

RLT Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

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Review period: Annually

Statutory: Yes

Required on website: Yes

Policy Document Version Control

Version 1

Responsibility for Policy:	Directors of Phase
Policy approval/date:	Spring term 2026
Frequency of Review:	Annual
Next Review date:	Spring term 2027
Related Policies:	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Equality statement Accessibility Plan / Equality Objectives Behaviour Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Attendance Policy Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy CEIAG Policy Admissions Policy Exclusions Policy Alternative Provision Policy Complaints Policy Data Protection / Privacy Policy Looked After Children Policy
Minor Revisions:	
Major changes	
Full re-write	This policy is new. It is an overarching RLT policy that ensures that our schools are compliant with all relevant related policies and current legislation. All processes will sit at school level.

1) Policy statement

The Rowan Learning Trust is committed to ensuring that all children/students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive a high-quality, inclusive education that enables them to thrive, achieve ambitious outcomes, and transition confidently to adulthood. This policy outlines the trust-wide principles that shape our provision and clarifies expectations for all staff and settings. While this document sets the strategic direction, the detailed operational guidance is located in the The Rowan Learning Trust SEND Procedures Handbook and in each school's SEND Information Report.

Our policy is underpinned by:

- a commitment to inclusive practice across the trust
- a belief that every child/student has the right to access high-quality teaching
- a requirement that all schools adhere to statutory duties under SEND legislation
- a shared commitment to working collaboratively with families, children/students and partners
- a drive to ensure that safeguarding is integral to every aspect of SEND provision

2) Legal and statutory framework (with pinpoint references)

We comply with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

This policy is grounded in the legislation that governs SEND practice nationally. The Rowan Learning Trust ensures that schools operate in full compliance with all statutory duties, including the following:

Children and Families Act 2014 – Part 3 (SEND and Disabilities), including:

- *Section 19*: Principles on views, wishes, and best outcomes
- *Section 20(1–2)*: Legal definition of Special Educational Needs
- *Section 21*: What constitutes special educational provision
- *Section 22*: Duty to identify children/students with SEND
- *Section 30*: Requirement to publish a Local Offer
- *Section 33*: Presumption of mainstream education
- *Sections 36–37*: EHC needs assessments and issuing of EHCPs
- *Section 42*: Duty to secure provision in an EHCP
- *Section 44*: Annual review of EHCPs
- *Section 66*: "Best endeavours" duty on schools
- *Section 67*: SEND Code of Practice
- *Section 69(2–3)*: SEN policy and SEN Information Report requirements

Other statutory duties include:

- *SEND Regulations 2014 (Reg. 51 & Schedule 1)* — Required content for SEN Information Reports
- *SEND Code of Practice (0–25)* — Statutory guidance issued under s.77
- *Equality Act 2010* — Including s.6, s.20, s.85, Schedule 10, and s.149 (PSED)
- *Children & Families Act 2014, s.100* — Supporting children/students with medical conditions
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)* — Multi-agency safeguarding requirements
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)* — Safeguarding duties in education
- *JCQ AARA 2025/26* — Exam access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

3) Scope and who this policy is for

This policy applies to all children/students and stakeholders across the trust. It sets expectations for inclusive practice in all schools and provides clarity on roles, responsibilities and statutory obligations at every level.

This policy applies to:

- all children/students aged 2–16 within Rowan Learning Trust schools
- parents, carers and families
- trustees and governors
- headteachers and senior leaders
- teachers and support staff
- specialist practitioners, external partners, and contractors

4) Definitions (for quick reference)

Understanding key definitions ensures consistent application of SEND expectations across all trust settings

Special Educational Needs (SEND)

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for provision that is *additional to or different from* that made for others of the same age.

A child/student has a learning difficulty if they:

- have significantly greater difficulty in learning than others the same age; or
- have a disability that prevents or hinders them from accessing educational facilities;
- require special educational provision as defined in *C&F Act 2014, s.20(1–2)* and s.21.

Disability (Equality Act 2010)

A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on normal daily activities.

