Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy

This policy has been informed by the Statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; updated 1st May 2015

Version number	3.0
Applicable to	All Academies
Committee	Curriculum & Standards Policy & Scrutiny Committee
Date approved	5.10.26
Date approved by Trust Board	12.10.26
Review cycle	Annually
Date of next review	September 2027
Revisions since last version	See Review Appendix
Related policies	Anti-Bullying Policy CEIAG Procedure E-Safety Policy First Aid Procedures Intimate Care Policy Physical Restraint & Restrictive Intervention Policy Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Search & Confiscation Policy Supporting CYPs with Medical Conditions Policy Supporting Mental Health & Well-Being Advice

Contents

1. Vision 2
2. Values 3
3. Definition and Context 3
4. The Trust Core SENDV Team 5
5. Trust Governance 6
6. SEND: Areas of need 6
7. Principles 7
Appendix 1 10
8. APPROACH 10
9. SEN SUPPORT CYCLE 12
10. SEN INFORMATION REPORT 15
11. INCLUSION STRATEGY 16
12. OUTCOMES 17
13. Transition 18
14. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP 21
15. Revisions appendix 25

Note on terminology: Meridian Trust provides education at all ages and stages. For this reason, the term CYP (children and young people) will be used throughout this policy in reference to children, pupils and students. YP refers to post 16 young people. Trust means Meridian Trust, and School refers to individual settings.

1. Vision

All Meridian Trust staff will work collaboratively to create vibrant, successful centres of learning for those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) in the heart of their local community. Using their best endeavours, educational outcomes will be generated, through exciting, inclusive, forward thinking or research based methods, to enable aspirational opportunities for all CYPs.

2. Values

- Every CYP is a successful learner, confident individual and responsible and employable citizen.
- Our School is a hub for community activities, a centre for extended services and a source of immense pride for CYPs, their families and other local stakeholders.
- A School for all CYP, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, faith, creed, ability or special educational need and/or disability.
- Trust staff will strive for high levels of respect, openness, honesty, communication and collaboration with parents/carers, CYPs and other professionals, as together we strive for high levels of performance and recognise the contributions and achievements of others.
- Embedded within our School: the five core values of the Meridian Trust: **Valuing People**: Providing an inclusive, tolerant environment where differences are celebrated, individual learning needs are met, and all staff and CYPs feel known and supported.
- **High-Quality Learning Environment**: Equipping CYPs with strong academic, social, and technological skills inside engaging, well-disciplined, and modern spaces.
- **The Pursuit of Excellence**: Maintaining an academically rigorous approach that stretches all CYPs, drives continuous school improvement, and develops high aspirations.
- **Extending the Boundaries of Learning**: Enriching the educational journey through diverse, memorable experiences beyond traditional classrooms, fostering resilience and real-world skills.
- **Achievement for All**: Ensuring every CYP makes strong progress, removes personal barriers to learning, and reaches their maximum potential.

3. Definition and Context

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015) identifies the need to explore targeted support if a CYP:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- Has 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Special Educational Provision is educational provision or training which is additional to, or different from, that made generally for children and young people of the same age by mainstream schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or relevant early years providers.

Within the **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)**, the current statutory levels of support are SEN Support and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Across the Trust we have adopted a Four Wave Graduated Approach for the identification of need and the provision of targeted support for those with SEND. See Appendix 1.

The Government's 2026 Schools White Paper, *Every Child Achieving and Thriving, and SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First* set out a developing direction for SEND provision which places greater emphasis on early identification, inclusive mainstream practice, evidence-based intervention and support being provided at the earliest appropriate point, without unnecessary reliance on diagnosis or statutory assessment. The proposed national model describes Universal, Targeted (including Targeted Plus) and Specialist support, with Individual Support Plans proposed for children receiving Targeted or Specialist support and Specialist Provision Packages proposed for children and young people with the most complex needs. These reforms are being introduced and consulted upon in stages and do not currently replace the statutory framework within the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice. The Trust's Four Wave Graduated Approach is therefore intended both to meet existing statutory responsibilities and to support transition towards the emerging national approach to SEND and inclusion.

This developing national approach also reinforces that inclusion should not be considered solely through the identification of SEN. Schools should proactively identify and remove barriers to learning, participation, attendance, engagement and belonging, particularly where children and young people may be vulnerable, disadvantaged, have SEND or additional needs. Appropriate support should be considered early and should draw together educational, pastoral, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and wider professional support where required.

