Minerva Learning Trust

STOCKSBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
This is Just the Start

SEND Policy 2026-27

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Changes to this edition

- New policy in line with national college

1. Purpose

Minerva Learning Trust is committed to improving the lives of **all** students by helping them to become keen, lifelong learners who aspire to achieve their best and are passionate about education.

The purpose of this policy is to accurately reflect the shared aspirations and beliefs of all stakeholders (i.e. all those with an interest in the child), across the Trust, as well as to ensure all organisations are taking full account of the law and guidance on SEND provision. It is intended to help all staff be aware of and understand their responsibilities, in order that we provide the support that students deserve, enabling them to succeed in all aspects of school life and beyond.

Each school's SEND Policy must be taken from this Trust Policy and be widely reflective of the principles and aspirations outlined. Each school's policy must be updated annually and published on the school's website.

2. Aims

2.1 Aims and Values

At Stocksbridge High School, we aim to **safeguard**, **include** and **support** all our students.

We want to raise the aspirations of and expectations for all students with SEND, so we take an outcome-focused approach to our students rather than focusing on the number of hours of provision or support. We want to enable our students to be the best that they can be by identifying and removing their individual barriers to success, whilst developing their independence and ensuring that they are included in all aspects of school life.

We are committed to welcoming all students and will make the adjustments when necessary and where possible to enable students to access a broad and balanced curriculum, participate in enrichment activities and access social time.

We believe that '*there is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequal people*' (Thomas Jefferson), and that some students may need to access more targeted and personalised support in order to succeed. The school's own systems, policies and procedures should not in themselves act as barriers to students' achievement, engagement and success. Where this is the case, reasonable adjustments are made as appropriate.

We recognise that every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person, including those with SEND, and each teacher is responsible for the progress of all of their students, including those with SEND. Where a student is identified as having SEND, the teacher should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. High-quality, differentiated teaching is the first step in responding to the needs of a student.

For further information on the Minerva Learning Trust SEND Core Offer and Student Entitlement.

2.2 Objectives

Every school is required to identify and address the SEND of the pupils that they support. Through the implementation of this policy, the school will:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support they need to access the school's broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- Ensure there is high-quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, with specific focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with SEND in light of the SEND code of practice.
- Promote disability equality and equality of opportunity, fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled pupils.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision, i.e. the SENCO.
- Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child.
- Review, prepare and publish important information about the school and its implementation of relevant SEND policies, including:
  - Accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access to the curriculum and the physical environment for pupils with SEND.
  - Information about the admission arrangements for pupils with SEND and the steps taken to prevent them being treated less favourably than others.
  - An Inclusion Strategy about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEND

3. Links to other documents

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Care Act 2022
- DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Pupil Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Careers Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Use of AI Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:

- School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- School Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- School Teaching and Learning Policy
- School Anti-bullying Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Trust Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Trust SEND Core Offer
- Trust Student Entitlement

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board has responsibility for:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, values and strategic direction of the Trust.
- Annual appointment of a Lead Trustee for SEND.
- Convening network group meetings with Lead SEND Local Governors.
- Attending Lead Trustee group meetings.
- The review of Lead SEND Local Governor reports.
- Regularly monitoring the quality of provision for students with SEND across the Trust.
- Regular analysis of school and Trust SEND reports and data.
- Ensuring statutory compliance with SEND legislation and regulations.
- Monitoring the impact of the work of the Central School Improvement Team.

The Trust Executive Team have responsibility for:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, values and strategic direction of SEND provision across the Trust.
- Developing central SEND policy, strategy, processes and procedures.
- Developing and delivering the SEND Core Offer.
- Holding school leaders and school staff to account for the quality and impact of SEND provision.
- Ensuring the provision and delivery of training and development for Governors and school staff.
- Establishing systems to monitor and quality assure the quality and impact of SEND provision.
- Ensuring SEND provision meets statutory and regulatory compliance.

The Trust Central School Improvement Team have responsibility for:

- Developing an annual strategic plan for the provision of SEND across all schools.
- Monitoring the quality and impact of SEND provision across Trust schools.
- Providing support and challenge to Trust schools' SEND provision
- Developing an annual SEND focus for training, research and product development.
- Analysing school performance, diagnosing issues, brokering support, monitoring impact and facilitating the sharing best practice.
- Building leadership capacity within identified schools.
- Keeping abreast of national agendas.
- Leading on research and development in the area of SEND.
- Coordinating and leading the cross-Trust SEND network group.

School Headteachers have responsibility for:

- Developing an ethos, which promotes inclusive practices and ensure that this is at the heart of the work of the school.
- Developing an annual strategic plan for the provision of SEND across the school.
- Monitoring the quality and impact of provision across the schools.
- Developing an annual SEND focus for training, research and product development.
- Analysing school performance, diagnosing issues, brokering support, monitoring impact and facilitating the sharing of best practice.
- Keeping abreast of national agendas.
- Keeping the Governing body fully informed of all relevant SEND issues; working closely with the Lead Governor for SEND.

Lead Governors for SEND have responsibility for:

- Attending planned and agreed school visits to meet key staff and leaders (agreed in advance) to support monitoring and reporting to the Lead Trustee and Local Governing Body.
- Completing student voice activities.
- Completing Parent/Carer voice activities.
- Analysing internal and external reports and data.
- Attending network meetings with the Lead Trustee and other Lead Governors.
- Monitoring the spending and impact of additional SEND funding.

