



Special Educational Needs

Author	SENCos	Source	Previous Policy
Approved By	Trust Board	Status	Statutory
Last Review	Sept 2026	Next Review	Sept 2027

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
June 2022	Minor updates and review by LGB
June 2023	No changes
June 2024	Updates to include SEMH with some autism needs. Updates to include North Star 180
June 2025	Updates to include NS265 Differentiation replaced with adaptive teaching Minor updates to reflect tutor record keeping changes Section 4 - Admissions to link with our Admissions policy and SEN code of Practice. Section 6 – specific information added to explain needs likely to be met within our settings

September 2026	Clarified relationship between EHCP outcomes, IEP targets and the graduated response. Added reasonable adjustments wording. Added Preparation for Adulthood reference from Year 9. Updated SEND terminology and information report wording.
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1. Rationale

This policy complies with the statutory requirements and guidance set out in:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (January 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (December 2015)
- School Admissions Code (2021)
- NSAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School's Accessibility Plan
- NSAT Admissions Policy

2. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

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

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.

3. Aims and Objectives

- To create a learning environment that meets the special educational needs of each pupil.
- To ensure that all pupils have equal access to a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum through adaptive teaching and personalised support to meet their individual needs.
- To promote education in a safe and secure environment where pupils can learn effectively, improve their confidence, build up their self-esteem and develop their independence as individuals within the community.
- To enable pupils to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning.

- To actively involve parents and carers in the development and education of their child.
- To ensure parents and carers are kept fully informed and are engaged in effective communication about their child's education.
- To support the professional development of all staff and in relation to special educational needs.
- To fulfil our statutory obligations to provide for SEN needs as outlined in pupils EHCPs

4. Admissions

North Star Academy Trust comprises of North Star 82°, North Star 240°, North Star 265° and North Star 180°.

All pupils at North Star 82°, North Star 240°, and NS180° have a range of social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils may also have additional communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning needs and/or sensory and physical needs. They all have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in accordance with current legislation, the SEND Code of Practice and Local Authority guidelines. For a more detailed list of needs we can meet, please see our admissions policy.

Many of the students at North Star 265° have special educational needs and some of these have an EHCP.

There are currently 77 places at North Star 82°, 80 places at North Star 240° and 104 places at North Star 180°. North Star 265° has a three-year place plan and will have a total of 85 places by January 2027. All admissions are in line with SEN code of practice.

All pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans who attend the North Star Academy Trust are subject to the provision identified on their EHCP. This is determined by a multi-professional assessment under the terms of the Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3) which will identify the provision that needs to be put in place to meet those needs.

If a Local Authority considers that North Star 82°, North Star 240°, North Star 265° or North Star 180 might be an appropriate school then a referral will be made which is then considered by the senior leadership team on behalf of the Trust Board prior to admission. (For further information see Admissions Policy).

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) will:

- Work with the SLT and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.

- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEN policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Work with the SLT and Trust board to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date.
- Ensure that Annual Reviews are held in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice.
- The SENCO to liaise with transition coordinators of the commission coordinators.

5.2 The SEN Governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEN issues at governing board meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEN and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this.
- Work with the Heads of School and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.

5.3 The Head Teacher will:

- Work with the SENCOs and SEN board member to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.

5.4 Class teachers are responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil 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 SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEN policy.

6. SEN information report

North Star Academy Trust is designated by the Department for Education as a specialist provider for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Admission to the Trust's schools is dependent upon SEMH being identified as the primary area of need within a pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The schools are designed, staffed and resourced to support pupils with SEMH needs, including difficulties associated with attachment, trauma, emotional regulation and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Whilst the Trust can support some co-occurring needs alongside SEMH, the provision is not designed to meet needs where SEMH is not identified as the primary area of need.

Referrals for pupils whose primary need is identified as another SEND category are unlikely to be appropriate for placement within the Trust's specialist SEMH provision. This may include, but is not limited to, pupils whose primary need is identified as Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Physical Disability (PD), Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), or another area of SEND where SEMH is not the primary identified need.

7. Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

All our students have SEN or, in the case of North Star 265° are at risk of permanent exclusion. Many are working below the expected level for their age group due to significant gaps and/or interruption in learning.

