Waterton Academy Trust

ACKWORTH MILL DAM

Ackworth Mill Dam

SEND Policy

2026–2027

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Introduction

This policy sets out our vision and aims for children with special educational needs and disability (SEND). At Waterton Academy Trust we believe that meeting every pupil's needs is a shared responsibility and we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

At Ackworth Mill Dam, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils are valued, respected and fully included in school life. We aim to identify needs as early as possible and to provide appropriate support through high-quality adaptive teaching, the graduated approach and effective partnership with pupils, parents, carers and relevant professionals.

We recognise that:

- Each child is an individual with his or her own particular educational needs;
- All pupils have the right to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, adapted to reflect their needs and with regard to continuity and progression;
- Learning experiences should encourage self-motivation and independence and focus on positive achievement;
- The nature of a child's SEND might be long or short term and in one or more areas;
- Our partnership with parents / carers is key to ensuring appropriate and effective SEND provision.
- All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs or disability. SEND is therefore a whole academy responsibility that requires a whole academy approach.
- There is an obligation to support our local partners in delivering quality SEND provision, and where possible as a trust we will endeavour to do so.

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and 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, 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'/trustees' 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

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Aims and Objectives

We will:

- Ensure SEND is a whole Trust/ academy responsibility requiring a whole trust/academy response;
- Identify, as early and accurately as possible, any pupils with additional needs and make appropriate provision in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice;
- Ensure all pupils receive a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum;
- Build partnerships between home and the academy and ensure pupils and their parents / carers are treated with respect and have their views taken into account;
- Liaise with other members of staff, governors and appropriate outside agencies in order to meet pupils' needs effectively;
- Ensure that pupils with SEND express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education where possible;
- Regularly assess and monitor pupil's progress to allow the relevant support and provision to be provided;
- Provide quality support and advice for all staff working with pupils with SEND;
- Ensure that all pupils with SEND make the best possible progress;
- Ensure that children with SEND are admitted into the academy in accordance with the whole academy admissions policy.

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability

The SEND Code of Practice states that a pupil has SEND 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 / academies.

Special educational provision is additional to, or different from, any provision made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools / academies. A child with a disability is covered by the SEND definition if they require special educational provision.

Pupils with SEND may need extra help or support because of a range of needs. These are defined under the SEND Code of Practice broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- Sensory and / or physical needs.

The 4 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.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant 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 on the autism spectrum 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: dyslexia, 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. The Trust recognises the close relationship between SEND and mental health needs. Where pupils present with emerging mental health difficulties, appropriate support and referrals will be considered through the graduated approach.
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 multisensory impairment • A physical impairment These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Responsibilities for SEND

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) at Ackworth Mill Dam is Mrs Coates. The SENDCO will:

- Work with the trust, Headteacher and SEND governor (or whole Academy Standards Committee (ASC), as appropriate) to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy in order to raise the achievements and accelerate the progress of pupils with SEND;
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND;
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with trust staff, parents / carers, and other agencies to ensure pupils with SEND receive effective support and high quality teaching;
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support;

- Advise on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively and efficiently;
- Work with trust staff, the Headteacher and ASC to ensure that the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- Ensure the academy keeps the records of all pupils with SEND maintained and up to date;
- Monitor the effectiveness of any special educational provision made and where necessary secure relevant services provision;
- Liaise with the trust, parents / carers, external agencies regularly to provide information on pupils' needs, provision and outcomes;
- Prepare and review information required by law to be published in relation to special educational needs provision.
- Meet the DSL regularly to review safeguarding for pupils with SEND, including CPOMS tags, plans, and pupil voice evidence.

The SEND governor (or whole ASC, as appropriate) will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at ASC meetings;
- Monitor the SEND provision within the academy and update the ASC on this;
- Assure the ASC that the school website publishes the SEN Information Report.

The Trust Board retains strategic responsibility for SEND across the Trust and receives regular reports regarding:

- outcomes for pupils with SEND
- attendance and exclusions
- EHCP numbers
- complaints relating to SEND
- effectiveness of provision

The Headteacher will:

- Work with the trust, SENCO and SEND governor (or whole ASC, as appropriate) to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the academy;
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of pupils with SEND.

Every teacher will:

- Take responsibility for ensuring the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those with SEND;
- Implement inclusive high quality teaching in their classroom;
- Work closely with any additional adults to assess, plan, do and review support and intervention for each pupil with SEND in their class;

- Work with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision;
- Set high academic and behavioural expectations for all pupils in their class, including those with SEND, and support them in achieving them.

