Connect Alliance Trust

Excellence - Collaboration - Respect

Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

Adopted by

Barlow Hall Primary School

Approved by:	Connect Alliance Trust Board	Date: 23.9.25
Last reviewed on:	9th September 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

Version Control Table

Version	Date	Author	Rationale/Summary of changes	Ratified Date
V1.1	09/09/25	Jayne Kennedy	New CAT policy	

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Connect Alliance Trust ensures they develop communities where everyone is given the opportunity to enjoy learning and achieve their full potential in an emotionally supportive, respectful and inclusive environment. We believe that every child should have access to a broad, balanced, relevant and adapted curriculum. This should take account of their individual learning and emotional needs and should allow each child to fulfill their potential.

1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Ensure our school fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our schools will:
    - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
    - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life, so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
    - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
    - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
    - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil.
    - Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND.
    - Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff
    - Identify children with SEND as early as possible. We endeavour to assess pupils as soon as possible after entry to school and via continuous assessment.
    - Consult with parents/carers to identify the strengths and the needs of the pupil, and agree on an education plan to build on the strengths and identify support.
    - Identify and use support that is available in school to provide the best value for money.
    - Refer the pupil to outside agencies where required and work together to support families.
    - Seek and consider the pupil's own views wherever possible.
    - Have a systematic approach to preparing pupils for adulthood.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) with day to day responsibility for the operation of the policy is located in each school.

There is a named Governor in each School Governing Board (SGB) with designated SEND responsibilities.

2. Vision and values

This policy outlines the framework for Connect Alliance Trust to meet its duty and obligation to provide a high quality education to all of its pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and to do everything it can to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. It is in accordance with **article 23** of the UN convention of the rights of the child: A pupil with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled pupils and their families.

3. Legislation and guidance

This 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, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and the special educational needs (SEND) 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

4. Inclusion, Accessibility and equal opportunities

In all our schools we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

The Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, places a duty on all schools to increase - over time - the accessibility of schools for disabled pupils and to implement their plans. Schools are required to produce written accessibility plans for their individual school and Local Authorities are under a duty to prepare accessibility strategies covering the maintained schools in their area.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires 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 most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other pupils or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

5.2 Disability

Many pupils who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '…a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more pupils than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Pupils with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled pupils and those with SEN. Where a disabled pupil requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

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

5.3 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	Educational communication and interaction difficulties refer to the challenges pupils face in understanding and using language, and in interacting with others in a learning environment. These difficulties manifest as challenges with expressing thoughts, understanding spoken information, using social communication rules, and developing relationships, and are often associated with but not limited to, conditions like autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or speech, language, and communication needs, Development Language Disorder (DLD) Examples of Specific Difficulties **Verbal and Non-Verbal Difficulties:** This can range from delayed speech and unusual intonation to a limited range of facial expressions or difficulty using eye gaze appropriately. **Literal Interpretation:** Some individuals may interpret language literally, missing nuances like metaphors or sarcasm, which affects their understanding. **Abstract Language and Inference:** Challenges in understanding abstract concepts, drawing inferences, and grasping emotional language can impair learning. **Social Vulnerability:** Difficulties in social situations can lead to withdrawal, social isolation, or emotional outbursts.
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 ● Emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) 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.

Attainment and progress that is less that expected, does not necessarily mean that a pupil has SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEND.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a pupil has SEND.

Identifying and assessing SEND for pupils whose first language is not English requires particular care; difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Connect AllianceTrust Board, in consultation with the Headteachers and Heads of School, have a legal responsibility for determining the policy and provision for pupils with special educational needs. It maintains a general overview and has an appointed representative who takes particular interest in this aspect of the school. Provision for pupils with SEND is the responsibility of each school.

6.1 The SENDCO

The SENDCO at our school is Lia Bolton.

