Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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Last updated: Oct 2026; review Oct 2027

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Aims	4
3. Objectives	5
4. Identifying special educational needs	5
5. Areas of need	6
6. Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions	8
7. Roles and Responsibilities	8
8. SEN information report	12
9. Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs	12
10. Consulting and involving pupils and parents	13
11. Early Years and In Year Transfers	14
12. The graduated approach to SEN support	14
13. Levels of support	16
14. Inclusion Mainstream Funding	16
15. Education, health and care (EHC) plans	17
16. Bullying	17
17. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision	18
18. Expertise and training of staff	18
19. Links with external professional agencies	18
20. Admission arrangements	19
21. Accessibility arrangements	19
22. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion	19
23. Storing and Managing Information	20
24. Complaints about SEND provision	20
25. Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy	21
26. Monitoring the policy	21
27. Links with other policies and documents	21

1. Introduction

Fern Academy Trust has a lead SENCo- Mrs Anna Priday. Mrs Priday is an experienced teacher who has taught in both KS1 and KS2 and has completed the National Award for SEND Coordination (NASENCO) through the University of Hertfordshire. She sits on the senior management team and is the named SENCo for Marlbrook Primary School. Her email address is apriday@fernacademyturst.co.uk. She can also be contacted by phone on 01432 266643. She is supported by Emma Kolosinski, an experienced SENCo who has taught across Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and brings extensive knowledge and expertise in supporting children with SEND.

St Martins Primary School and Wellington Primary School & Nursery have their own named SENCo – Mrs Clare Adams. Mrs Adams is an experienced KS2 teacher and has completed the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (NPQSENCO) through the Best Practice Network. Her email address is cadams@fernacademytrust.co.uk. She can be contacted by phone on 01432 273633.

The school each has two Trustees, who monitor the school's SDP priorities and SEND provision. These trustees are responsible for feeding back to the board at Trust level.

They are as follows:

Marlbrook Primary School: June Willis and Karen Morris

Wellington Primary School & Nursery: Nafisa Farooqui and Andy Goode

St-Martin's Primary School: Richard Preece and Mark Johnson

Together, they ensure that our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy works within the guidelines and inclusion policies of the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice the legislation below, the Local Authority and other policies current within the school:

- 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, SEN co-ordinators (SENCos) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it

- The Governance Handbook, which sets out governors' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

We passionately believe that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to achieve their full potential. We are truly inclusive schools and our staff enjoy the challenge of supporting pupils to reach their potential. All of our staff are skilled in scaffolding and adapting learning and are emotionally literate with a good understanding of the wide range of barriers that prevent children from thriving academically, emotionally and socially. We believe that there is a corporate responsibility for us all to support every child. Within our collaboration **every** teacher is a teacher of **every** child including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND).

This SEND policy details how we will do our best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs or disabilities and that those needs are known to all who are likely to work with them. We will ensure that teachers are able to identify and provide for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, allowing them to join in all school activities together with pupils who do not have special educational needs or disabilities. A key message in the code of practice is that teachers are at the centre of identifying, planning and delivering additional support for pupils. This is something we at Marlbrook, Wellington and St Martin's have always been committed to. Our teachers are the teachers of **ALL** the children in their care.

The Trust provides strategic leadership for SEND and inclusion, promoting consistency, quality assurance and the sharing of effective practice across all schools. The Trust's approach supports school leaders in ensuring that inclusive practice remains central to school improvement and pupil outcomes.

2. Our Aim

At Marlbrook, Wellington and St Martin's we want all pupils to be the best that they can be. We are committed to raising the aspirations of and expectations for all pupils with SEND. We expect the pupils themselves to play a full part in their own journey, developing the independence and learning behaviours that will help them to understand their own barriers and develop strategies with us to overcome them. We are fully committed to focusing on the outcomes for children with SEND and paving their way to successful lives beyond school and do not just focus on hours of provision and support.

The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs or disabilities of each child in order that they can achieve their learning potential and engage in activities alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- to request, monitor and respond to parents/carers and pupils' views in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership.
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process.

- to ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need, through well targeted continuing professional development.
- to support pupils with medical conditions so they are fully included in all school activities where possible by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals.
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of all staff in providing for children's special educational needs or disabilities.
- to make reasonable adjustments to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum.
- to work in cooperation and productive partnerships with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their potential.
- Support pupils with SEND to become confident individuals living fulfilling lives.

