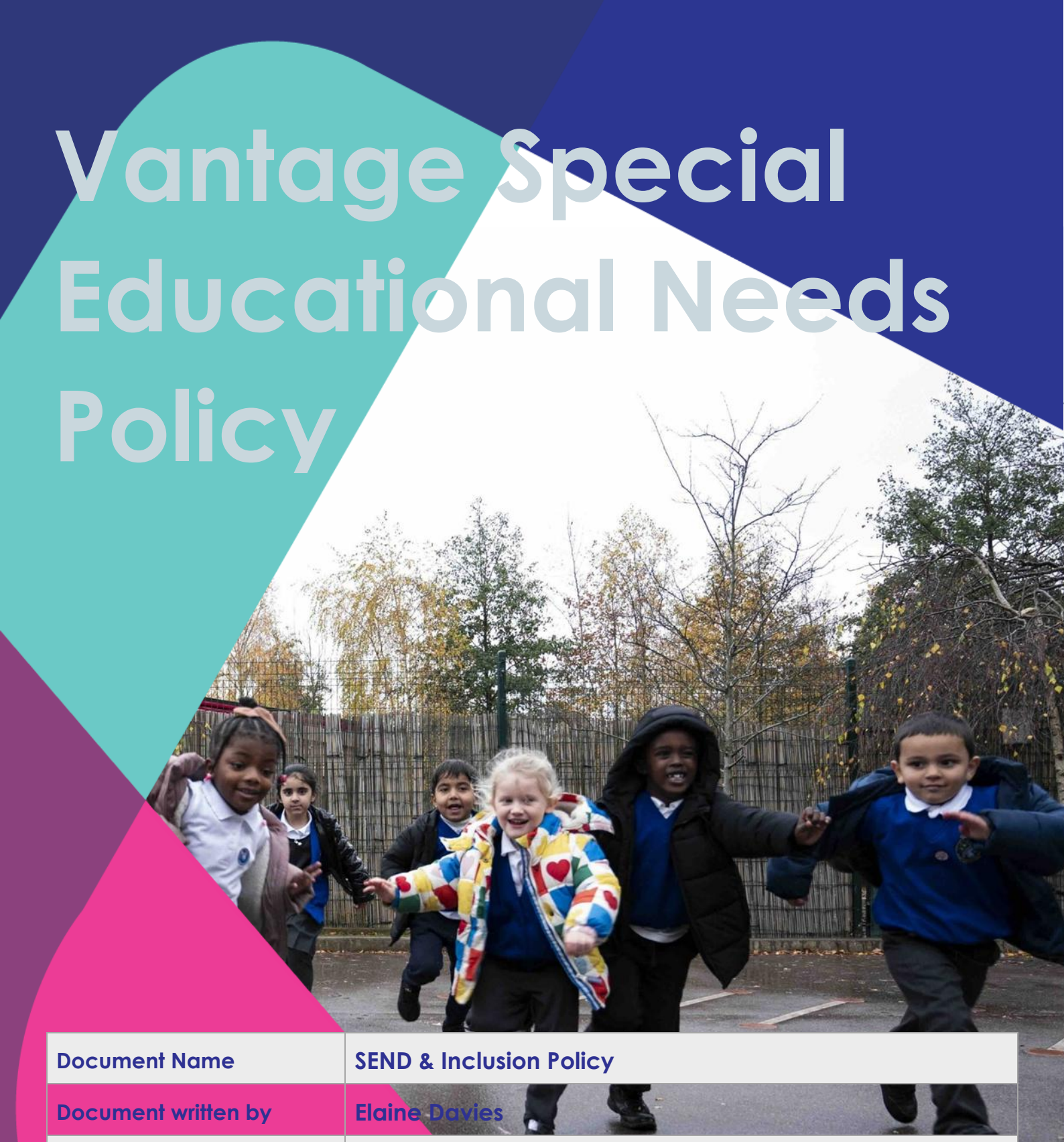
Vantage Special Educational Needs Policy



Document Name	SEND & Inclusion Policy
Document written by	Elaine Davies
Date for next revision*	July 2027
Responsibility	Trust Inclusion Lead
Approved by	Education & Standards Committee

Delivering educational excellence, together.

Vantage CE Academies

Contents

	Page No.
Statement of Intent	03
Legal Framework	03
Aims	04
Objectives	04
Roles and Responsibilities	05
Identifying Special Educational Needs	07
A Graduated Response to SEND	07
Admissions	08
Transitions	08
Supporting Pupils and Families	08
SEND Funding	09
EHC Assessments and Plan	09
Supporting Successful Preparation for Adulthood	09
Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions	10
Accessibility	10
Managing Complaints	11
Use of Data and Record Keeping	11
Joint Commissioning, Planning and Delivery	11
Monitoring and Review	11
Appendix 1	12
Appendix 2	14

Statement of Intent

This policy outlines the framework Vantage CE Academy Trust (herein the 'Trust') will use in meeting its duties, obligations and principal equality values in providing appropriate high-quality education for pupils and students with Special Educational Needs.

