

East Midlands Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy 2020/2022

'Every child deserves to be the best they can be'

Scope: East Midlands Academy Trust & Academies within the Trust	
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Approval: July 2020	Next Review: July 2022 <i>This Policy will be reviewed every two years by Standard & Performance Committee</i>
Owner: East Midlands Academy Trust Board of Trustees	Union Status: Not Applicable

Policy type:	
Statutory	Replaces Academy's current policy

EMAT Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out our vision and aims for children with special educational needs and disability (SEND). At East Midlands Academy Trust (EMAT) we believe that meeting every pupil's needs is a shared responsibility and we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities.

At East Midlands Academy Trust, we are passionate about all pupils receiving the best possible education and reaching their full potential, in line with their individual needs and abilities. We endeavour to always provide a positive and nurturing environment whereby our pupils feel able to build upon their strengths and have the confidence to overcome their areas of development. We aim to identify and provide for pupils with SEND, focusing on the specific needs of the individual and endeavour to achieve maximum inclusion of all pupils. Our partnership with parents / carers is key to ensuring appropriate and effective SEND provision.

We aim to ensure that each pupil is fully included in all aspects of academy life. Fundamental to this aim is the belief that each pupil has a right to access a broad, balanced, relevant and ambitious curriculum appropriate to their individual needs, along with full access to all extra-curricular activities on offer.

2. Legislative Compliance

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the Trust ethos, enables consistency and quality across all academies. This policy complies with all statutory requirements and, in particular, is related to the following legislation:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

The trust also follows the statutory guidance within the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014).

As providers of education services to all children and young people, including those with SEND, EMAT academies contribute to the local authority SEND Local Offer. This is a resource which is designed to support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families. It describes the services and provision that are available both to those families that have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who do not have a plan, but still experience some form of special educational need. The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education,

health and social care, as well as those provided by the private, voluntary and community sectors. Further information about the local offer can be found here:

- Northamptonshire: <https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/SEND/local-offer>
- Milton Keynes: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/send-local-offer>

3. Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aims of our policy and practice are:

- To provide curriculum access for all.
- To secure high levels of achievement for all.
- To meet individual needs through a wide range of provision.
- To attain high levels of satisfaction and participation from pupils, parent/carers and ensure parents/carers and pupils are at the centre of all decisions.
- To carefully map provision for all vulnerable learners to ensure that staffing deployment, resource allocation and choice of intervention is leading to good learning outcomes.
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need, through well targeted continuing professional development.
- To work in co-operative and productive partnership with the Local Authority (LA) and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
- To “promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.” (National Curriculum, 2014).
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015.
- To operate a whole school approach to the management and provision of support for pupils with special educational needs.

This policy should be viewed in conjunction with East Midlands Academy Trust’s Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Pupils’ Mental Health Policy and Accessibility Policy. It will be reviewed annually and updated with amendments in light of national, local, Trust and academy changes.

4. Definition of special educational needs and disabilities

The SEND Code of Practice states that a pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for 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 the majority of 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 additional to, or different from, any provision made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools. A child with a disability is covered by the SEND definition if they require special educational provision.

Children with SEND may need extra help or support because of a range of needs. These are defined under the SEND Code of Practice broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- Sensory and / or physical needs.

Special Educational Need might be an explanation for delayed or slower progress but is not an excuse, and we make every effort to narrow the gap in attainment between vulnerable groups of learners and others. We focus on individual progress as the main indicator of success.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not considered a Special Education Need. Differentiated work and individual learning opportunities are provided for pupils who are learning EAL as part of our wider provision for vulnerable learners.

We strive to make a clear distinction between “underachievement” – often caused by a poor early experience of learning - and special educational needs. Some pupils in our academy may be underachieving but will not necessarily have a special educational need. It is our responsibility to spot this quickly and ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to help these pupils catch up.