Under the Equality Act 2010, some CYPs with SEN may also have a disability that requires additional or different educational provision to be made for them. Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Within this definition, long-term means that the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months, and substantial means more than minor or trivial. The definition can include sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

The Trust will also have regard to current statutory and Department for Education guidance relating to attendance, children missing education, alternative provision, suspension and permanent exclusion and safeguarding, recognising the significant overlap between SEND, vulnerability, absence from education and risk of exclusion. Identification of need and decisions about support should therefore consider the child or young person holistically, rather than treating SEND, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding or vulnerability as separate issues.

4. The Trust Core SENDV Team

Meridian Trust's core SEND team provides strategic leadership, specialist expertise and practical support to strengthen inclusive practice across all Trust schools. The team works alongside school leaders and SENDCOs to support early identification of need, high-quality universal and targeted provision, effective use of resources and the development of specialist provision where required. It provides advice, challenge, training, quality assurance and opportunities to share best practice across the Trust, while also supporting schools with complex cases and engagement with local authorities and external agencies. The team helps ensure that SEND practice is consistent, evidence-informed and focused on improving belonging, participation, achievement and outcomes for children and young people.

5. Trust Governance

SEND governance is embedded within the Trust's wider accountability structure. Academy Councils (ACs) provide local oversight of SEND provision within their schools, including the quality of provision, pupil outcomes, use of resources and the experiences of children, young people and families. Key themes, risks and areas for development are reported through the Trust's committee structure, including the Curriculum and Standards Committee, providing assurance and challenge at Trust level. A designated Link Trustee for SEND provides additional scrutiny and maintains oversight of the Trust's strategic approach to SEND and inclusion. Trustees receive an annual SEND report, supported by appropriate in-year reporting, which brings together key information on provision, outcomes, statutory compliance, workforce development, specialist provision, resource use and priorities for improvement. This ensures that Trustees retain clear strategic oversight of SEND while maintaining an appropriate line of accountability from individual schools through to the Trust Board.

6. SEND: Areas of need

There are four broad areas of need, although the Trust recognises that a CYP's needs may fall into one or more categories.

1. **Communication and Interaction (C&I):** CYPs with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and/or Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have difficulty communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to (expressive), understanding what is being said to them (receptive) or they do not understand what is being said to them (cognition). They may not understand or use social rules of communication. CYP with Autism can have more prevalent difficulties with social interaction due to differences in their understanding and connections between language, communication and flexibility of thought, which then impacts on how they relate to others.
2. **Cognition and Learning (C&L):** A broad ranging group of learning difficulties including Dyslexia and Dyspraxia as Specific learning Difficulties (SPLD), Moderate learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) where CYP will need support in the

curriculum and may have associated mobility and communication difficulties, to those with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) where CYP have severe and complex learning difficulties with physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

3. **Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties**: CYP diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ADHD of the predominantly inattentive type or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Attachment Disorder may need additional support in the curriculum. Those with Mental Health Difficulties such as anxiety, depression, self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms, perhaps related to previous trauma, that are medically unexplained may also need additional or different support to access education.
4. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs (SI/PD)**: CYP with Hearing (HI) or Visual (VI) Impairment, or Multi- Sensory Impairment (MSI) may need additional specialist support or equipment to access the curriculum, or rehabilitation support. Some with physical disability (PD) may need additional and ongoing support to enable them to access opportunities available to their peers. SEN provision may be required as they have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making full use of educational facilities generally provided.

7. Principles

The Trust positively pursues the stated obligations within **The Equality Act 2010** and as such, for all CYP within the School diagnosed with a disability affecting their education, will:

- Not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled CYP and will actively encourage heightened awareness of potential discrimination.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services to ensure that disabled CYP are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. As an anticipatory duty, this requires advance planning for the needs of disabled CYP generally, as well as responding to individual circumstances. Reasonable

adjustments and support should not be dependent upon a formal diagnosis where a need or barrier has been identified.