This definition includes:

- sensory impairments
- long-term medical conditions
- neurodevelopmental differences
- conditions that significantly impact school access

5) Principles

Our work across the trust is guided by a shared set of principles that underpin all SEND provision.

We believe in:

- inclusive mainstream education for all where possible and appropriate
- high-quality teaching first, with targeted and specialist support layered as needed
- best endeavours in meeting every child/student's SEND needs
- co-production with families and children/students
- no discrimination, with proactive reasonable adjustments
- a strong safeguarding ethos, ensuring SEND children/students are protected and supported

6) Roles and responsibilities

High-quality SEND provision relies on clear expectations for all participants within the education system.

Trust Board

- monitor compliance with SEND legislation
- oversee strategy, resources, and impact
- approve SEND policies and ensure publication duties

Headteachers

- ensure statutory compliance, including "best endeavours"
- deploy staffing and resources effectively
- maintain oversight of teaching quality and SEND provision

SENCO (Qualified)

The SENCO must achieve the National Award for SEN Coordination or NPQ SENCO within 3 years of appointment.

- lead strategic implementation of the graduated approach
- coordinate individual provision and liaise with families
- manage referrals, assessments, reviews, and external agency involvement
- oversee training and capacity building of staff

All Teachers

- are responsible for the progress of every child/student they teach
- implement differentiated quality-first teaching
- use the APDR (Assess–Plan–Do–Review) cycle for children/students with needs
- work closely with support staff and specialists

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- works jointly with SENCO when safeguarding concerns intersect with SEND
- ensures KCSIE requirements are applied effectively to SEND cohorts

7) Identifying needs and assessing children/students (Graduated Approach)

The trust uses a structured, evidence-based process for identifying needs early and tailoring provision over time.

Our approach includes:

- universal screening for all new children/students
- ongoing monitoring of progress, behaviour, wellbeing and attainment
- teacher assessments informing early intervention
- use of the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle
- formal reviews with parents and children/students
- early involvement of specialists when needed (EP, SaLT, OT, CAMHS)

8) Deciding on “SEN Support” and exiting the SEND register

Children/students receiving SEN Support require provision beyond high-quality teaching.

SEN Support includes:

- targeted interventions based on assessed need
- personalised plans with clear outcomes
- strategies agreed with parents and children/students
- regular reviews of impact
- adaptations to teaching, resources and environment
- decisions to exit SEN Support when progress is secure and needs can be met universally

9) Requesting an EHC needs assessment and maintaining EHCPs

When children/students require substantial additional support that cannot be met through SEN Support alone, the trust follows the statutory assessment process.

This includes:

- SENCO initiating an EHC needs assessment request with family involvement
- LA-led assessment considering evidence from education, health, and care
- implementation of EHCP provision once issued
- statutory annual reviews (or earlier if required)
- ongoing monitoring to ensure full delivery of EHCP outcomes

10) Curriculum access, reasonable adjustments and accessibility

We ensure all children/students are able to access the curriculum equitably. Each school will maintain a **rolling three-year Accessibility Plan**, reviewed **annually** by the SENCO and senior leadership, with progress reported to the **Local Governing Body**.

We will:

- make reasonable adjustments proactively
- provide auxiliary aids and services as required
- adapt the curriculum and learning environment

Maintain a compliant Accessibility Plan covering curriculum, environment, and information access

- Implement supports such as:
 - scaffolded tasks
 - visual supports
 - personalised resources
 - assistive technology
 - sensory-friendly spaces
 - modified learning environments
 - adjustments—mirroring the practice already described in your three school policies

11) Child/student voice and parent/carer partnership

Co-production is central to our approach.

We commit to:

- listening to child/student views at every stage
- providing information in accessible ways
- involving families in decisions about support
- valuing parental expertise and lived experience
- ensuring transparent communication

12) Working with other agencies / multi-agency safeguarding

The Rowan Learning Trust recognises the importance of multi-agency collaboration in meeting complex needs.

We work with:

- health professionals (EPs, SaLT, OT, physio, mental health)
- local authority SEND teams
- social care and early help services
- voluntary and community partners
- specialist outreach professionals

13) Safeguarding

Children with SEND can be disproportionately vulnerable.