3. Our objectives-

- Identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities or additional needs.
- Work within the guidance provided by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to management and the provision of support for SEND.
- Provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who will work with this SEND policy.
- Provide support and advice for all staff working with special educational needs pupils.

4. Identifying special educational needs

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

Behaviour is no longer seen as a barrier to learning in isolation. In our Trust we welcome the drive, enshrined in the Code of Practice, to discover the underlying causes of poor behaviour and to tackle those with targeted support.

5. Areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

AREA OF NEED	
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 autistic often have needs that fall in 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 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is 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 as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.

AREA OF NEED	
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.

In our Trust, pupils are deemed to have special educational needs (SEN) if they are working two years below national expectations, have regular speech and language intervention(s), have a diagnosis or condition that impacts upon their learning or are receiving regular, timetabled pastoral support for behaviour that impacts upon their learning. These children may be offered additional support, through small group or 1:1 activities, in order to boost their skills level and confidence.

We believe in early intervention; therefore children who are not at expected levels academically but are less than two years behind will be placed on the 'additional educational needs register' (AEN). These children will receive targeted support, at the discretion of their teacher in order for them to make accelerated progress towards the expected level.

The school recognises that the needs of high achieving children should also be catered for and recognised as a 'special educational need'.

The purpose of recognising SEND is to work out what action the school needs to take to support them to become the best they can be. They are not identified so they can fit into a category but to enable teachers to work with pupils to develop their key strengths and weaknesses. When we identify pupils with SEN or AEN we consider the whole child and not just their difficulties.

When identifying pupils, it is also important to consider what is **NOT SEN** but may still have an impact on progress and attainment. This includes;

- Disability (The Code of Practice outlines a 'reasonable adjustments' duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislations – these alone however do not constitute SEN)
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an Additional Language
- Being in receipt of pupil premium grant
- Being a looked after child

- Being formerly a looked after child
- Being a child of a serviceman/woman

6. Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

The Trust recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some pupils with medical conditions may also have special educational needs and may have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs as well as their special educational provision.

At Marlbrook, Wellington and St Martin's we will strive to meet all the medical needs of pupils as directed by professionals, parents, carers and the pupils themselves. We will work in partnership with others to create and enabling environment in which pupils can thrive.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The SENCo

The SENCos at our schools are Mrs Priday (Lead SENCo based at Marlbrook), Mrs Kolosinski (Marlbrook) and Mrs Adams (St Martin's and Wellington).

They will:

- Work with the Headteacher and nominated Trustees to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND 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 liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- The Trust's schools will make full use of ordinarily available provision and reasonable adjustments to meet pupils' needs through a graduated response before considering the need for additional or specialist support.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- Ensure parents are informed that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made

- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the Headteacher and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the Headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the Headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

The Board of Trustees

The board of Trustees are responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Ensure provision of access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCo for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND

The Headteacher

The Headteachers will:

- Work with the SENCo and the trustees to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCo and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCo has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCo, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCo, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCo and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is adjusted to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- 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 consider 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 SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents 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 the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

In the Trust there are no specifically named SEND TAs – it is expected that all teaching assistants will have the experience and aptitude to support pupils with SEND to make progress. Their line managers are the Assistant Head Teachers. They meet regularly with the Lead TA to discuss any issues and to develop their expertise.

Other Responsibilities

- The designated staff members with specific safeguarding responsibility (DSLs) are Mrs Claire Gibson (Marlbrook), Miss Emma Blankley (Wellington) and Mrs Rachel Matthews (St Martin's) The member of staff responsible for managing the schools' Pupil Premium Grant are Mr Wilson (Marlbrook), Miss Blankley (Wellington) and Mrs Matthews (St-Martins).
- The members of staff responsible for the monies and provision for children who are looked after are Mr Wilson (Marlbrook) and Mrs Adams (St Martins' & Wellington)
- The members of staff responsible for managing the schools' responsibility for meeting the medical needs of pupils are the individual SENCos. Levels of responsibility have been delegated to lead first aid practitioners Mrs Sue Williams and Miss Jo Davies.