- Have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled CYP, publishing information demonstrating compliance with this duty through specific and measurable objectives published and reviewed against the core aims of the duty.
- Make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services supported by a published accessibility plan showing how access to the curriculum, information and the physical environment for those with disabilities is to be increased over time.
- Through the Academy Council, publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled CYP, steps taken to avoid those with disabilities being treat less favourably and show how facilities through accessibility planning provide assistance.

In line with the direction set out in Every Child Achieving and Thriving (DfE, 2026) and SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First (DfE, 2026), the Trust will place inclusion and accessibility at the centre of its approach. Schools will seek to identify barriers early and plan proactively to remove or reduce them, ensuring that CYP can participate fully in learning, enrichment and the wider life of the school. Reasonable adjustments will form part of the school's graduated response to need and, as the proposed national SEND reforms are implemented, will be clearly recorded alongside identified barriers, provision and intended outcomes within relevant support planning.

The Trust positively pursues the principles underpinning the **2015 SEND Code of Practice** where Local Authorities must have regard to:

- The views, wishes and feelings of the CYP and their parents/carers
- The full participation of the CYP and their parents/carers in any decisions through accessible timely information and support as is necessary to enable them to participate in those decisions fully
- Any support the CYP and their parents/carers need in order to facilitate the development of the CYP and to help them achieve the

best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

The Trust employees, Trustees, Academy Councillors and wider community believe all CYP within the School are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress and through this that they are able to:

- Achieve their best.
- Become confident individuals, with the skills needed to live fulfilling lives
- Be supported to make successful transitions into adulthood, whether to employment, further or higher education or training.

Appendix 1

8. APPROACH

Assessment and Identification

The Trust will:

1. Use our best endeavours to make sure that all CYP with SEND get the support they need.
    - Ensure decisions are informed by insights of our parents/carers and CYP themselves.
    - Have high aspirations and set challenging targets for them
    - Track and monitor their progress towards individual goals
    - Keep under review the different or additional provision that is made for them
    - Promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development
    - Ensure that approaches are based on evidence and deliver impact

2. Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in order for those with SEND engage in the activities of the School alongside peers without SEND.
    - All CYP will access a broad and balanced curriculum, personalised in terms of their learning, progress, outcomes, character development and onward journey to future pathways.
    - All teachers will set high expectations through ambitious target setting, adaptive teaching to enable curriculum access for every CYP, regardless of prior attainment.
    - Assessment targets from prior attainment will be set centrally by the School according to the School's Assessment Policy and Trust Target Setting Policy where appropriate.
    - CYPs 16-19 will have met the entry criteria for the School and be enrolled on a program which is suitable and provides stretch and progression. CYPs will not be able to repeat learning already completed successfully.

- Alternative (Appropriate) Provision may be commissioned for CYP who face barriers to participation but only when other mainstream options have been exhausted.
- The School believes that in preparing CYPs for future life, developing a CYP's individual character and building skills from their starting points for successful adult life are important.
- CYP in the School will be encouraged to undertake wider enrichment activities including trips and visits through reasonable adjustments.

3. Designate a teacher responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision (SENDCO)
    - The SENDCO has the day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual CYPs with SEND, including those with EHC Plans.
    - The SENDCO will hold, or be working towards, the statutory SENDCO qualification and will be given sufficient time and resources to fulfil their responsibilities.
    - The SENDCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents/carers and other agencies to meet the needs of the CYP. They will be aware of provision in the Local Offer.
    - The SENDCO will advise the Headteacher and leadership on the deployment of the School's delegated budget and other resources to meet CYP need working alongside the Headteacher and Academy Council to ensure that the School meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

4. Inform parents/carers when we are making special educational provision for CYP.
    - The School will determine through assessment the levels of support required through the core offer or whether something alternative or different is required

- Parents/carers will be informed where the SENDCO or classroom teacher feel that concerns in progress may indicate that a CYP has a SEND

9. SEN SUPPORT CYCLE

The Trust acknowledges that CYPs that make slow progress and/or have low attainment do not necessarily have SEND. There are many factors that impact on progress and therefore it will not automatically lead to a CYP being recorded as such.

In addition, the Trust acknowledges that progress in line with chronological age data does not mean that there are no learning difficulties or disability. The impact of issues linked to Social Emotional and Mental Health such as bereavement, bullying or significant illness can impact on a CYP's wider educational development and progress. Teachers should monitor closely any changes and alert the SENDCO to potential learning difficulties. These should be discussed with House, pastoral, and safeguarding team staff where appropriate and provisions for example nurture group, social skills workshops, counselling or other wellbeing support, put in place in consultation with parents/carers and the CYP.