Other pupils will genuinely have special educational needs and this may lead to lower-attainment (though not necessarily to under-achievement). It is our responsibility to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have the maximum opportunity to attain and make progress in line with their peers. Accurate assessment of need and carefully planned programmes, which address the root causes of any learning difficulty, are essential ingredients of success for these pupils. These will be provided, initially, through additional support funded from the devolved academies budget.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Headteacher

The principal has responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of the academy's work including provisions for pupils with special educational needs. The principal will appoint a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will work with the SEND Policy. The principal keeps the Governing Body (GB) informed whilst working closely with the academy's SENCO.

5.2 Local Advisory Board (LAB)

The Local Advisory Board must:

- Appoint a member of the GB with specific oversight for the academy's arrangements for SEN and disability. The governor with responsibility for SEND is responsible for reporting regularly to the Trust on the ongoing effectiveness of this policy.
- Do their best to secure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs.
- Secure that, where the 'responsible person' - the principal or the appropriate governor - has been informed that a pupil has special educational needs, these needs are made known to all who are likely to teach him or her.
- Ensure that teachers in the academy are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for, those pupils who have special educational needs.
- Consult the LA and the governing bodies of other schools and academies, when it seems to be necessary or desirable in the interests of co-ordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole.
- Report to parents/carers on the implementation of the academy's policy for pupils with special educational needs.
- Ensure that a pupil with special educational needs joins in the activities of the academy together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, so far as that is reasonable, practical and compatible with the learning needs of the pupil receiving the special educational provision.

(Section 317, Education Act 1996)

5.3 The SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for reporting regularly to the Principal, parents/carers and the governor with responsibility for SEND on the ongoing effectiveness of this policy.

The SENCO is responsible for determining the strategic development of the SEND Policy and provision within the academy. This involves the day- to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, and regularly reviewing interventions and adapting them accordingly to the needs of the individual.

The SENCO, with the support of the Principal, is responsible for providing support, advice and training for all staff working with pupils with special educational needs.

The SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the academy and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school or academy, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment.

5.6 Class Teachers

Within our trust, every teacher is a teacher of every pupil, including those with SEND, therefore we believe it is paramount to create an inclusive environment for all pupils within the educational setting. All teachers are therefore responsible for the progress and development of pupils in their class. Their role will involve identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with special educational needs, liaising with the SENCO as and when appropriate to the needs of the pupil. They are also responsible for completing relevant documentation and paperwork under the direction of the SENCO, including Provision Maps (or other similar academy-specific document).

All staff in school have a responsibility for maximising achievement and opportunity of vulnerable learners – specifically, all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs. Staff are aware of their responsibilities towards all vulnerable learners and a positive and sensitive attitude is shown towards all pupils at all times.

6. Identifying Special Educational Needs

In our academy, identification is a thorough process, involving the views of the teachers, parents/carers, SENCO and in some cases, where appropriate, external specialists. This ensures that all areas are considered in order to determine if the pupil has special educational needs or whether the impact on progress and attainment is as a result of other factors listed below:

- Disability
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- English as an Additional Language
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding
- Being a Looked after Child
- Being a child of a Serviceman/woman.

As a Trust we feel it is extremely important to consider not just the external presentation of behaviour as an area of need, but to look beyond this for an underlying reason. Information regarding the Trust's approach to behaviour can be viewed in East Midlands Academy Trust's Behaviour Policy. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN. Where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues. Persistent mental health difficulties may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. Academies should consider whether the child will benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN). Further guidance can be found in East Midlands Academy Trusts' Pupils' Mental Health Policy.

7. A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

We believe it is fundamental that all pupils achieve; the steps to achieving this, including the graduated approach to SEND support is described below. By adopting a graduated response the academy recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs that brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a pupil may be experiencing. See also Appendix 1.

Quality First Teaching

All pupils within the academy receive quality first teaching within the classroom under the responsibility of the class or subject teacher. The teacher is directly responsible for the progress and development of the pupils within their class and will adapt teaching strategies and approaches such as differentiation in order to ensure this for the pupils. This is the solid foundation for all pupils' learning whether additional

intervention or support is needed. We pride ourselves on the high quality of teaching and regularly review and update teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils.

