notional SEN budget to strengthen universal provision and provide targeted support. Funded activities will align with one or more of the Department for Education's seven principles of inclusion.

Schools will prioritise a manageable number of approaches that can be implemented consistently and evaluated for impact. Where a multi-year strategy is adopted, it will be reviewed annually.

The strategy will be developed through shared leadership and appropriate engagement with pupils, families, staff, governors and relevant external partners.

SEND Information Report

Each school publishes a SEND Information Report on its website, setting out how this policy is implemented locally.

The report will be updated annually in the autumn term and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

Dealing with Complaints

Parents and carers are encouraged to share any concerns at the earliest possible opportunity. In the first instance, they should speak to the class teacher, with further discussion with leaders and/or the SENDCo where required.

If a concern or complaint cannot be resolved informally, parents and carers should raise it in writing. Further information is available in the PACE Complaints Policy on the Trust website.

Where a complaint is directly related to decisions about an EHC plan, this will be managed by the relevant local authority SEND team.

Parents and carers may seek independent and impartial advice from their local SEND Information, Advice and Support Service: SENDIASS in Croydon and MIASS in Merton. They may also access the local mediation service, commissioned by the relevant local authority but operating independently, which can provide a quick and non-adversarial way to resolve disagreements.

If a parent or carer remains dissatisfied after the Trust's complaints procedure has been completed, information about appropriate routes for further consideration can be found in the SEND Code of Practice. In some circumstances, the right to raise or pursue a concern may also apply to the pupil.
Information about disagreement resolution, mediation and relevant SEND information, advice and support services is available through the Croydon and Merton local offers, as applicable.

Anti-Discrimination

Schools recognise that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying and other forms of discrimination, and that this can affect emotional health and wellbeing. Through careful monitoring and regular review of anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policy and practice, we work to prevent and respond effectively to bullying and discrimination in all its forms.

Disability Access Arrangements

Schools will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services where required, to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

Each school's Accessibility Plan will set out how the school will:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment so that disabled pupils can take greater advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information for disabled pupils.

Accessibility will be reviewed as part of the Trust's continuing work to develop inclusive environments.

Information management and data protection

Information about pupils' SEND will be recorded, stored, shared and retained in accordance with data protection legislation and the PACE data protection and records-management arrangements. Information will be shared only where there is a lawful basis and where it is necessary to support the pupil, safeguard their welfare or fulfil the school's statutory duties.

When a pupil transfers to another setting, relevant SEND information will be shared securely and promptly to support continuity of provision.

Monitoring and Evaluating SEND Provision

PACE Academy Trust and its schools will evaluate both the quality of implementation and the difference provision makes to pupils. Schools will draw on quantitative and qualitative evidence, including attainment, progress, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, belonging, participation and engagement, alongside the views of pupils, families and staff.

Schools will monitor whether:

- needs and barriers are identified early;
- pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included;
- reasonable adjustments remain effective;
- universal provision is reducing barriers to learning and participation;
- targeted and specialist provision is delivered as intended and connected to classroom teaching;
- pupils are making progress towards agreed outcomes;
- commissioned services and interventions are having the intended impact;
- staff development is leading to improvements in inclusive practice; and
- resources are being deployed effectively.

Findings will be used to refine provision, professional development, accessibility planning, future commissioning and each school's inclusion strategy. Evaluation will be ongoing, recognising that approaches may need to be adapted as needs change.