Waves of Intervention

- **Wave 1 -** The School believes that most-high incidence SEND can be supported in the classroom by the class teachers' quality first teaching and through their knowledge and the quality of their adaptive teaching strategies, assessed and monitored in line with their peer group. CYP are identified as Wave 1 when need is identified and planned support is put in place. Wave 1 provision underpins and surrounds all stages of support. Children and young people receiving support through Waves 2, 3 or 4 continue to access high-quality universal provision and reasonable adjustments alongside targeted or specialist interventions.
- **Wave 2 -** Where the CYP struggles to make progress, despite quality first teaching, further investigation is needed to put effective provision in place. This will take the form of a short- term intervention. A baseline will be taken before the intervention starts in order to ensure that

impact can be measured. Impact will be measured after 6-12 weeks and this will inform the next step. The outcomes of Wave 2 should be evaluated with the parents/carers CYP.

- **Wave 3** - A four-part cycle is formalised in order to document the CYP's needs, provision and progress **(APDR).** The APDR could be created by a range of staff.
    i. **Assess** - The CYP's needs will be explored to form a picture of the current position. External Agencies may be asked to support in this collection of information and the parent and CYP will be asked for their views.
    ii. **Plan** - The SENDCO will oversee the creation of the plan, involving the views of CYP, including strategies, for parents/carers and teachers to support the CYP in making satisfactory progress. Targets will be set and reviewed. The plan will be formalised and agreed in consultation with parents/carers.
    iii. **Do** - The subject teacher and Teaching Assistants or other support staff work together to enact the plan and assess the impact of the provision.
    iv. **Review** - The effectiveness of the provision and progress made will be reviewed and evaluated with the parent and CYP, ensuring that their voice is captured. This will then feed into the following possible next steps:

    i. If the CYP makes progress with their target, then it may inform a move back to Wave 2 or Wave 1, in consultation with parents.
    ii. If not already involved, specialists may be contacted for further advice eg Educational Psychologists, Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS), speech and language therapist-multi sensory needs, or visually/hearing impaired.
    iii. When the School has taken relevant and purposeful action and the CYP has not made expected progress then the School or parents/carers may make a referral for an Education Health and Care needs assessment.

- **Wave 4** - CYP receiving support at Wave 4 all have an EHCP. The SENDCO holds responsibility for ensuring appropriate provisions are in place and support is provided to meet the CYP's needs.
    i. The School will monitor and review the progress made by the CYP termly holding an Annual Review meeting including the parent, CYP (this might be before or during the formal meeting), a representative from the School, and inviting a Local Authority SEN officer, a health representative and Local Authority Social Care representative, where these are involved with the CYP.
    ii. Two weeks' notice will be given and information circulated on the progress made against outcomes will be discussed and new outcomes agreed where appropriate.
    iii. The School will send out a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting including any recommendations and amendments required to the EHC Plan.
    iv. Within four weeks of the meeting the Local Authority will decide whether it will keep the plan as is, amend the plan, or cease to maintain the plan. They will notify the CYP, the School or other institutions that attended the meeting of their decision.
    v. The Local Authority will notify the parents/carers or the CYP of their right to appeal, the time limits and the requirements for them to consider mediation including support and advice and disagreement resolution services should the EHC Plan not be amended.
    vi. Children in Care (CIC): It is important that the annual review of any EHC Plan of a CYP who also has a Personal Education Plan coincides. The School must work closely with other relevant professionals including the Virtual Schools Head and social worker to decide any review of educational provisions for the CYP.

The Waves of provision are fluid processes built on a cycle of interventions. A CYP moving into Wave 2 for assessment and planning may return to Wave 1 if the difficulties faced in accessing learning and making appropriate progress can be met with training, guidance and adaptation in the classroom through high-quality teaching. Those needing more specific

interventions moving to Wave 2 may undertake a targeted intervention of 6 weeks in length and return to Wave 1. Alternatively, the needs identified through the Wave 2 assessment process may be such that Wave 3 interventions, which include referrals to external agencies or similar, need to be sustained and progress may be slow or difficult to identify. An application may be started at this point, after at least two cycles of the APDR process with parental support for an EHC Plan.

