



The Island Learning Trust

TILT Policy for Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

March 2026

Vision

We exist to enable every child, **irrespective of ability, background or starting point**, to fulfil their potential:

To become the best learner, the best friend, the best citizen of the local and global community. We believe in inclusion and we believe in the power of education to transform young people's lives.

The Island Learning Trust has total commitment to improving the life chances and aspirations of pupils. We want our children to thrive, flourish, achieve highly, have dreams and aspirations, know who they are and know the person they want to be.

We have a responsibility to ensure that all pupils with SEND are provided with the education, experiences and skills to lead full and meaningful lives, without constraint or cap to their ambition.

There aren't children that come to learn and children that come to school to be looked after.

It is our duty to enable our young people by developing schools with an outstanding curriculum that empowers our youngsters to develop;

The knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to flourish, live well, build character, drive social mobility and make a positive contribution to their local community and the wider world.

Values

We provide stimulating and safe learning environments **where development as a person is as important as academic achievement**, we care about our young people and their families, driven by our strong moral values, **we are determined that every young person achieves highly** and demonstrate:

- Resilience; both personal and academic,
- Optimism; maintaining a can-do attitude and spirit
- Ambition; high expectations and work hard
- Responsibility; personal and collective responsibility.



1. Strategic Aims

At The Island Learning Trust, we are committed to building truly inclusive schools where every child is valued, supported, and empowered. We align our approach with the **Confederation of School Trusts' Five Principles for Inclusion,** which guides our thinking and practice across all settings:

1. Dignity, Not Deficit

We believe that difference and disability are natural aspects of human diversity. Our approach to SEND is rooted in dignity and high expectations—not deficit thinking or medicalisation. **Every child deserves to be seen for their strengths and potential.**

2. Greater Complexity Merits Greater Expertise

All children are entitled to a high-quality education. Where additional support is needed, it must be expert, evidence-informed, and tailored to the individual. We invest in professional development and specialist knowledge to meet complex needs effectively.

3. Different, But Not Apart

Inclusive education means learning together. Children with different learning needs should grow up alongside their peers, building mutual understanding and a more inclusive society. **We design our environment and practice to support shared experiences.**

4. Success in All Its Forms

We recognise and celebrate a wide range of achievements. Success is not one-size-fits-all—it includes academic progress, personal growth, social participation, and contributions to the community. **Every child's journey is unique and valued.**

5. Action at All Levels

Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. Change happens through leadership, collaboration, and grassroots action. From classroom practice to Trust-wide strategy, we empower all staff, pupils, and families to be agents of inclusive change.

6. Building a Network of Expertise

At The Island Learning Trust, we believe that collaboration is key to excellence in SEND education. We are committed to developing a Trust-wide network of expertise, where schools actively share knowledge, resources, and best practice.

In TILT schools, all pupils irrespective of need access a broad and balanced curriculum which is delivered through high quality inclusive teaching to enable every pupil to make progress and reach their full potential socially, emotionally and academically. When required to do so, we will make reasonable adjustments to support pupils with SEND. We set high expectations and aspirations for each individual pupil, working together with them, and their parents/carers to ensure that pupils with SEND become confident and independent young people who are able to successfully transition to the next phase of their education.

2. Legislation, Statutory Requirements and Statutory Guidance

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014 – Part 3: [Children And Families Act 2014 Part 3](#)
- Special Educational needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015:
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014: [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#)
- Equality Act 2010: [Equality Act 2010](#)
- School Admission Code 2021 [School Admission Code 2021](#)
- The School Information Regulations: Updated 24/10/24
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online>
- Governance in Academy Trusts 2025: [Governance in Academy Trusts](#)

This policy also takes account of the best practice outlined in HM Government SEND Review March 2022: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- TILT Strategic Plan 2023-2028
- TILT SEND Strategy
- Nurturing Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Accessibility Plans
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- School's SEND Information Report
- Complaints Policy
- Positive Handling Policy

This policy was developed with staff, parents/carers and the Trust Board, it will be reviewed annually.

Policy Reviewed:	March 2026
------------------	------------

3. Definitions

Definition of SEND:

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/her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

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

(SEN Code of Practice 2015 p.15)

Definition of Disability:

Many children and young people who have SEND may also 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 children 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. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is sufficient overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires a special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition’

(SEN Code of Practice 2015 p16)

4. The kinds of special educational needs for which provision is made within the Trust

At The Island Learning Trust we can make provision for every kind of frequently occurring special educational need without an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) or High Needs Funding; for instance speech, language and communication needs, physical, social, emotional and mental health, autism, ADHD, learning and behaviour difficulties, dyslexia and dyspraxia. There are other kinds of special educational needs which do not occur so frequently and with which the school is less familiar; these needs would require additional training and advice in order for us to meet them.