Identification

Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed on a termly basis by the class teachers and overseen by members of the senior management and senior leadership team. Progress and attainment is shared with parents/carers throughout the academic year and there are regular opportunities for teachers and parents/carers to jointly review the pupil's learning.

If pupils are not making expected progress in line with their peers after an adapted curriculum and booster intervention, then their needs will be explored further to determine if there is an underlying special educational need that is affecting their progress and performance.

Pupils are identified as having SEND through a variety of different ways including:

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, teaching staff, previous schools or the young person themselves.
- Pupil progress and attainment data.
- A change in the pupil's behaviour or poor self-esteem which impacts on their learning.
- Liaison with external professionals.
- A medical diagnosis (where this impacts on their learning)

SEND Support and Managing Pupils' Needs on the SEND Register

If pupils are identified as having special educational needs, parents/carers will be formally advised of this and they will be placed on the SEND Register in school under SEND Support. Alongside the SENCO, the class teacher will then create an individual SEND Pupil Profile with the pupil and the parents/carers, which includes an individual Education Plan (or other similar academy-specific document). This details strategies of what helps the pupil with their learning, celebrates the pupil's strengths and details the desired long term and short term outcomes and the provision that will support the pupil in achieving these outcomes. The long term outcome looks at the long term aim or the individual pupil in relation to their area of need. The short term outcome then changes on a termly basis at the review stage in order to provide short term aims for the pupil, also in relation to their area of need.

This is part of the Assess/Plan/Do/Review approach suggested in the Code of Practice (2015). All stages of the process are conducted through discussion with both parents/carers and the pupils. This is an ongoing cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of the needs of the pupil grows. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions and strategies which are the most effective in supporting the pupil to achieve good progress and outcomes.

- **Assess:** The pupil's needs will be assessed, taking into consideration the needs of the whole child. It will identify the desired long term outcomes and aspirations, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and wishes of the pupil, teachers and parents/carers. This is then broken down into small step targets for the coming term, which are measurable, specific and achievable.
- **Plan:** An Individual Education Plan (or other similar academy-specific document) will be written for the pupil, describing the interventions that are additional to or different from that received by their peers within the same year group in order for them to meet the short term targets. Some of these may be conducted within the classroom and others may be in a small group outside the classroom.

This document will also include any intervention groups that the pupil will be part of that will take place outside the classroom. These plans are live records which are updated each term and annotated by the teacher in terms of the impact of the intervention throughout the term. These documents are the responsibility of the class teacher who records and evidences the progress according to the outcomes described on the SEND Pupil Profile.

The level of provision decided upon is individual to the pupil's needs and is provided through the academy notational SEN budget or through funding linked to their EHC Plan, where applicable.

Each individual intervention is also recorded on a Provision Map in order for the SENCO to keep an overall record of the additional intervention. This document details the clear aims behind the intervention and the starting point and reasoning behind its use. The interventions are the overall responsibility of the class teacher and are overseen by the SENCO. They are delivered either by teachers or teaching assistants within the academy.

Across the whole school, the SENCO will review the interventions taking place within each year group using the Provision Map. The impact of the intervention will be evidenced for the group in relation to the aims and assessment conducted at the beginning. The measure of impact and cost effectiveness will then be analysed. This information will inform subsequently interventions and provision.

- **Do:** The strategies and provision will be implemented by the teacher, teaching assistant, or where appropriate, other professionals. Allocation of intervention and provision is dependent on the pupil's particular needs and reflects a graduated approach that recognises the continuum of special need.
- **Review:** The impact of the interventions and provision will be reviewed against the short term targets on the plan by the teacher and will be discussed in a review meeting with the parents/carers and the pupil. The short term targets are also reviewed at this meeting and the Assess/Plan/Do/Review process restarts. The successes will be discussed and recorded. Any

interventions that have not been as successful for particular reasons will be discussed and addressed. Any new provision for the next term is also decided.

Occasionally a pupil or family may need more specialist support from an outside agency. If the advice of an external professional is required, parents'/carers' consent will initially be required for the needs of the pupil to be discussed at the termly Joint Planning Meeting. This will then trigger the involvement of the relevant professional.