CYPs that exhibit persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours, where ongoing concerns exist that are not resolved through quality first teaching strategies should be raised through the pastoral team or SENDCO. Where it is thought domestic circumstances may be contributing to the behaviour seen, evidence should be collated by those working directly with the CYP and discussed with the pastoral team. This may then be used to initiate an Early Help Assessment to be explored for accessing support.

10. SEN INFORMATION REPORT

The School will publish on its website the implementation for the policy for CYPs with SEND. This will be reviewed and updated annually and identify arrangements for meeting the Equality Act 2010.

Information includes:

- Kinds of SEND provided for
- A summary including SENDCO contact details, arrangements for consulting CYP with SEND and their parents/carers, for assessing and reviewing CYP's progress towards outcomes, transition arrangements, approaches to teaching those with SEND, the expertise and training of staff to meet the needs of those with SEND including how specialist support will be secured
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of provisions available
- Identification of how those with SEND are engaged in activities across the school and how these are adapted to ensure inclusivity
- Provision for improving emotional and social development, including pastoral support arrangements and prevention of bullying

- How other support bodies including Health and Social Care, Local Authority Services, voluntary organisations are involved in meeting the CYPs' needs with SEN and provides support for families
- Arrangements for handling complaints from parents / carers of CYP with SEND
- The Academies contribution to the Local Offer including information pointing to the Local Authorities Local Offer
- A member of the Governing Body as School Champion should be named
- Effectiveness of the use of resources and expertise should form part of the whole school monitoring and review processes and link into whole school improvement and development planning
- Progress of those with SEND should form part of the School review cycles with termly reviews of provisions for those on Waves 1-3 and an Annual Review for those on Wave 4.

11. INCLUSION STRATEGY

In addition to the SEN Information Report, mainstream Academies/Schools will publish an annual Inclusion Strategy Statement on their website in accordance with the Department for Education's Inclusive Mainstream Fund requirements. For the 2026/27 academic year, this must be published by 31 December 2026.

The Inclusion Strategy will set out the School's whole-school approach to inclusion, including:

- the commonly occurring and predictable needs within the School's cohort and the barriers to learning, participation, engagement and belonging experienced by CYPs with additional needs;
- the School's approach to ensuring high-quality ordinarily available and universal provision;
- how the School's overall resources for inclusion are used, including its core funding, notional SEN budget and Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF) allocation;
- the evidence-informed activities, interventions and approaches used to remove or reduce barriers and meet identified needs;

- how the School is developing inclusive practice across the seven principles/areas of inclusion identified by the Department for Education;
- planned investment and the budgeted costs of activities supported through the Inclusive Mainstream Fund;
- how the impact of the School's inclusion strategy and use of resources will be evaluated; and
- how the views and experiences of CYP, parents/carers and the wider school community have informed the development and review of the strategy.

The Inclusion Strategy will be scrutinised through School and Trust governance arrangements and will form part of the School's wider self-evaluation, improvement planning and review of inclusive practice.

The SEN Information Report and Inclusion Strategy should be read alongside one another. The SEN Information Report describes the School's statutory arrangements for identifying and meeting SEND, while the Inclusion Strategy sets these arrangements within the School's wider whole-school approach to identifying need early, strengthening universal provision and removing barriers to learning and participation for CYPs with SEND and additional needs.

12. OUTCOMES

Quality of Teaching and Learning

The School will ensure that the quality of teaching and learning for all CYPs including those with SEND will form part of the Academies performance management process and the professional development of staff.

- High quality teaching, assessment and review forms the norm across the School

- Provision that is different or additional is monitored and through the upskilling of teachers the number requiring provisions is reduced
- On-going high quality training is recognised and will form a clear element in training events

Progress

The School will review information collected on CYP with SEND at data collection and review points identifying any patterns and comparing these to National Data.

- Use of Data for identification: The School recognises the benefit of early intervention and targeted provision to improve long term outcomes for CYP. Assessment will be undertaken on entry for reading, spelling, writing and numeracy. Cognitive assessments will also be undertaken. Data will be scrutinised alongside KS2 data to inform teaching and set provisions as required.
- CYP who are identified as working below age related expectations will receive additional support with progress reviewed regularly to narrow the gap. Where the gap does not start to narrow or additional concerns are raised the SENDCO and their team will undertake further investigations. Evidence will be considered to see if a CYP may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments will be made. See Waves of intervention above.