They will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEND and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the Headteacher/Head of School and SEND governor 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 SEND, 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 SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support and differentiated 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
- Supporting class teachers in devising strategies, drawing up Individual Learning plans (ILPs), All About Me profiles, Communication and Individual Behaviour Plans
- Carrying out assessments and observations of pupils with specific learning problems
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEND and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner

- Work with the Headteacher/Head of School 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/Head of School, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Headteacher/Head of School, 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 SEND information report and any updates to this policy
- With the Headteacher/Head of School and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.2 The Trust Board and School Governing Board

The Trust Board and School Governing Board 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
- Ensure staff are providing pupils with SEND with the support they need.
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide 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 each school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEND information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils, the steps taken to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled pupils, and the school's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCO 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

6.3 The SEND link Trustee and Governor

The SEND link Trustee is Teresa Regan. The SEND link Governor is Matthew Williams.

The SEND Trustee and Governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at Trust board and School Governing Board (SGB) meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the Trust/School and update the Trust/ SGB on this
- Work with the Headteacher/Head of School and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

6.4 The Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher/Head of School will:

- Work with the SENDCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENDCO and school governing board 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 SENDCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- With the SENDCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENDCO, 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 SENDCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.5 Class Teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- Regular review the impact of these adjustments, interventions and support, including pupils with SEND in the classroom, through providing an appropriately adapted curriculum
- 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 SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEND 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

6.6 Teaching Assistants

Be fully aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEND

- use the school's procedure for giving feedback to teachers about pupils' progress
- work as part of a team with the SENDCO and the teachers supporting pupils' individual needs and ensuring inclusion of pupils with SEND within the class
- play an important role in implementing ILPs/All About Me/Communication plans/Behaviour Support plans and monitoring progress and will be involved in the assess, plan, do, review process. They should attend review meetings where appropriate.

6.7 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:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEND 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.

6.8 Pupils

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 or through other pupil voive activity as appropriate.
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

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

7. SEND information report

The school publishes a SEND 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.

8. Our approach to SEND support at Connect Alliance Trust schools

8.1 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 differentiated, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENDCO 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, consider consulting an external specialist.

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

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as the impact of bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEND 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 SEND
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

The school will then 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.

8.2 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 pupil
- 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.

8.3 The graduated approach to SEND support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEND, 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 and the SENDCO 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.

Where there is little or no improvement in the pupil''s progress, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENDCO will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

2. **Plan**

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENDCO 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, SIMs.

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

Plans should take into account the views of the pupil. The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed.

3. **Do**

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for pupil's progress. With support from the SENDCO, they should oversee the implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed as part of SEND support.

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**.**

The SENDCO 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 SENDCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents. Parents will be given clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority must review that plan as a minimum every twelve months.

In addition the school recognises that some pupils may experience additional behavioural, educational and social needs in response to external factors, for example, home circumstances. We endeavour to support our pupils at such times through appropriate referrals.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEND provision

Pupils receiving SEND 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.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEND 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.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

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

- Tracking pupils' progress, including the use of Insight and the BSquared assessment tool.

- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEND support
- Implementing measurable interventions
- Monitoring by the SENDCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

9. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The Headteacher/Head of School and the SENDCO 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.

10. 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)
- Children's Services

11. Admission arrangements

The school will ensure it meets its duties under the School Admissions Code by:

- Not refusing admission for a pupil that has named the school in their education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Considering applications from parents of pupils who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan.
- Not refusing admission for a pupil who has SEND but does not have an EHC plan because the school does not feel able to cater for those needs.
- Not refusing admission for a pupil on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan.

Connect Alliance Trust has a specialist resourced mainstream provision at Barlow Hall for up to seven pupils who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) for ASD and/or DLD. Although the Connect Alliance Trust is responsible for the teaching and learning of these seven pupils it does not control the admission of places to the provision. These decisions are made by the Local Authority which has a multi agency panel who meet to agree placements in the resourced mainstream provisions in Manchester.

12. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about the school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance, with the support of the Assistant Head if required. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents can then submit a formal complaint to the Headteacher/Head of School. All complaints will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy and procedure.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaints, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEND Code of Practice.

13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

13.1 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 in section 1.

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

13.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed **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 Trust Board and School Governing Board.

14. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEND information report
- The local offer, available on the school website.
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Intimate care policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding/child protection policy
- Complaints policy