8. High Needs Funding and Education, Health and Care Plans

If, after the involvement of specialist external support and the use of the academy's own provision arrangement, the academy is still unable to meet the needs of a pupil, the academy can apply to the local authority for extra funding from the High Needs Block. This will be applied for in full discussion and approval by the parents. The application includes details of the pupil's needs as well as demonstrating how advice given by external agencies has been implemented and the impact this has had. Evidence also has to be submitted showing the Plan/Do/Assess/Review cycle.

For a minority of pupils with very complex needs, their needs might be best met through an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Applying for an EHC Plan

A request for an EHC Plan will be made once support has already been put in place and the services available through the Local Offer. The academy will work in full co-production with the parents/carers throughout all stages of this process.

The decision to make a referral for an EHC Plan will be taken at a progress review. The application for an EHC Plan will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Pupil
- Parents/Carers
- Teachers and other school staff
- SENCO
- Education professionals
- Social Care, where appropriate
- Health professionals, where appropriate

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made by a group of people from education, health and social care about whether or not the pupil is eligible for an EHC Plan. Parents have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

The Issue of an EHC Plan

Following Statutory Assessment, an EHC Plan will be issued by the local authority, if it is decided that the pupil's needs are not able to be met by the support that is ordinarily available. The academy and the pupil's parents/carers will be fully involved in developing and producing the plan.

Parents/carers have the right to appeal against the content of the EHC Plan. They may also appeal against the academy named in the plan if it differs from their preferred choice.

Once the EHC Plan has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the pupil's formal record and reviewed at least annually by staff, parents/carers and the pupil. The annual review enables provision for the pupil to be evaluated and, where appropriate, for changes to be put in place, for example, reducing or increasing levels of support.

9. Criteria for exiting the SEND register

The SEND register is a document that changes and responds to the needs of the pupils within the academy. If a pupil has made good progress and they no longer have needs that are significantly different to those of the majority of others the same age of them, then a pupil may be removed from the SEND Register. Before this happens, a meeting will be set up with parents/carers to analyse successes and discuss the overall progress that the pupil has made. With an agreement between the parents/carers, pupil and teacher, the pupil then may be removed from the SEND register. The pupil's progress will continue to be monitored and tracked closely by the class teacher and Year Group Leader.

10. Supporting pupils and families

Working in partnerships with parents/carers

East Midlands Academy Trust believes that a close working relationship with parents/carers is vital in order to ensure:

- early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND leading to appropriate intervention and provision.
- continuing social and academic progress of pupils with SEN.
- personal and academic targets are set and met effectively.

In cases where more frequent regular contact with parents/carers is necessary, this will be arranged based on the individual pupil's needs. The SENCO may also signpost parents/carers of pupils with SEN to

the local authority SEND Information and Advice Service (SENDIAS) where specific advice, guidance and support can be sought.

Admission arrangements

Parents/carers are welcome to visit the academy and see it in operation at any time.

As an academy, East Midlands Academy Trust and not the local authority (LA), is responsible for the admission arrangements, however, the policy for the Trust is to follow the LA admissions arrangements. The LA will manage the admissions process in accordance with the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, details of which will be published by the LA.

Children with EHC Plans naming the academy will be given priority for admission at the normal entry point. Other admissions will be in accordance with the academy's Admissions Policy.

Access arrangements

In order to support pupils with SEND in statutory assessments within the academy, the SENCO, considers appropriate access arrangements in the academy in consultation with teachers and parents/carers.

A small number of pupils may need additional arrangements so they can take part in statutory tests and assessments. Access arrangements must be considered before the tests are administered.

Access arrangements should be based primarily on normal classroom practice for pupils with particular needs. They must never provide an unfair advantage; the support given must not change the test questions and the answers must be the pupil's own.