13. Transition

Primary Phase

Primary settings work in close partnership with feeder preschools, nurseries and infant schools. There are opportunities for parents / carers to come and meet with the school SENDCO and parents / carers are encouraged to share information in advance where there may be a need for additional provision and SEND to be supported.

- Discussions with feeder settings/schools when at transition stage
- Annual Reviews in final year of preschool will be attended where appropriate to support transition

- Where there is a transition to a new setting between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the Year 2 Annual Review will be attended where appropriate to support transition
- Additional visits and discussions with parents / carers and the child will be explored and where needed further transition support during transition year will be included
- For those with an EHC Plan and where this is known in sufficient time interventions will be planned and in place for the first weeks
- Where an early years setting has identified a child as having a SEN and additional Wave 1-3 support this will be recorded by the primary school, shared with teaching staff and monitored across the first year. Needs will be evaluated and if sufficient progress is made the CYP removed from the SEN list
- Where progress is not as expected the class teacher in conversation with the SENDCO will discuss further assessment and Wave 2 interventions. The SENDCO will discuss these with parents / carers and the CYP beginning the APDR process as identified above

Secondary Phase

Secondary settings work in close partnership with their feeder primary schools. Parents/carers are encouraged through their primary school to agree to share information in advance where there may be a need for additional provision and SEND to be supported.

- Discussions with feeder settings/schools when at transition stage
- Annual Reviews in Year 5 and Year 6 will be attended where appropriate to support transition
- Additional visits and discussions with parents/carers and the child or young person will be explored and where needed further transition support during Year 6 will be included
- For those with an EHC Plan and where this is known in sufficient time interventions will be planned and in place for the first weeks.
- Where a primary school has identified a child as having a SEN and additional Wave 1-3 support this will be recorded by the secondary school, shared with teaching staff and monitored across the first year.

Needs will be evaluated and if sufficient progress is made the CYP removed from the SEN list.

- Where progress is not as expected the class teacher in conversation with the SENDCO will discuss further assessment and Wave 2 interventions. The SENDCO will discuss these with parents/carers and the CYP beginning the APDR process as identified above

Transition to Post 16 Education

The School works in partnership with post 16 providers. It will work to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of those with SEND and use this to plan support around them.

- The School will enable CYPs to explore the various post 16 options and the help that can be provided to get the SEN CYP to this point.
- In Year 10 more specific courses and providers will be explored including encouragement to attend taster days or visits as relevant. In year 11 CYPs and families will be supported to make a firm decision for post 16 and to familiarise themselves with the new setting.
- For post 16 YP with EHC Plans moving from the School to post 16 institutions or apprenticeships will have their plans and provisions reviewed at least five months before the move. Others will be reviewed at least three months before the March of the year of transfer.
- Where YP change their plans or do not meet the criteria for entry the plan must be reviewed and Local Authority informed as soon as possible.
- Under statutory guidance within the Autism Strategy, the SENDCO should inform the YP with Autism of their rights to a community care assessment and their parents/carers to a carers assessment. This should be built into the preparing for adulthood review meeting for those with an EHC Plan.

The School will ensure that as YP get older they will be increasingly involved in decision making about their future. The Trust recognises that after compulsory school age the right to make requests and decisions under the Children and Families Act 2015 applies to them directly, rather than their parents/carers. The School will continue to involve parents/carers wherever possible and appropriate whilst recognising the decision rests with the YP.

14. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Trust positively pursues the principles of coproduction. The School will ensure that it is working in partnership with the Local Authority, Education professionals, other education partners or relevant agencies whose support will be relevant in ensuring the ambitions of the CYP are fulfilled in relation to accessing Higher or Further Education/employment/apprenticeship, independent living, participation in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life. CYP and their parents/carers will be actively involved in identifying needs, agreeing outcomes, reviewing provision and informing future planning

From Year 9 and where relevant before, preparing for adulthood will be an explicit element of the conversations with CYP and their families.