Trust SEND Vision
An inclusive environment where every child feels safe, valued and accepted, able to thrive as a confident, independent learner and grow into a well-rounded citizen of the future.

Trust SEND Mission
Through inclusive practice, high expectations, strong partnerships, and personalised support, we remove barriers to learning, nurture wellbeing and independence, and empower every child to reach their full potential.

The Trust will ensure that the following principles underpin this policy:

- The involvement of pupils, students and their parents in decision-making.
- The early identification of pupils' and students' needs and early intervention to support them.
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High- quality provision to meet the needs of pupils and students with SEND.
- Greater choice and control for pupils, students and their parents over their support.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

Though successful implementation of this policy, the Trust aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to the following:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled persons (services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The UK Geneal Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Care Act 2022
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2024

This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including but not limited to, the following:

- DFE (2015) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years
- DFE (2015) Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- DFE (2023) Working together to safeguard children 2023

- DFE (2018) Mental Health and wellbeing provisions in schools
- DFE (2021) School admission code
- DFE (2024) Keeping children safe in education 2024
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2015) Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils

This policy operates in conjunction with the following trust and school policies.

- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Pupil Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental health (SEMH) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Careers Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Accessibility Policy

Aims

- Raising the aspirations and expectations for all pupils and students with SEND.
- Ensuing that all pupils and students with SEND have a positive experience of learning and achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Ensuring all pupils and students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is ambitions and designed to give all learners the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- A curriculum which is designed, adapted or developed to be ambitious and meet the needs of pupils and students with SEND developing their knowledge, skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.
- Ensuring all pupils and students with SEND develop so that they can reach their full academic potential.

Objectives

- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- To provide each school with a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision.
- To identify, assess and meet the needs of pupils and students with SEND to ensure they meet their full potential by operating a 'whole pupil/ student, whole school's approach to the management and provision of support.
- To use best endeavours to ensure that pupils and students with SEND are offered full access to an ambitious curriculum in order develop intellectually, physically and emotionally at a pace suited to their needs.
- To ensure there is high quality provision to meet the needs of pupils and students with SEND, with specific focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- To ensure early identification for those pupils and students who may be disadvantaged or have additional needs or barriers to learning.

- To develop and maintain effective relationships with parents, carers and, as necessary, other professionals/ specialist services in deciding how best to support pupils and students with SEND.
- To prepare pupils and students with SEND for their next steps in education, employment and training, and their adult lives, including further/ higher education and employment, independent living, participating in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.
- To promote disability equality of opportunity, fulfilling the duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled pupils and students.
- Each school to review, prepare and publish important information about the school and its implementation of relevant SEND policies, including:
    - Accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access to the curriculum and the physical environment for pupils or students with SEND.
    - Information about the school's admission arrangements for pupils or students with SEND and the steps taken to prevent them from being treated less favourably than others.
    - A SEN Information Report about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils or students with SEND.
- Each school to use their best endeavours to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support they need to access the school's broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- Promote disability equality and equality of opportunity, fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled pupils.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

Roles & Responsibilities

Provision for pupils and students with SEND is a matter for the Trust as a whole.

The **Local Advisory Board (LAB)** for each school will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the SEND Policy is implemented fairly and consistently across the school.
- Ensuring the school meets its duties in relation to supporting pupils and students with SEND.
- Ensuring that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.

In enacting this policy, the **principal** for each school will:

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils and students with SEND.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils and students with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs of pupils and students with SEND, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to SEND code of practice.
- Work with the LAB to ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.
- Ensure the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

- Ensure the SENCO has completed either the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination or the National Professional Qualification for special Educational Needs Co-ordinators within three years of taking up post.
- Regularly and carefully reviewing the quality of teaching for pupils or students at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly discriminate against pupils and students with SEND.

The key responsibilities of the **SENCO** for each school include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy.
- Collaborating with the LAB, principal and SLT, to determine the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school.
- The co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils and students.
- Liaising with and providing professional guidance to colleagues.
- Advising on a graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' and students' needs effectively.
- Liaising with parents and carers or pupils and students with SEND.
- Contributing to the in-service training for all staff in relation to SEND.
- Liaising with external outside agencies including the LA's support, Educational Psychology Services, health and social services and voluntary bodies, as required.
- Liaising with potential future providers of education to ensure that pupils and students and their parents are informed about the options, and a smooth transition is planned.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of pupils and students with SEND up to date, in -line with the school's data protection policy.
- Working with the LAB and principal to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Being familiar with the provision in the authorities' Local Offer and being able to work with professionals who are providing support to the family.