Access arrangements may be appropriate for a pupil:

- with an Education Health and Care Plan
- for whom provision is being made in the academy using the SEND Support system aspect of the SEND Code of Practice and whose learning difficulty or disability significantly affects their ability to access the tests;
- who requires alternative access arrangements because of a disability e.g. if they are unable to sit and work for a long period because of a disability or because of social, emotional or mental health difficulties.

Transition

The relevant class teachers liaise with the feeder schools/nurseries; the SENCO also meets with the SENCO from the main feeder schools/nurseries for a complete transfer of information. They also attend any review meeting that is deemed relevant by the feeder school, thus ensuring that the needs of all

pupils can be met immediately on entry to the school/nursery. Information will be passed on to the academy prior to the end of term, therefore ensuring the pupil's SEND file is set up. Extra SEND visits are also arranged for higher level needs pupils in addition to the main transition days. This provides further opportunities for familiarisation with the academy layout and routines as well as also meeting key members of the Inclusion Team and if possible any staff that will be supporting them in the upcoming academic year. If further transition opportunities are needed, an individual transition plan will be designed for pupils to meet their needs in conjunction with parents/carers and feeder schools/nurseries.

Similarly, with pupils who are leaving the academy to transition to a new school or their secondary school, a full hand over of information is completed. All pupils with an Education Health Care Plan will have a transfer review to ensure placement in secondary school is best to meet their needs. Meetings are also arranged with the SENCO from the secondary school to ensure best practice is shared and that schools are fully informed about the pupil's needs. These meetings will be arranged for any pupils needing extra support during the transition process. Both parents/carers and pupils are invited to contribute to these meetings. Additional transition days are offered by a number of secondary schools and visits from staff at these schools are welcome with flexible transition plans devised in conjunction with the SENCO from the next school and parents/carers.

11. Supporting pupils at the academy with medical conditions

Most pupils at some time have a medical condition, which could affect their participation in academy activities. This may be a short term situation or a long term medical condition which, if not properly managed, could limit their access to education. The Governing Body and staff wish to ensure that pupils with medical needs receive care and support in our academy. We firmly believe pupils should not be denied access to a broad and balanced curriculum simply because they are on medication or need medical support, nor should they be denied access to the academy or other activities.

Information regarding how pupils with medical conditions are specifically supported is detailed in the Trust's Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy.

12. Monitoring and evaluation of SEND

In order to make consistent continuous progress in relation to SEND provision the academy encourages feedback from staff, parents/carers and pupils throughout the year. This is done in the form of an annual parent/carer and pupil questionnaire, discussion and progress meetings with parents.

SENCOs will monitor the progress of their SEND Development Plan in line with the academy school improvement and evaluation cycle.

13. Accessibility

(Reference should also be made to the East Midlands Academy Trust Accessibility Policy)

We aim to be an inclusive academy and we actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our pupils, and this, of course, includes pupils with disabilities.

We will endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the academy, within the limits of the resources available.

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We endeavour to plan our out-of-school activities and trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We seek to respond to guidance from the parents/carers and pupils. We also welcome the advice from external agencies such as Specialist Teachers, Physiotherapists and Occupational Health.

Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about academy events) will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user friendly if required.

14. Complaints

In our academy we endeavour to put the needs of the pupils first. Parents/carers are positively encouraged to come into the academy to talk about any aspect of their child's education; initial contact is usually made through the child's class teacher, and in the vast majority of cases, concerns or anxieties can usually be resolved at this stage.

However, if this fails and a parent wishes to make a formal complaint, East Midlands Academy Trust Complaints Policy details the necessary procedures and stages in the formal complaints procedure.

Any issue relating to statutory SEN assessments should be pursued with the relevant Local Authority.