Identifying Needs

Initial identification is in most cases either due to class teacher or parental / carer concern about a relative lack of progress or observations of social, (communication/ interaction), emotional, behavioural or physical difficulties. Evidence is gathered through the pupil's work, assessment data, classroom observations and through discussions with parents / carers, other professionals and the pupil.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with exploration of current needs through the completion of a needs analysis. This will help to create the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views of the pupil and their parents / carers. 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 we determine that something additional/ different is needed then a provision map- detailing targets and provision in place to meet these will be created.

At Ackworth Mill Dam Academy, provision for pupils receiving SEND Support is recorded and reviewed through a My Plan and provision map, which is reviewed at least termly in partnership with parents/carers and the pupil where appropriate.

Working in Partnership with Pupils and Parents / Carers

We will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents / carers when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will ensure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty;
- We take into account the parents' / carers' and pupils' views; • Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the pupil;
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record.

We will formally notify parents / carers when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEND support.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the class teacher or SENDCO at any time if they have concerns or wish to discuss their child's provision. Ackworth Mill Dam operates an open and supportive partnership with families and values regular communication.

The trust/academy will be transparent with all matters relating to a pupil's SEND provision. Parents / carers are also encouraged to work in partnership with the academy to support their child's learning needs.

The Graduated Approach

All Waterton Academies across the trust will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice:

Assess: We will ensure that we regularly assess all pupils' needs so that each pupil's progress and development is carefully tracked compared to their peers and national expectations. We will listen to the views and experience of parents / carers and the pupil. In some cases, we will draw on assessments and guidance from other education professionals e.g. Educational Psychologists (EPs) and from health and social services.

Plan: Where SEND support is required the teacher and SENCO will put together a plan outlining the provision to be put in place for the pupil as well as the expected impact on progress and outcome (this is a provision map). This will be done in partnership with the pupil and parents / carers and all staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the plan. This is known as SEN Support.

Do: The class teacher is responsible for the implementation of the plan and working with the pupil on a daily basis. The teacher will also liaise closely with teaching assistants or specialists who provide support set out in the plan and monitor the progress being made. The SENCO will provide support and guidance for the teacher.

Review: The impact of the plan will be reviewed each term by the teacher, SENCO, parent / carer and pupil. This will inform the planning of next steps.

The SENDCO works closely with class teachers, teaching assistants, parents/carers and external agencies to ensure provision is effectively planned, implemented and reviewed through the academy's graduated approach.

Requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments

For some pupils, the provision available through SEN Support may not be sufficient to meet their needs. It will then be necessary for the academy, parents and any external agencies already involved, to consider whether a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment may be

appropriate. This is known as an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. The purpose of the EHC needs assessment is to enable the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

Where a request for an EHC needs assessment is made to the local authority, the pupil will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the academy will have evidence gathered throughout the graduated approach highlighted above.

Further information about the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment process can be found via the local offer:

- Barnsley Synergy - Enquiry (servelec-synergy.com)
- Wakefield Wakefield SEND Local Offer | Wakefield SEND Local Offer (mylocaloffer.org)

Our Approach to Teaching Pupils with SEND

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High-quality adaptive teaching forms the foundation of provision for all pupils, including those with SEND. Adaptations are made to teaching, curriculum, resources and assessment to enable all pupils to access ambitious learning and achieve well.

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

- Adapting our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it;
- Adapting our resources and staffing;
- Using recommended aids and equipment;
- Adapting our classroom environments
- Adapting our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, preteaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud;
- Providing small group or, on occasions, 1 to 1 interventions to focus on key skills.

SEN Information Report

Each academy 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.

Working in Partnership with Other Professionals

We work with a range of external agencies to provide support for pupils with SEND. These services include, but are not limited to:

- 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

Expertise and Training of Staff

We expect our SENCOs to have the relevant experience necessary to carry out the SENCO role (see appendix for specific training / qualifications). In accordance with current statutory requirements, newly appointed SENCOs who have not previously held the role must achieve the mandatory National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs within the required timeframe.

The SENCO attends network meetings to share good practice with colleagues in the trust and to keep up to date with SEND developments.

Training needs of other staff are identified in response to the needs of pupils.
See appendix for the specific training and expertise of individual academy's staff.