Each school also currently meets the needs of children with an Educational Health and Care Plan and/or High Needs Funding with the following kinds of special educational needs: Autism, ADHD, Tics and Tourettes, physical disability, speech, language and communication needs, specific and moderate learning difficulties.

Decisions on the admission of pupils with an EHC Plan are made by the Local Authority.

The admission arrangements for pupils without an EHC do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with a special educational need.

5. Information about the policy for identification of pupils with SEND

At each school within The Island Learning Trust we monitor the progress of all pupils at least three times a year (dependent on Ofsted rating) to review their academic progress. We also use a range of assessments with pupils at various points: Year R Baselines Assessments, Year 1 phonics screening; Speechlink; Language Link; Salford Reading Test and BOXALL Profile.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if a special educational need has not been identified, we put in extra support to enable the pupil to catch up (AEN). Examples of extra support are: precision teaching, Toe by Toe, Write from the Start, NESSY, Clever Fingers, IXL, Numicon, Clicker 8, Task boards, Individual Workstation/Timers/Individual Visual Timetable, social skills groups, Emotional 5-point Scales, Zones of Regulation/Colour Monster, 1:1 pastoral intervention, gap filling based on gap analysis, additional small group or 1:1 interventions to address a specific need.

Some pupils (SEND) may continue to make inadequate progress despite high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, we will use a range of assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty. At each school we are experienced in using the following assessment tools: Phonics screening, Accelerated Reader Assessments, Speechlink, Language Link, Dyslexia (GL Assess), Salford Reading Test and BOXALL Profile. We have access to external advisors who have a further range of assessment tools

(e.g. Specialist Teaching Service and a Private Speech and Language Therapist). The purpose of this more detailed assessment is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to support the child enabling them to make better progress. These will be shared with parents alongside Personalised Provision Plans which are reviewed regularly, being refined or revised as necessary. At this point we will have identified that the child has a special educational need due to the provision being made which is additional to and different from that which is normally available.

If the child is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the child as having a special educational need. If the child is able to make good progress without the continued support they will no longer be considered as having a special educational need. Parents will be notified of any changes.

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the child are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used.

6. Information about the Trust's policies for making provision for pupils with SEND with and without EHC Plans

Each review of the Personalised Plans will be informed by the views of the child, the parents and class teacher and the assessment information will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17) describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly below 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 rates of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

For pupils with or without an EHC plan or High Needs Funding there will be an annual review of the provision made for the child which will enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of the special provision. In addition the parent(s)/carer(s) will have the opportunity to meet with the SENDCo and Class Teacher/TA on at least two other occasions throughout each year.

7. The Island Learning Trust's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with SEND

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked at least three times a year (dependent on Ofsted rating), however, in addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments, depending on their need, of their reading age, spelling age etc. in the form of personalised plan reviews (these take place at least three times annually).

8. The Island Learning Trust's approach to teaching pupils with SEND

High quality teaching, adapted for individual pupils is the first step in responding to those who may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. We carefully and regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachieving. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and the SEND most frequently encountered. Each school employs some additional teaching approaches as advised by internal and external assessments such as one to one and small group teaching; precision teaching; software learning packages (Clicker 8, IXL, Accelerated Reader). These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as "notional SEND funding". At The Island Learning Trust we adapt the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with SEND. We also incorporate the advice given as the result of assessments, both internal and external and the provision described in EHC plans.

We follow the Mainstream Core Standards advice developed by Kent County Council to ensure that our teaching conforms to best practice. In meeting the Mainstream Core Standards each school employs some additional teaching approaches, as advised by internal and external assessments e.g. one to one reading /precision teaching, small group teaching, use of ICT software learning packages. These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as 'notional SEND funding'.

9. How The Island Learning Trust adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with SEND

At The Island Learning Trust we follow the advice in the Mainstream Core Standards on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in statements of special educational needs /Education, Health and Care Plans. As part of our requirement to keep the appropriateness of our curriculum

and learning environment under review subject leaders have been updating our curriculum and policies to ensure they are as inclusive as possible.

10. Additional support for learning that is available to pupils with SEND

As part of our budget we receive “notional SEND funding”. This funding is used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and different teaching for those pupils requiring SEND support. The amount of support required for each child will be different in each case and a full list of the interventions we can offer is on our provision map. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6,000 per year of resource for each pupil with high needs and above that amount the Local Authority should provide top up to the individual school, subject to approval by the SENDCo and Head of School. .

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at schools within The Island Learning Trust are available to pupils with SEND either with or without an EHCP. Where necessary the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to ensure the safe participation of the child in the activity.