Teachers will have the responsibility for:

- Identifying the strengths and needs for the pupils or students in their class.
- Planning and reviewing support for pupils or students with SEND on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO and, where appropriate the pupil or student themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil or student and aiming to teach a broad and balanced curriculum based on their needs.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure there are no barriers to every pupil or student achieving.
- Being accountable for the progress and development of the pupils or students in their classes.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided for any pupils or student with SEND that they are working with.
- Understanding and implementing strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils or students with the support of the SENCO.
- Keeping the relevant figures of authority up to date with any changes to behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

The Trust has a clear approach to identifying the needs of pupils and students with SEND with the emphasis being on early identification. Schools assess each pupil's or student's current skills and levels on entry, building on information from parents and carers, previous settings and outside agencies, where applicable to build up a picture of the whole pupil or student, not just their special educational needs and disability.

With the support of the SLT, teachers will conduct regular progress assessments for all pupils and students, with the aim of identifying pupils or students who are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 states a child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child or young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of others of the same age

OR

- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be considered as falling under four broad areas of need:

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

These four board areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for. The purpose of identification is to work out what action is required to ensure positive outcomes rather than fit a pupil or student into one of these categories. Pupils and students often have needs which cut across all areas and their needs may change over time.

The Trust recognises that there are several factors that may also impact on progress and attainment of pupils and students within our schools. These include:

- Disability, including some medical conditions (the Code of Practice outlines the 'reasonable adjustments' duty for all settlings and schools provided under current Disability Equality Legislation- these alone do not constitute SEND).
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked After Child
- Being a child of serviceman / woman

A Graduated Approach to SEND

The Trust is aware of its statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and recognises that high quality teaching, which is differentiated or adapted for individual pupils or students, is the first step in responding to pupils or students who have or may have SEND.

The Trust uses the graduated response to SEND Support which follows the; assess, plan, do, review cycle to identify and manage pupils and students with SEND. This enables earlier decisions and actions to be revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil or student's needs and what support they require to make good progress and secure good outcomes. The process is as follows:

- **Assess**: establishing a clear assessment of the pupil's or student's needs
- **Plan**: agreeing the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development on behaviour, along with a clear date for review
- **Do**: implementing the agreed interventions and support
- **Review**: analysing the effectiveness of the interventions and their impact on the pupil's or student's progress in line with the agreed review date

Where higher levels of need are identified, the school will access specialised assessments or support from external agencies and professionals.

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess, and meet the SEND need of the pupil or student, they have not made expected progress, the school, in consultation with parents and carers, will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment.

See Appendix 1- Vantage Graduated Approach Flowchart

Admissions

The schools within the Trust will ensure it meets its duties set under the DFE's 'Schools Admission Code'. Arrangements for the fair admissions of pupils or students with SEND are outlined in the school's Admission Policy which is published on the school's website.

Transitions

The Trust is aware of the importance of planning and preparing for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life.

Where pupils and students have an EHC plan, these will be reviewed prior to a pupil or student moving between key phases of education, to allow for planning for and, where necessary, commissioning of support and provision at the new setting.

Further information on transition between year groups and phases is detailed in the school's SEND information report.

Supporting Pupils & Families

The Trust values the contribution and support from parents and carers and recognises the importance of working with parents and carers to support pupils and students with additional needs.

The Trust is committed to working in partnership with all parents and carers in the best interest of their child and will provide an annual report for all parents and carers on their child's progress.

As part of the SEND Code Of Practice 2015, all local authorities must publish a local offer which outlines the provision which is available for children and young people in their local

areas. Details of each authority's Local Offer can be found on the school's SEND Information Report.

Each school within the Trust has a SEND Information Report which outlines the provision for SEND available at the school. This can be found on the school's website.

Each school with the Trust works closely with a variety of external agencies including Community paediatrics, CAMHs, Local Authority SEND and Inclusion Teams, Speech and language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, medical healthcare professionals, Educational Psychology Services, Sensory Support Services, Early Intervention Team and Social Services. This ensures that schools are able to provide or to signpost the best possible support for pupils or students and their families.

SEND Funding

Where additional pupil or student needs are identified the school will use its delegated funding allowance to provide early intervention support for the benefit of pupils and students identified with SEND.

Where pupils or students with SEND have been receiving early intervention support but are still not making sufficient progress, the school will consider accessing high needs top-up funding from the LA to provide additional specialist support.

EHC Needs Assessments & Plans

The Trust recognises that, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of a pupil or student, some pupils or students may not make the expected levels of progress. In these cases, the school will consult with parents and carers and consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

The purpose of the Education, Health and Care plan is to make special educational provision to meet the pupil's or student's SEND needs, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and prepare them for adulthood.