The Head of SEND and Inclusion oversees all SEND across the trust and is responsible for the strategic vision of this and driving our provision forward.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of SEND Provision

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

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress and attainment each term;
- Reviewing the impact of interventions;
- Reviewing the quality of My Plans that are In place;

- Using pupil and parent / carer questionnaires to gain feedback;
- Monitoring by the SENCO;
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with Education, Health & Care plans.
- Annual SEND review of each academy by the Head of SEND and Inclusion;
- Regular meetings and visits by the Head of SEND and Inclusion.

Evaluation will also consider:

- attendance
- behaviour and exclusion data
- participation in wider curriculum opportunities
- pupil voice
- preparation for next stages of education

Admissions and Accessibility Arrangements

Each of our academies detail their admissions policy on their website and this is inline with their Local Authority. Academies will be sent a consultation for pupils with an EHCP as part of the Local Authority procedures and will respond to this.

Accessibility Plans are reviewed at least every three years in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Preparing for Adulthood and Transitions

The Trust will support effective transition between classes, key stages and educational settings. Information relating to a pupil's SEND needs, provision and successful strategies will be shared appropriately to ensure continuity of support.

Safeguarding children with SEND

We acknowledge that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable to abuse. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children such as:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- The Trust recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to online harms due to communication difficulties, social vulnerabilities or additional learning needs. Online safety education and safeguarding measures will be adapted where appropriate.

- Please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) for how the school/Trust aims to reduce these barriers in order to safeguard and protect children with SEND.

We therefore

- train all staff about the extra vulnerabilities of children with SEND, particularly those adults who are working in 1:1 or small group situations

- offer support for those staff working with children with SEND
- ensure that every child has a way of communicating their voice and that it is listened to and responded to
- closely monitor children with SEND through high vigilance of staff and the open ethos of the school
- offer pastoral support to children with SEND when monitoring has identified that they require this additional support
- ensure that every child in school knows that they can trust all adults in school and that they can communicate any worries they might have with any adult in school
- maintain positive, open and honest relationships and communication with parents/carers of children with SEND and ensure that opportunities for regular communication are used.

Attendance Responsibiities for Pupils with SEND

The Trust recognises that some pupils with SEND may experience barriers to attendance. Attendance data for pupils with SEND will be monitored closely and reasonable adjustments and support strategies will be considered where attendance difficulties relate to a pupil's identified needs.

Complaints About SEND Provision

We urge parents / carers with any concerns regarding the SEND policy or the provision made for their child to speak to the academy as soon as possible and, in the first instance, to the class teacher or the SENCO. If parents / carers feel their child's needs are still not being met they should make an appointment to see the Headteacher. If concerns are still unresolved parents / carers may wish to engage with Waterton's complaints procedure.

NB - any issue relating to statutory SEN assessments should be pursued with the relevant Local Authority and not via Waterton's Complaints policy.

If parents / carers require further advice / support, they should use the local Information, Advice and Support Service for Special Educational Needs and Disability SENDIASS:

- SENDIASS Barnsley About SENDIASS (barnsley.gov.uk)
- WESAIL SENDIASS Wakefield Wakefield WESAIL SENDIAS - Family Action

(family-action.org.uk)

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy is monitored by Waterton Academy Trust Board of Trustees and will be reviewed regularly.

Links with Other Policies and Documents

This policy links to the following Waterton Academy Trust/ Academy policies and documents:

- SEN Information Report;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Equality information and objectives;
- Behaviour policy;
- Teaching and learning policy.

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Version Control

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1	Feb 2024	L Thresh	New Policy
2	Sept 2025	L Thresh	p.11 added 'reviewing the quality of My Plans' and “Meet the DSL regularly to review safeguarding for pupils with SEND, including CPOMS tags, plans, and pupil voice evidence.” in relation to SENCO responsibilities.

3	Sept 2026	L Thresh	P.5 details added about the relationship between SEND and mental health needs P.7 added details about the Trust Board P.9 EHCP requests- amended opening sentence to reflect 'some pupils' rather than a minority. P.9 Improvement to language used around high quality teaching and adaptations used. P.10 Added detail about requirements for NPQ for SEN qualification P.11 added details about frequency of review for accessibility plans P.11 added details about the full range of evaluation measures P.11 Added preparing for Adulthood and Transitions section P.11 added information related to online safety and the increased vulnerability of pupils with SEND
			P.11 amended ref to KCSIE to reflect 2026 guidance P.12 Section added relating to attendance responsibilities
5	September 2026	Caroline Coates	Personalised to Ackworth Mill Dam