11. Improving the emotional and social development of pupils with SEND

At The Island Learning Trust we understand that an important feature is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching such as PSHE and indirectly with every conversation adults have with children throughout the day. For some pupils, with the most needs for help in this area we can also provide access to both our Family Liaison Officer (FLO) and Pastoral Support Officer/Lead (PSO/PSL); social skills groups; anger management; bereavement and loss support and behaviour support. In addition, we fund access to an Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner for those KS2 pupils who require this. Pupils in the early stages of emotional and social development because of their SEND will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately. This will usually require additional and different resources, beyond that required by the majority of pupils.

12. Safeguarding challenges for SEND pupils (KCSIE 2025, paragraph 201-203):

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s condition without further exploration
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

13. Expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with SEND

All teachers and teaching assistants have had appropriate awareness training, e.g. - Restorative approach CPD and also where necessary Positive Handling Training. Where a training need is identified beyond this we will find a provider who is able to deliver it. Training providers we can approach are:

- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists

- Specialist teaching and learning service (STLS)

The cost of training is covered by the notional SEND funding.

14. How equipment and facilities to support children and young people with SEND will be secured

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the notional SEND funding, high needs funding or seek it by loan. For highly specialist communication equipment the school will seek the advice of the KCC Communication and Assistive Technology team.

15. Consultation and involvement of parents of children with SEND/AEN

All parents of pupils at schools within The Island Learning Trust are invited to discuss the progress of their children twice a year and receive a full and detailed written report at this time, with a further opportunity to discuss any concerns. In addition we are happy to arrange meetings outside of these times. As part of our normal teaching arrangements all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch up if progress monitoring shows this to be necessary; this will not mean the child has SEND. All such provision is recorded, tracked and reviewed on a class provision map, reviewed termly. If, following this normal provision, improvements are not seen we will contact parents to discuss the involvement of assessments which will help us to address these needs better. As a child, at this stage, is identified as having SEND, parents will be invited to planning and review of this provision. Parents will be encouraged to actively contribute to all assessment, planning and review. Parents of pupils with an EHC will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review which, whenever possible, will also include other agencies involved with the pupil.

In addition, The SENDCo and specific SEND parents run termly parent support group meetings. Invitations are sent to all parents of SEND and AEN (children who are up to 12 months behind their peers) children. These sessions are very informal and generally last for 1 hour on a particular day of the week convenient to that school. Parents make suggestions for topics for discussion e.g. Makaton, Speech and Language or Sleep and often outside professionals join the session.

16. Consultation and involvement of children with SEND

When a pupil has been identified as having SEND because special provision is being made for them, they will, where appropriate be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of child-centred planning. Their views are gathered and recorded on their SEND personalised plans or EHCP. For younger children parents are likely to play a more significant role with the child taking more responsibility as they get older.

17. Arrangements made by the Trust Board relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with SEND concerning the provision made at the school

The normal arrangements for dealing with complaints at The Island Learning Trust are used for complaints about the provision made for SEND at any of the three schools. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with the class teacher, SENDCo or Head of School to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Link Trustee. If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the Link Trustee a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contacted. If it remains unresolved the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an EHC plan where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall into this category cannot be investigated by the school.

18. Involvement of other agencies in meeting the needs of SEND pupils

- Early Help Service
- NHS Emotional Wellbeing Team (at Halfway Houses Primary and Minster Primary)
- A service level agreement with Rivermead for a Speech and Language Therapist (12 days at each school) and Occupational Therapy support (9 days at each school)
- Access to the NHS Speech & Language Service; Occupational Health & Physiotherapy Services via referrals.
- Ability to make ad hoc requests for advice from Communication and Assistive Technology Team, etc.

- Link to Disabled Children's Service for support to families for some pupils with high needs.

19. Information and Advice Support Kent (IASK)

IASK support families of children and young people (0 – 25 years) with special educational needs or disabilities. They hope to empower children/young people and their parents to make informed choices about their children's education, other outcomes and communicate confidently.

Their advice and support is confidential and impartial. They are not on anybody's side.

IASK is overseen by a steering group, half of which must be parents.

They also support schools in working with parents.

Helpline: 03000 41 3000 Email: iask@kent.gov.uk

Telephone Helpline open Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

20. Transition arrangements for pupils with SEND

TILT schools work closely with the educational settings to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6 as well as the pre-school settings attended by children before coming to any of our schools.

For any child already identified as having SEND before starting school a transition meeting is held for us to seek information about the child's difficulties and strategies that work. This will involve representatives from the school, the pre-school, parents and, usually, any other agencies involved with the child. We also contribute to ensuring a smooth transition for all SEND pupils to the secondary phase of their education through meetings, supporting documentation such as pupil profile sheets and, where necessary, additional visits.

21. Name and contact details for the School SENCos

The SENCo at Halfway Houses is Mrs Gemma Lewis, who is also Designated Teacher for CiC and Deputy DSL. She is a qualified teacher with a BA (Hons) Primary Education and National Award for SEN Co-ordination. She is available on 01795 662875 or by email hhsendco@tiltrust.org.