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 always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Informed termly about 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 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

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

Parents can refer to the Local Authorities Local Offer when investigating what is available to support their child in school and in the wider community. This information can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

8. SEN information report

The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

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

9. Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

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

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with adapted, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCo to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, may consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this 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.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

The Trust recognises the strong relationship between attendance, inclusion and pupil outcomes and will work collaboratively with families and external agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance for pupils with SEND.

10. Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

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

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

11. Early Years and In Year Transfers

The school will assess each child's current levels of attainment on entry in order to ensure that they build on the patterns of learning and experience already established during the child's pre-school years. If the child already has an identified special educational need or disability, this information may be transferred from other partners in their Early Years setting or school and the class teacher and SENCo will use this information to:

- Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum.
- Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class.
- Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties.
- Ensure ongoing observation and assessments provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning.

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs or disabilities of children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about a particular child, a teacher will look carefully at all aspects of the child's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems are due to limitations in their command of English or arises from special educational needs or disabilities. Advice may also be sought from the Advisory Teacher for Children with English as an additional language.

12. The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The pupil's class teacher, with the support of the SENCo as necessary will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. Plan

In consultation with the parents and the pupil and any relevant professional involved, the teacher and the SENCo will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed.

This information will be recorded on our management information system, Arbor and will be made accessible to staff in an individual education plan (IEP).

The IEP will set out clear outcomes to be achieved within an agreed time frame. It will name who is responsible for maintaining and updating the IEP. It will list teaching strategies to be used, the provision to be put in place and how the targets will help the child in their learning. It explains how pupils and parents/carers are involved in supporting the process. The IEP will also state if the child has a diagnosis of a condition, professionals who have been involved and if any extra funding is in place for them.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. Where ever possible support takes place in the child's classroom.

The SENCo will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

4. Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCo will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

At regular intervals any work done is monitored for impact. If successful in closing gaps the intervention will stop and the child will be removed from the register but closely monitored. If it is decided that more intervention work is needed the class teacher, after discussion with the SENCo, will then provide additional/further interventions. At this point the support of specialist agencies such as Educational Psychology; Speech and Language; Learning Support; Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy; CAMHS may be requested.

13. Levels of support

School-based SEN provision

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

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

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Reasons for a child being added to the SEND register may include the fact that he/she:

- Makes less than nationally expected progress, even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness.
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills which result in poor attainment. A child will be placed on the SEND register if they are working two years or more below nationally expected levels.
- Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not improved by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school.
- Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make below nationally expected levels of progress, despite the provision of specialist equipment.
- Has speech/language/communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make below nationally expected levels of progress.
- Has regular, timetabled pastoral support for behaviour that impacts upon their learning.

14. Inclusion Mainstream Funding

Each school within the Trust will be allocated an individual Mainstream Inclusion Funding (IMF) budget based on the needs of its pupils and local funding arrangements. Schools are responsible for ensuring that IMF is deployed strategically and effectively to improve inclusion and outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Each school will publish and annually review an IMF Strategy Statement which will outline how funding is allocated, the principles underpinning its use, the types of provision and support funded, and the arrangements for monitoring impact and value for money. The Strategy Statements will demonstrate how IMF contributes to inclusive practice, removes barriers to learning and supports pupils to achieve positive outcomes within their mainstream setting.

15. Education, health and care (EHC) plans

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

The decision to request an EHC plan will always be a collaborative one which will have the pupil and parents/carers at the centre. Our approach to this process is family-centred and focuses on working with all agencies to co-produce a plan that meets the needs and concerns of the parents/carers and pupil. The decision to apply for an EHC plan would have been a gradual one, built upon evidence and discussions throughout the time a child has been on the graduated response outlined in this policy. When the decision is made by family and school to request a plan the SENCo, parents/carers and pupil will fill in the request together. In Herefordshire this request will be in the form of a 'Family Conversation' form.

This will outline our joint concerns and desired outcomes for the pupil. The Local Authority will be given information about the child's progress over time, and will also receive documentation in relation to the child's special educational needs or disabilities and any other action taken to deal with those needs, including any resources or special arrangements put in place.

The evidence may include:

- Previous individual education plans and targets for the pupil.
- Records of regular reviews and their outcomes.
- Records of the child's health and medical history where appropriate.
- National Curriculum attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Education and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist support teacher or educational psychologist.
- Views of the child.
- Views of the parents/carers.