As part of the EHC needs assessment, the schools within the Trust will meet its duty by:

- Responding to any request for information as part of the EHCP needs assessment process within six weeks from the date of request, unless special exemptions apply as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.
- Providing the LA with any school- specific information and evidence about the pupil or student's profile and educational progress.
- Gathering any evidence received from relevant professionals regarding their education, health and care needs, desired outcomes, and any special education, health and care provision that may be required to meet identified needs and achieve desired outcomes.

Each school will ensure that the pupil's or student's progress is monitored during the year and a formal review of the EHC plan will be conducted at least annually.

Supporting Successful Preparation for Adulthood

The Trust is aware that being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for pupils and students with SEND. It recognises the importance of starting early, centring on pupil or student aspirations, interests and needs, and will ensure

that pupils and students are supported at developmentally appropriate levels to make a smooth transition to what they will be doing next, e.g. moving on to higher education.

The primary schools in the Trust will:

- Seek to understand the interests, strengths and motivation of pupils and use this as a basis for planning support around them.
- Support pupils so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school together with those who do not have SEND and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of school and in any wider community activity.
- Engage with secondary schools, as necessary, to help plan for any transitions.

The secondary schools in the Trust will:

- Ensure that the EHC plan review includes a focus on preparing for adulthood, with additional focus on transition and preparing from adulthood from year 9 onwards.
- Build transition planning into the revised EHC plan to identify appropriate post-16 pathways for higher education and employment, and support preparation for independent living, maintaining good health in adult life and participating in society.
- Seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations, and arts and sports groups, to help the young people understand what is available to them as they get older, and what is possible for them to achieve.
- Engage with FE providers as necessary to help plan for any transitions.
- Ensure young people from year 8 and year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance.

Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions

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

Some pupils and students may also have special educational needs and may have an Education, Health and Care Plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision.

For further information and guidance see the schools 'Supporting Children with Medical Needs' Policy.

Accessibility

All pupils and students across the trust have access to and participate in an inclusive and enriching curriculum with lots of opportunities to develop their social, emotional and cultural development alongside their academic development. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils and students can fully access their school's curriculum by making the necessary adjustments. This may involve the use of specialised equipment and resources, adaptive teaching and learning and/or close liaison with specialist outside agencies to help reduce any barriers to learning.

To enrich the curriculum each school offers a range of extracurricular clubs, events and educational trips. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils and students can fully participate in all aspects of school life.

Each school makes every effort to ensure that pupils and young people have as full access as possible to the physical environment.

For further information see the school's accessibility plan which has been written in compliance with paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Managing Complaints

As a Trust, we have policies in place that aim to resolve problems swiftly, fully and efficiently at the earliest opportunity. For more information see our Complaints Policy, which is on the Trust website, in addition to the websites of individual schools.

Use of Data & Record Keeping

All information about pupils and students in our schools will be kept in accordance with the Trust's Records Management Policy and Data Protection Policy.

The trust will adhere to the Pupil Confidentiality Policy at all times.

Joint Commissioning, Planning & Delivery

Schools within the Trust will work closely with local education, health and social care services to ensure pupils and students get the right support.

The schools will assist the LA in carrying out their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, by ensuring that services work together where this promotes children's and young peoples' well-being or improves the quality of special educational provision (Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

Each school will plan, deliver and monitor services against how well outcomes have been met, including, but not limited to:

- Improved educational progress and outcomes for pupils and students with SEND.
- Increasing the identification of pupils and students with SEND prior to school entry.

SEND support will be adapted and/or replaced depending on its effectiveness in achieving the agreed outcomes.

Monitoring & Review

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust Inclusion Lead in conjunction with the trustees; any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of the trust, parents of pupils and young people with SEND, and relevant stakeholders.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2027.

Appendix 1- Graduated Approach Flowchart

Appendix 1
Vantage Graduated Approach Flowchart



Below references from page 95 of Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years (July 2015) - Reference: DFE-00205-2013

"6.17 Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

	• *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* *6.18 It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life."*

Appendix 2- SENCO Contact List

School	SENCo	Contact Details
St James CE Primary School	Sophie Conville Sophie Nolan Jennie Schofield	stjoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
Gorton Primary School	Amelia Dennis Lauren O'Neill	gortonoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
St Barnabas CE Primary School	Chris Martin	stboffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
St Hilda's CE Primary School	Janine Thomas	sthoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
Willow Tree Primary School	Kerri Duck	wtpoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
Knowsley Lane Primary School	Emma Gibson	
SS Simon and Jude CE Primary School	Hannah Murphy/James Winteringham	sssjoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
St Augustine's CE Primary School	Laura Juniper	staoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
St Paul's CE Primary School	TBC Interim – Elaine Davies	stpoffice@vantageacademies.co.uk
Flixton Girl's School	Andrew Wexler	flixtongirls@vantageacdemies.co.uk