15. Safeguarding

Safeguarding and child protection is paramount and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our pupils. We believe that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for

signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

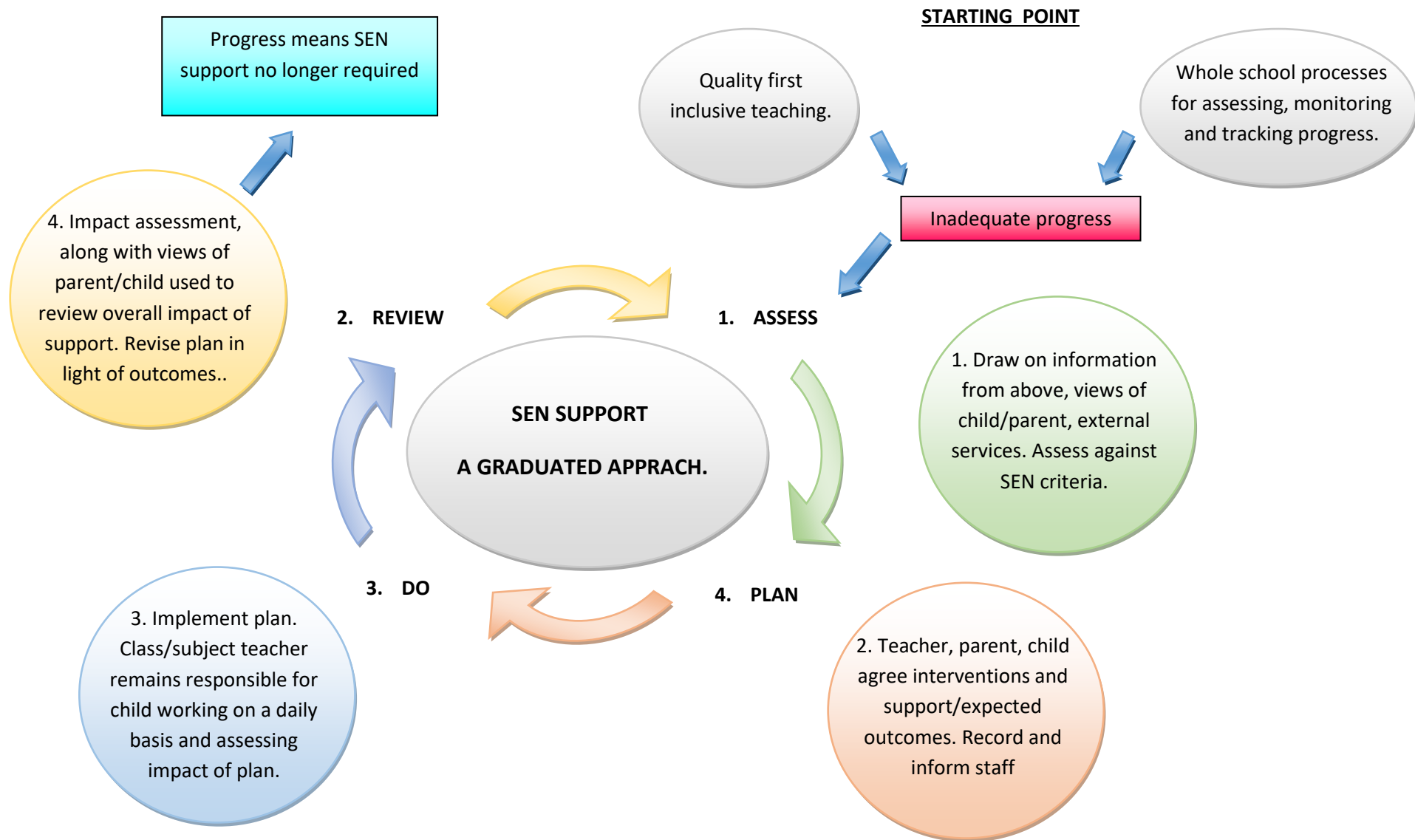
If any behaviour is a concern in relation to safeguarding, the procedures detailed in East Midlands Academy Trust's Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

16. Links with other policies and documents:

This policy links to the following EMAT / Academy policies and documents

- SEN Information Report;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Equality information and objectives;
- Behaviour policy;
- Teaching and learning policy.

APPENDIX 1 – THE GRADUATED APPROACH



APPENDIX 2 – RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Role	Name	Contact details
SEN Coordinator		
SEND Link on Senior Leadership Team (if not SENCO)		
SEND Governor		
External Agencies Support		