- Careers education. The School will ensure that all CYPs between years 8-13, including those with SEND are provided with Careers advice (see Careers Policy). The School will ensure that it works to raise the career aspirations of those with SEND through this guidance and broadens their career employment horizons. CYPs will be guided to attend careers events, taster days, work experience, mentoring, enterprise experience, meet role models and inspiring speakers to support discussion and conversations around choices.
- The School will seek to work in partnership with other agencies such as employment services, colleges, post 16 providers, alternative education partners, housing agencies, disability organisations and other relevant agencies as required, to ensure that a YP has knowledge about and understands available support and opportunities as they get older.

Admissions

The child's parent or young person has the right to request the School in their EHC Plan. The Local Authority must comply with the preference unless it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the CYP, or 'others' meaning the CYP they will directly come into contact with on a regular day to day basis.

The Local Authority will consult the School in these circumstances and consider the comments made carefully before deciding to name it on the EHC Plan. The School will have 15 calendar days to respond. Where the School is named in the EHC Plan the CYP must be admitted.

Inclusion Bases

In line with the SEND reforms, Meridian Trust will begin using the following terminology:

Specialist Inclusion Base (SPIB) (previously known as Enhanced Resource Bases (ERB)/Additional Resource Provision (ARP)/ Hub, depending on local authority): Intensive specialist support for CYPs with significant needs which is formally commissioned by the Local Authority. This forms part of the Local Authority's planned specialist provision within mainstream schools. These provisions offer specialist support for an identified type or range of SEND and are funded through High Needs arrangements, including commissioned place funding and, where applicable, individual top-up funding.

The School will work in partnership with the commissioning Local Authority to ensure that commissioned places are used appropriately, that the provision continues to meet the identified needs for which it was established, and that staffing, specialist expertise, facilities and resources are sufficient to deliver the commissioned provision. The effectiveness and quality of the Specialist Inclusion Base will form part of the School's and Trust's arrangements for SEND monitoring, evaluation and improvement.

Support Inclusion Base (SUIB): Structured Targeted Plus support for CYPs with more complex needs which is funded by the school or trust. CYPs accessing this type of provision may have an EHCP.

General Learning Resource Area (GLRA): Flexible, needs-led support within the classroom or school setting.

CYPs accessing an Inclusion Base of any type remain part of the mainstream school community and should be enabled to participate in mainstream education, activities and the wider life of the School to the greatest extent appropriate to their individual needs. The balance between

specialist provision and access to mainstream teaching will be determined by the CYP's needs, outcomes and provision, including that specified within an Education, Health and Care Plan where applicable.

Appropriate/Alternative Provision (AP)

