



The Island Learning Trust

Policy for Inclusion and

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Approval Date: 06.07.26

Review Cycle: Annual

Next Review Date: July 2027

Applies to: All schools and staff within The Island Learning Trust (TILT)

Policy Statement

The Island Learning Trust (TILT) is committed to securing consistently high-quality provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). **We are determined to ensure that every child becomes the best learner, the best friend, the best citizen of the local and global community that they possibly can be.** The Trust is clear that SEND must not be a barrier to pupils achieving well, participating fully, or progressing successfully to the next stage of education, employment, or training.

Across all TILT schools, leaders set high expectations for pupils with SEND. All pupils are expected to access an ambitious curriculum, achieve strong outcomes from their starting points, and develop the knowledge, skills, and personal qualities required for adult life.

Inclusion is a fundamental principle of the Trust and is embedded across our values (*resilience, optimism, ambition, responsibility*), leadership, curriculum design, teaching, and wider school systems. The effectiveness of SEND provision is determined by its impact on pupils' progress, independence, and readiness for the future.

Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by and complies with the Children and Families Act (2014), the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the SEND Regulations (2014), the Equality Act (2010), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), and Governance in Academy Trusts (2025).

In addition, our approach is aligned with the Confederation of school Trusts' Five Principles for Inclusion as well as Governance in Academy Trusts, 2025.

The Trust ensures that statutory duties are met in full and that provision reflects current guidance. Leaders remain responsive to national developments and adapt practice where required and endeavour to work collaboratively with Kent County Council.

Principles and Culture of Inclusion

TILT expects all schools to demonstrate a strong culture of inclusion, underpinned by high expectations and a clear understanding that difference is part of normal human diversity.

Schools do not adopt deficit-based models. Instead, they focus on removing barriers to learning and enabling pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Provision is designed to promote independence, resilience, and long-term success.

Responsibility for SEND sits with all staff. It is not confined to the SENCo or specialist roles but is integral to quality first teaching and effective leadership at all levels.

Definitions

A pupil is identified as having SEND where a learning difficulty or disability requires special educational provision that is additional to or different from that normally available.

A disability is defined, under the Equality Act (2010), as a long-term physical or mental impairment that has a substantial impact on day-to-day activities. Schools meet their duty to make reasonable adjustments regardless of SEND status.

Identification and Assessment

All schools within TILT operate a rigorous approach to identifying SEND, rooted in ongoing assessment and responsive teaching. Leaders ensure that emerging needs are identified early and addressed promptly.

The Graduated Approach (Assess–Plan–Do–Review) is applied consistently. Decisions are informed by a secure evidence base, including progress and attainment data, teacher assessment, professional input, and the views of pupils and their families.

Support is not delayed while awaiting external diagnosis. Schools act swiftly to put appropriate provision in place.

Provision and SEND Support

Where pupils require SEND support, provision is clearly planned, implemented, and reviewed. Plans are precise, identifying need, provision, and intended outcomes.

Reviews take place at least termly and are focused on evaluating the impact of provision on pupils' progress and wider development. Where provision is not sufficiently effective, it is adapted without delay.

Pupils remain on the SEND register only where provision continues to be additional to or different from high-quality universal practice.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Schools fulfil their statutory responsibilities for pupils with EHCPs. Provision aligns closely with the specified outcomes and support detailed within each plan.

Annual reviews are completed within statutory timescales and are evaluative in nature, focusing on progress, appropriateness of provision, and next steps. Pupil and parent contributions are integral to the process.

Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

High-quality, adaptive teaching is the most important factor in securing good outcomes for pupils with SEND. Teachers are accountable for the progress of these pupils and are expected to plan and deliver teaching that meets their needs effectively.

Adaptation is purposeful and enables access to an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum. Expectations are not reduced and bespoke arrangements for education can be highly beneficial.

Additional interventions are used where appropriate. These are evidence-informed, time-limited, and aligned with classroom learning. Leaders evaluate their impact rigorously to ensure they contribute to improved outcomes.

Access and Inclusion

Pupils with SEND are supported to participate fully in all aspects of school life. This includes enrichment, educational visits, and extracurricular activities.

TILT uses a range of specialist ICT to improve access to and personalise learning, increase independence, support communication and boost confidence.

Leaders ensure that withdrawal from lessons is used only where it is demonstrably beneficial and does not compromise access to the full curriculum.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

Schools take a structured approach to supporting pupils' social, emotional, and mental health. Universal provision promotes wellbeing through strong relationships and an inclusive ethos. In addition, pupils within TILT benefit from specialist tools and approaches such as Boxall Profile, Nurture and Thrive. Provision aims to build resilience, independence, and self-regulation.

Safeguarding

Leaders recognise that pupils with SEND may be at increased risk of harm. The TILT Safeguarding Lead works closely with school leaders and DSLs to ensure safeguarding practice reflects this, with systems adapted to ensure vulnerabilities are understood and addressed.

Staff are trained to recognise communication differences and potential barriers. Leaders ensure that behaviour is not misattributed to SEND where it may indicate safeguarding concerns.

All concerns are acted upon promptly and in line with statutory guidance.

Leadership, Staffing and Expertise

Leaders prioritise SEND within school improvement. Each TILT SENCo has a clearly defined strategic and operational role and is given sufficient time and resources to be effective.

All staff receive appropriate training, and SEND is embedded within professional development. A developing SEND core offer ensures a consistent level of knowledge and competence across TILT plus additional training specific to the needs and context of each school.

The Trust actively builds expertise through collaboration across schools, both mainstream and special.

Funding and Resource Allocation

The CEO, CFO, Director of Inclusion and SEND work closely with leaders to utilise SEND funding strategically to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils, including the IMF. This includes investment in high-quality teaching, targeted interventions, and specialist support.

The impact of funding is monitored closely, and adjustments are made to ensure value and effectiveness.

Partnership with Parents and Pupils

Strong, constructive relationships with parents and pupils are a key feature of effective SEND provision and a great amount of this work is led by our Family Liaison Officers for each school. Schools communicate clearly and involve families in decision-making.

Pupil voice is actively sought and informs both planning and review. Concerns are addressed promptly, with an emphasis on early resolution.

Complaints

Complaints relating to SEND are managed in accordance with the Trust's complaints procedure. Parents retain their statutory rights to mediation and tribunal.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board provides strategic oversight, holding leaders to account for the quality and impact of SEND provision.

The Head of School is accountable for ensuring that provision is effective and that outcomes for pupils with SEND are strong. This includes ensuring appropriate SENCo capacity.

The SENCo leads the implementation of SEND provision, oversees assessment and review processes, supports staff, and coordinates external support.

Teachers are responsible for the progress, attainment, and wellbeing of pupils with SEND in their classes.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision through a range of indicators, including pupil progress and attainment, attendance, behaviour, and participation.

Evaluation is informed by first-hand evidence, including work scrutiny, lesson visits, and feedback from pupils and parents.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant, reflects best practice, and continues to drive improvement in outcomes for pupils with SEND