Therefore, we ensure:

- full compliance with KCSIE 2025
- joint working between DSL and SENCO
- early identification of safeguarding risks
- support for wellbeing, attendance and safety
- robust online safety practices

14) Supporting children/students with medical conditions

Healthcare needs must never be a barrier to education access.

Our provision includes:

- development of Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)
- staff training to meet medical needs safely
- close work with families and health teams
- ensuring children/students can access learning, trips and activities safely

15) Exams and access arrangements (secondary / KS2 tests as applicable)

We follow national standards for ensuring fair access to examinations.

This includes:

- applying the JCQ AARA framework consistently
- using evidence of “normal way of working”
- considering reasonable adjustments such as:
 - extra time
 - rest breaks
 - readers or reading software
 - scribes
 - assistive technology
 - modified papers

16) Training and expertise

The Rowan Learning Trust invests in continuous professional learning to build SEND capacity.

Training includes:

- SEND induction for all new staff
- regular CPD on specific needs and inclusive practice
- SENCO-led guidance and coaching
- specialist input where required
- training for teaching assistants tailored to intervention roles

17) Publication duties: SEN Information Report (separate, annual)

Every school must publish a compliant and annually updated SEN Information Report.

This must include:

- all statutory content from Reg. 51 & Schedule 1
- information about identification, support, provision and agencies
- contact details for the SENCO
- accessibility and admissions information
- links to the Local Offer
- review updates in-year where needed

Each school will publish on its website, and review at least annually:

- this trust SEND Policy
- its SEN Information Report, compliant with SEND Regulations 2014, Regulation 51 & Schedule 1
- its Accessibility Plan

The SEN Information Report must:

- link to the local authority local offer
- describe the school's contribution to the local offer
- be updated in-year when significant changes to SEND provision occur

18) Data protection and records

SEND records are handled with the highest regard for confidentiality.

We ensure:

- GDPR-compliant management of sensitive data
- secure sharing on a need-to-know basis
- clear transition arrangements when children/students move settings
- accurate and up-to-date recordkeeping

19) Transitions (within school, between schools, and phases)

We aim to make all transitions smooth and well-supported.

Transition support includes:

- enhanced planning for children/students with SEND
- sharing of documentation and child/student voice
- liaison between SENCOs across settings
- additional visits, resources and supports when needed

20) Monitoring impact, quality assurance and reporting

The Rowan Learning Trust ensures accountability for SEND outcomes at every level. Schools will maintain evidence of the graduated approach and reasonable adjustments, typically including Support Plans/IEPs, APDR review records, risk assessments, and where relevant IHPs/ICPs/PHPs/PEEPs. These artefacts will be quality-assured through trust SENCO networks and internal review.

This includes:

- tracking of wellbeing, attendance, progress and inclusion data
- regular SENCO reports to LGBs and the trust Board
- quality assurance activities such as learning walks and plan audits
- evaluation of interventions and APDR cycle
- annual policy review and improvement planning

21) Complaints

The Rowan Learning Trust is committed to resolving concerns promptly, fairly and in line with statutory expectations. If a parent, carer, child/student or external professional has a concern regarding SEND provision, the following applies:

- all concerns should be raised initially with the relevant school, normally with the SENCO or a senior leader, so that issues can be addressed at the earliest possible stage
- where a concern cannot be resolved informally, any formal complaint must follow the trust's Complaints Policy
- the Complaints Policy sets out the stages for handling concerns, the expected response times, and the escalation routes available

- complaints relating to the provision specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may also be referred to the Local Authority or taken through statutory SEND disagreement resolution or mediation routes where appropriate, but the trust's Complaints Policy should be followed in the first instance
- the trust will ensure that complainants are treated with respect, that complaints are considered without bias, and that outcomes are communicated clearly and within published timescales
- nothing in this section prevents parents or carers from seeking independent advice or support at any stage; however, the trust's internal process must be completed before any external escalation (where applicable)