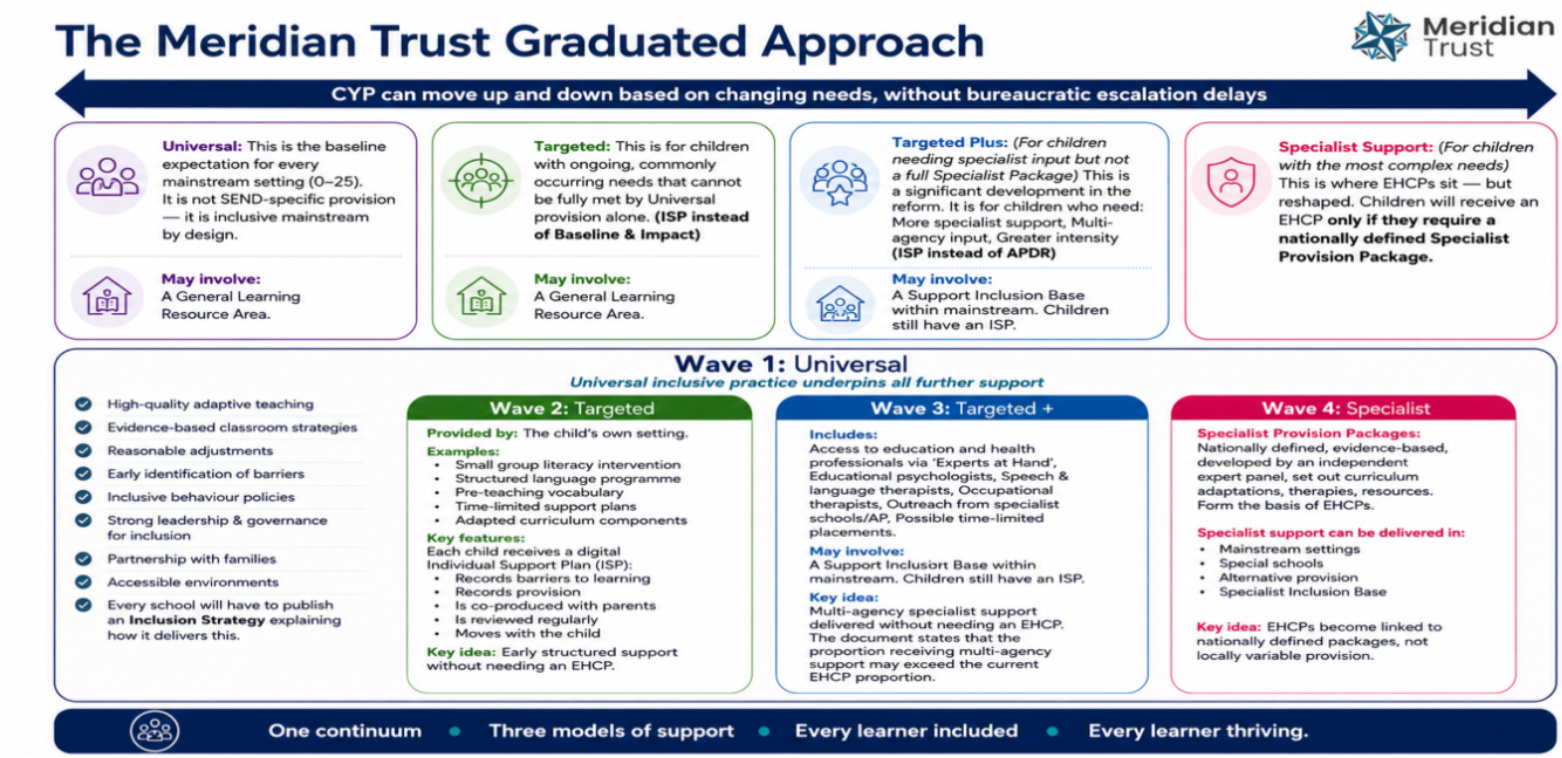
The Trust believe that AP stands for 'Appropriate', rather than 'Alternative' Provision as considering whether Provision is 'Appropriate' ensures that the needs of CYP are more likely to be met effectively.

When a CYP attends AP commissioned by a Meridian Trust school, the provision will be quality assured using the Meridian Trust AP Quality Assurance framework.

When a CYP attends AP commissioned by a Local Authority, Meridian Trust will request the quality assurance documentation held by the local authority, the School retains responsibility for safeguarding, attendance monitoring, educational progress and oversight of SEND provision. Placement suitability and impact will be reviewed regularly in partnership with parents/carers and providers.

Graduated Approach; Update SEND Reforms

Wave 1 underpins and surrounds waves 2, 3 and 4



15. Revisions appendix

Changes made since the previous version of this policy:

Definition & Context	Adds references to the Government's 2026 SEND reforms and explains how the Trust's Four-Wave model aligns with emerging national arrangements. Introduces stronger emphasis on inclusion, early identification and removing barriers to participation, attendance, engagement and belonging.
Principles	Strengthens inclusion expectations, including proactive removal of barriers and clarification that reasonable adjustments should not depend on formal diagnosis.
Assessment & Identification	Adds requirement for SENDCOs to hold or be working towards the statutory qualification and be provided with sufficient time and resources to fulfil the role
SEND Support Cycle / Waves of Intervention	Existing four-wave approach retained. Additional clarification that Wave 1 provision underpins and continues alongside all targeted and specialist support
Inclusion Strategy (New Section)	Introduces requirement for academies to publish an annual Inclusion Strategy, setting out barriers to learning, use of inclusion funding, planned activity, impact measures and governance oversight.
Inclusion Bases (New Section)	Introduces Trust-wide terminology for specialist and targeted provision, including Specialist Inclusion Bases (SPIB), Support Inclusion Bases (SUIB) and General Learning Resource Areas (GLRA)
Appropriate / Alternative Provision (New Section)	Introduces quality assurance expectations for commissioned Alternative Provision and clarifies School responsibilities for safeguarding, attendance, progress and SEND oversight