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social needs. We will use this information to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

8. The Core Offer at North Star Academy Trust Schools is:

- Maximum class size of 8 pupils
- In class adult: pupil ratio of 1:4 (one teacher and one TA in each class)
- Break time adult: pupil ratio of 1:8
- A key-adult system with a named key tutor
- One hour each week of behaviour support team intervention outside of the classroom.
- SLT support and intervention for pupils when needed.
- Availability of Designated Teacher for Children in Care
- Staff attendance at Multi-Agency meetings where required,
- Multi-Agency liaison
- Staff trained in trauma-informed practice
- Staff trained in understanding attachment styles
- Staff trained in de-escalation of behaviours and physical intervention (Team-Teach)
- Termly IEP plans
- SENCO advice, guidance and support to staff
- SENCO moderation of annual reviews
- SENCO attendance at annual reviews as required
- Speech and Language Therapy assessment on admission
- Baseline assessment on admission (WRATS)
- Regular assessment of academic development
- Regular assessment of emotional development
- A classroom environment that takes account of sensory needs.
- A consistent and structured behaviour policy, with secure and explicit boundaries and consequences
- A classroom environment monitored by the SENCO.
- A modified, flexible curriculum that is tailored to the needs of the cohort
- An extended curriculum that includes as an example:
 - gardening (KS1, KS2)
 - forest schools (KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4)
 - additional sporting activities (KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4)
 - additional music activities (KS1, KS2)
- Two terms of swimming each year
- Subsidised school trips
- Lunchtime supervision focusing on social skills
- Whole schools reward systems that has hourly, daily, weekly and termly focus
- Dyslexia friendly adaptations.
- Managed transitions

- Weekly (verbal) contact with parents.
- Support plan for low or non-attendance
- Vocational and GCSE pathways (KS4)
- Support college applications – Post 16 (KS4)
- Personalised careers advice and guidance (KS4)

The Core Offer does NOT include:

- 1:1 intervention such as literacy, Emotional and Social Support Assistant (ESSA), Thrive,
- 1:1 therapeutic intervention such as Speech and Language Therapy, music therapy, drama therapy, occupational therapy.
- 1:1 support at break-times or in the classroom
- Small group interventions outside of the normal classroom delivery
- Behaviour support team intervention that exceeds 1 hour per week

9. Consulting and involving pupils and parents:

North Star Academy Trust endeavours to work closely with families to ensure

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account the parents' aspirations, concerns and views
- We take into account the pupil's views and aspirations
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

There are many formal contacts between the school and home to review provision and progress.

- Parents play a full role in the Annual Review process and any other meetings throughout the school year.
- There are 2 parents' evenings per year to discuss pupil Individual Learning Pathways and target setting.
- An Annual Report is sent home at the end of the Year.
- Weekly phone calls home.

10. Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENCO to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs.

10.1 Assess

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENCO to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil.
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour.
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant.
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.
- The views and experience of parents.
- The pupil's own views.
- Advice from external support services, if relevant.

10.2 Plan

Targets and objectives will be identified and agreed with the student, parents and teachers. The plan will clearly outline interventions to be undertaken, and the resources required. There will be clear measurable outcomes. These will be recorded through the school's graduated response process. Where appropriate, particularly for pupils with an EHCP, longer-term outcomes will be broken down into smaller, measurable targets within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). IEPs are reviewed three times annually and contribute to the ongoing Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.

10.3 Do

Interventions will be implemented as required and funded. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

10.4 Review

Reviews will evaluate the effectiveness of the support given and the impact on the pupil's performance.

Progress towards IEP targets will be reviewed three times per year. This review process enables staff, pupils and parents/carers to evaluate progress towards smaller-

step targets linked to EHCP outcomes and identify any amendments required to support ongoing progress.

The EHCP is reviewed annually by the school and family and makes recommendations to the local authority as to any necessary changes to ensure that it continues to reflect the pupil's needs.

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

11. Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this.

Additional support is put in for our students at times of transition as we know many of them find these times particularly difficult.

Examples of support include:

- Accompanied visits to schools / college.
- Social story work around transition.
- Additional Hub Team support to help them manage difficult emotions.

There is a transition programme in place for students moving to NS240° from NS82° which includes full and half day visits and summer activities including NS240° and NS82° staff.

From Year 9 onwards, Annual Reviews will include consideration of Preparation for Adulthood outcomes. These may include aspirations relating to education, employment, independent living, participation in the community and maintaining good physical and emotional health.

12. Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN

The provision identified in students' EHCPs informs teaching. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN. This will be differentiated for individual pupils. There is regular quality assurance monitoring that focuses on adaptive teaching, personalisation and EHCP provision.

Following consultation and funding agreements with the local authority we can also provide the following interventions:

- Reading / Numeracy
- SaLT
- Social skills (linked to individual EHCPs) / LEGO therapy
- Emotional and social support sessions
- Therapy sessions (where identified in an EHCP)
- Learning Outside the Classroom / Forest School
- Life skills training
- Sensory / Occupational Therapy linked activities

Other therapies noted in EHCPs can be considered for inclusion on a case-by-case basis.

13. Adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment

The curriculum has been specifically designed to meet the needs of students with Social, Emotional and Mental health needs – including a strong emphasis on social skills, literacy and numeracy. There is a strong pastoral element to the work that we do.

Provisions identified in individual EHCPs are mapped to ensure that the curriculum and other additional support meet the needs of our students.

We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- Adapting our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing.
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Adapting our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, movement breaks and chunking of lessons and information etc.

The Trust will make reasonable adjustments where required in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

14. Additional support for learning

We have a staff to student ratio of 8 students: 2 staff (teacher and LSA) unless additional support is identified in a student's EHCP. There is a limit to the number of adults per room. We have additional staff who are trained to deliver intervention support. Teaching

assistants will support pupils on a 1:1 basis when this is identified in their EHCP and there is capacity and funding agreement for this.

Teaching assistants will support pupils in small groups when this is identified in their EHCP – particularly relating to social skills work.

We work with numerous agencies to provide support for pupils with SEN. This list is contained in the Appendix, regularly changes and is not exhaustive.

15. Expertise and training of staff

Staff have regular training related to SEN. The full record of this is kept by the school offices. Training includes but is not limited to:

- Attachment training
- ELKLAN training (Speech and Language)
- Emotional Literacy training / Emotions coaching
- Peer-on-Peer Abuse training
- Autism training
- Safeguarding training is particularly important for us considering the vulnerabilities of our students
- Sensory processing training
- Wellbeing training
- Self-harm training
- Walkthrus
- Adaptive teaching
- Training on trauma informed approaches

All staff have Team Teach training, with a focus on de-escalating behavior and maintaining a calm approach.

16. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Reviewing progress towards EHCP outcomes through Annual Reviews and monitoring progress against IEP targets three times per year.
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after 10 sessions
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO

- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding annual reviews of EHC plans

17. Enabling pupils with SEN to engage in activities available to those in the school

All schools offer a wide range of trips and activities. Our Accessibility Plan is available on the Trust Website. All areas of North Star 240°, North Star 265° and North Star 180 are accessible by wheelchair. At North Star 82°, which is a listed building, access is more difficult.

18. Support for improving emotional and social development

North Star schools have a strong pastoral focus with regular enrichment days and opportunities for social and emotional development. These include, but are not limited to:

- Regular visits / trips to places of cultural significance. All details of these are recorded in our PSHE tracker.
- Having a regular and empowered School Council.
- Having regular subject-based enrichment days.
- Taking part in National and local charity events (such as Sports Relief and Neurodiversity Week).
- Taking part in National cultural awareness events such as World Book Day, Black History Month.
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and an Active Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme.
- Therapeutic interventions. (e.g. Art Therapy / Music Therapy).

The schools work with multiple agencies that provide support; see Appendix A.

19. Complaints about SEN provision

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the SENCO in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

The parents of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our schools have discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services

- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

20. Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

Details of support services available to parents / carers of North Star Academy Trust can be obtained from The Bristol Local offer web-site – *see below*.

The Local Authority Local Offer:

Bristol's Local Offer is contained here:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/web/bristol-local-offer>

BANES Local Offer is contained here:

[Local Offer | Bath and North East Somerset Council \(bathnes.gov.uk\)](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/local-offer)

There is also additional support for parents / carers available here:

<https://www.supportiveparents.org.uk/>

Other support is sign-posted on the Trust website.

The procedure for raising concerns can be found in the Trust Complaints Policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy and information report will be reviewed by the SENCO every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.

It will be approved by the Trust Board.

Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to our policies on:

- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour
- Equality information and objectives

- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Admissions Policy

Appendix A:

Key Agencies:

North Star schools work very closely with a range of different agencies.

This list is not exhaustive and regularly changes.

These include:

- Social Care / Families in Focus
- Barnardos
- Bristol Drugs Project
- NSPCC
- Julian House
- CAMHS
- The Police / Topaz/PREVENT
- Brooke
- Off the Record
- Autism hub / BAT team
- Safer options team (VRU)
- Early Help (FIF)
- Social care
- Educational Welfare Service
- Creative Youth Network
- Young Carers Service
- Be Safe
- Thinking Allowed
- Professional Online Safety Helpdesk, POSH
- The Local Authority SEN Department
- Educational Psychologists from the Local Authority
- The School Nurse Team
- Willow
- Project 28
- St Giles Trust
- Bristol Autism Project/BANES autism Project
- Virtual School