The SENCo at Minster Primary School is Mrs Bethan McIntosh who is also Designated Teacher for CiC and a Deputy DSL. She is a qualified teacher with a BA (Hons) Primary Education and National Award for SEN Co-ordination. Mrs McIntosh is available on 01795 872138 or by email at missenco@tiltrust.org.

The SENCo at Sunny Bank Primary is Miss Joanne Akrill who is also Designated Teacher for CiC and Deputy DSL. She is a qualified teacher with a BA (Hons) Primary Educations and National Award for SEN Co-ordination. She is available on 01795 473891 or can be emailed at jakrill@tiltrust.org.

22. Roles and Responsibilities

SENCO

All schools are required by law to have a named SENCO who is a qualified teacher and has been awarded the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (prior to September 2024) or The National Professional Qualification for SEND (from September 2024).

The SENCO has an important role to play with the head of school and Trust Board with regards to the strategic oversight and implementation of the SEN policy and development.

They will:

- Oversee the day-to-day responsibility and implementation of the SEND policy.
- Ensure all statutory requirements are adhered to throughout the year
- Co-ordinate provision for children with SEN using the graduated approach – Assess, Plan, Do, Review to review and monitor provision for all pupils with SEN.
- Communicate and provide all staff with the key SEN and medical information, advice, guidance, and strategies to support pupils with SEN ensuring high quality provision across the school/academy.
- Collaborate with teachers, support staff, parents and carers regarding all aspects of their child(ren)'s provision including interventions and outcomes.

- Offer professional guidance to staff to secure high quality inclusive provision in the classroom and throughout the school day.
- Collaborate with curriculum leaders to remove barriers to learning.
- Develop and lead whole school continued professional development to ensure high quality provision for all pupils with SEN.
- Liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after child or young person has SEN
- Liaise with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Be the key point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Ensure the school keeps up-to-date records of all pupils with SEN.
- Ensure any pupils who has a part time timetable is agreed with parent/carers, is registered on the KELS website and a clear re-integration strategy is planned in conjunction with the parent/carer and pupil.
- Hold status to have capacity and authority to make change.
- Ensure genuine coproduction and collaboration with the wider community.
- To keep up to date with key national and local SEN development.
- Attend key meetings organised by the local authority such as The Countywide SENCO Forum to ensure they have up-to-date strategic and operational information.
- Be fully involved in all aspects of transition planning whether phased or in year regarding pupils with SEND, following expectations set out in the District Plans and Kent Transition Charter. Ensuring parents/carers are fully informed throughout the transition period.
- Work closely with other colleagues and SENCOs in their Community of Schools.

The Head of School will:

- Work closely with the SENCO and SEN trustee to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision across the school.
- Work with the SENCO and Trust Board to ensure the school adheres to all legislative and statutory guidance keeping up to date with all key national and local policies and expected SEN practice.
- Ensure the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to effectively carry out their role.
- Work closely with the SENCO to carry out their duties employing the Graduated Approach, using their 'best endeavours' and when required making reasonable adjustments to ensure the school/academy is providing high quality SEN provision.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEN, their progress, and outcomes.
- Have the responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEN budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils or SEN provision for groups of pupils.

Teachers

All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs. Our SENCO(s) provide a vital strategic role and provide significant advice and support to teachers, but the responsibility for the learning and progress of all children lies with the teacher.

'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the starting point in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and SEN support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils, and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.'

(DfE/DoH SEND Code of Practice 2015: 25)

Every teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Instilling high aspirations for every pupil.
- Delivering a broad balanced curriculum embedding high-quality inclusive teaching strategies and resources
- Working closely with teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan, monitor, track and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be transitioned and embedded in the classroom.
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEN policy.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers should inform the school/academy if they have any concerns about their child's progress socially, physically, emotionally, or academically or if there are any changes to provision that have been advised by key external professionals working with their child following an appointment.

Parents/ carers are actively involved in all aspects of the decision-making process through meetings or agreed forms of communication and are afforded every opportunity to contribute discussions regarding their child's SEN provision.

The pupil

Seeking the voice of the pupil is an important aspect of ensuring the SEN provision is highly effective for every pupil with SEN. Pupils are given every opportunity to express their view and provide information to support review meetings as part of our Graduated Approach in year meetings and for pupils with an EHCP the statutory Annual Review. However, the voice of the pupil can be sought at any time throughout the school year.

23. The school will ensure that pupils, parents and carers have:

- Access to impartial information, advice and support throughout their time in the school/academy to help them make informed decisions and choices about their future.
- Are effectively supported to understand their rights and decision-making processes and choices regarding their plans and support.
- An understanding of their individual plans, outcomes, provision and support and the reasons why some changes may not be possible

24. Local Authority's Local Offer

The Local Authority's Local Offer will be signposted on the school website. Parents without internet access should contact the school SENDCo for support to gain the information they require.