The parents/carers of any child who is referred for statutory assessment will be kept fully informed of the progress of the referral. The Local Authority are also committed to coproduction with families and will invite parents to participate at every stage of the process, including the drafting of the plan itself. Children with an education, health and care plan will be reviewed each term in addition to the statutory annual assessment. When this coincides with transfer to secondary school, the SENCo from the secondary school may be invited to the review and informed of its outcome.

16. Bullying

At Marlbrook, Wellington and St Martin's we take complaints of bullying of any kind very seriously and have an Anti-Bullying Policy, written in collaboration with pupils. This policy is designed to prevent bullying of all pupils including the most vulnerable. The school also

holds regular anti-bullying weeks where diversity is celebrated and positive attitudes to difference encouraged. The Trust's Student and Family Support team run self-esteem building programmes for vulnerable pupils.

17. Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

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

- Tracking pupils' progress
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Monitoring by the SENCo
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

18. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteacher and the SENCo will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

19. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

We have our own in-house speech and language team. The team consists of one part time speech and language therapist (SALT) and a full time speech and language therapy assistant (SALT-A). They play a valuable role in the identification, assessment and provision for children who have speech, language or communication difficulties. In the many cases our SALT team carry out interventions, but some children's speech and language interventions may be carried out by the class teaching assistant under the guidance of the SALT team. The SALT team provide relevant training to teaching assistants and teachers to support the children within their class.

The Student and Family Support team may be used to support pupils to break down more complex social and emotional barriers to learning. This team of professionals offer individualised support for pupils. There are team members in all of the schools offering 1-1 mentoring/counselling; self-esteem and anger management training; social skills groups and self-assertiveness training.

20. Admission arrangements

Our board of Trustees apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend our schools, we adhere to the guidance produced by Herefordshire Council related to admissions.

Full details of our oversubscription criteria and how we avoid unfairly disadvantaging prospective pupils with a disability or special educational needs can be found in our Admissions Statement.

21. Accessibility arrangements

Trustee boards have a duty to plan strategically to ensure that the schools are accessible to all pupils. To be fully accessible, we must ensure that all pupils, including those with a disability, are able to participate fully in the curriculum and other activities provided by the school. The physical environment should not limit pupils' ability to take advantage of the education and other opportunities afforded by the school, but we must also ensure equal access to the curriculum and the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils. We aim to ensure that the quality of the physical environment; the curriculum and information removes barriers to presence, participation and achievement.

For full details of how each school achieves this, please see each school's individual Accessibility Plan.

22. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The Trust is currently developing an Inclusion Strategy which will provide a clear framework for ensuring that all pupils are welcomed, valued and supported to participate fully in school life. Once implemented, the strategy will promote early identification of need, high-quality inclusive teaching and targeted support to remove barriers to learning. It will strengthen collaboration between schools, families and external agencies, helping to create a culture where individual strengths are recognised, diversity is celebrated and all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential. The Inclusion Strategy is currently being finalised and will be published by 31 December 2026.

Through all subjects we ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates

• need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

• providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy
• planning quality first teaching to develop children's understanding
• planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
• helping children to manage and develop their learning behaviour in order to take part in learning effectively and safely
• helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, in order to take part in learning

23. Storing and Managing Information

SEND information is stored according to the Trust's policies on E-Safety, GDPR and Information Technology which includes information on how long to store documents; when they should be destroyed, what should be kept and where. SEND information is also stored in accordance with the Trust's confidentiality policy.

24. Complaints about SEND provision

At Marlbrook, Wellington and St Martin's we aim to work effectively with parents and carers in all aspects of education. If a parent or carer has a complaint they should follow the procedure set out in the complaints policy.

Where parents 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 are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the SENCo or Headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. As appropriate this right also applies to the pupil 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 EducationCYPD@herefordshire.gov.uk

You can request mediation by contacting https://www.hwsendiass.co.uk/

25. Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out at the beginning of this policy.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

26. Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by Mrs Priday **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the full governing board.

27. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy

This policy should be read alongside the Trust Accessibility Plan, Equality Information and Objectives, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and all relevant safeguarding policies