School SENDCos and Assistant SENDCOs, together, have responsibility for:

- Working as part of the Outcomes team, analysing student data and putting actions in place to address gaps.
- Contributing to school self-evaluation and improvement.
- Developing and delivering the school's strategy for SEND
- Auditing current and predicted needs so that they can be met effectively.
- Overseeing the school's Provision Map.
- Writing, reviewing and disseminating the SEND Policy and Information Report so that it can be accessed, understood and delivered by all stakeholders.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of intervention programmes and the SEND provision.
- Ensuring that the school meets statutory requirements with regard to its provision for students with additional needs.
- Managing the SEND budget.
- Contributing to staff CPD.
- Facilitating the induction of new staff and newly qualified and student teachers.
- Line managing Learning Support Assistants/ Teaching Assistants and conducting PMR of relevant staff.
- Overseeing and ensuring continued effective communication with parents, informing and whenever possible involving students and their parents in decisions regarding SEND support.
- Together with the Teacher Coaching Team, provide support for staff on ways they can meet the needs of individual students.
- Identifying individual student need including access arrangements through a range of appropriate diagnostics.
- Ensuring that appropriate access arrangements are in place for students.
- Managing transition arrangements.
- Keeping abreast of assistive technologies and ensuring these are implemented where appropriate.
- Ensuring that students know how to use any equipment that they have been given to overcome identified barriers to learning, including computer software and applications.
- Staffing, resourcing and reviewing intervention programmes, including the SEND base provision.
- Tracking and reporting on the impact of interventions and for individual students.
- Liaising with Attendance staff to spot patterns in attendance.
- Making appropriate contact with partners.
- Disseminating information regarding students' needs and strategies to better meet them.
- Providing relevant and up-to-date information regarding students' needs, including collating information to inform Extended Support Plans/ EHCP applications and other reports.

- Applying for Education Health and Care Plans, chairing Statutory Annual Review meetings and writing reports within the framework and timescale set out in the Code of Practice and Local Authority guidelines.
- Taking an active role in the monitoring, evaluation and assessment activities as part of the department's quality assurance procedures.

Teachers have responsibility for:

- Knowing which students in their class have additional needs and ensure appropriate strategies are in place to support them so they can make progress.
- Embedding the school's SEND Non-Negotiables in every lesson.
- Demonstrating an understanding of their responsibilities under the Code of Practice, Teacher Standards, Equality legislation and the Ofsted framework.
- Referring any concerns using the relevant referral system.
- Making effective use of LSAs/ TAs in the classroom.
- Implementing Wave 1-3 interventions to Close the Gap.
- Providing information on students as and when requested.

All staff have responsibility for:

- Demonstrating an understanding of their responsibilities under the Code of Practice, Equality legislation and the Ofsted framework.
- Referring any concerns using the relevant referral system.
- Providing information about students as and when requested.

4. Key Contact Details

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6. Safeguarding

Stocksbridge High School recognises that evidence shows pupils with SEND are at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment, so will ensure that staff are aware that pupils with SEND:

- Have the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying.
- May face additional risks online, e.g. from online bullying, grooming, and radicalisation.
- Are at greater risk of abuse, including child-on-child abuse, neglect, and sexual violence and harassment.

Stocksbridge High School recognises that there are additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of pupils. These barriers can include, but are not limited to:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's condition without further exploration.
- These pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
- The potential for pupils with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- The need for intimate care or that these pupils are isolated from others.
- Increased dependence on adults for care.
- A different cognitive understanding and being unable to understand the difference between fact or fiction in online content.

The school's local governing body will ensure that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that these additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse. When using physical intervention and reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving pupils with SEND, staff will have due regard for the procedures outlined in the school's Physical Intervention Policy.

Care will be taken by all staff, particularly those who work closely with pupils with SEND, to notice any changes in behaviour or mood, or any injuries, and the DSL will investigate these indicators in collaboration with the SENCO.

The school recognises School staff to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with SEND and additional needs.

The headteacher and local governing body will ensure that pupils with SEND are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. The school will ensure that teaching of safeguarding is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND.

Any reports of abuse involving pupils with SEND will involve close liaison between the DSL and the SENCO.

7. The Universal Offer

The school will establish a strong universal offer as the foundation of its inclusive practice. This universal offer will set a clear baseline for high-quality provision for all pupils, placing inclusion at the heart of everyday school life.

Through its universal offer, the school will ensure that every pupil receives high-quality, adaptive teaching, timely support where needed, and access to approaches that are grounded in evidence. The school will build on existing strengths in its provision and continue to strengthen practice so that inclusion becomes embedded across the whole school.

The school will use assessment information, data, and professional insight to understand each pupil's strengths and barriers to learning. It will respond consistently to commonly occurring needs, recognising that differences in development and learning are natural, expected and may change over time. Early identification and early intervention will be central to the school's approach.
The universal offer will include:

- Ambitious leadership and governance that embed inclusion within strategic planning and school improvement.
- Evidence-informed practice that prioritises early intervention and prevention.
- High-quality, adaptive teaching and a broad, balanced curriculum designed to be accessible for all learners.
- Accessible and enriching opportunities beyond the classroom.
- A safe, calm, and respectful culture that promotes belonging, engagement and strong attendance.
- Strong partnerships with parents, carers, and external services.
- Inclusive physical environments, with ongoing improvements to accessibility.

The school will ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and supported to deliver inclusive practice. Teachers, leaders, and the SENCO will work collaboratively to ensure that communication is clear, and that provision is well coordinated. Inclusive practice will remain an integral element of everyday teaching and learning.

In the early years, the school will provide high-quality provision with a strong focus on communication and language development. The school will identify emerging needs promptly and put effective support in place without unnecessary delay.

Across all phases, the school will create calm, well-structured environments and deliver a rich and engaging curriculum that supports both academic progress and personal development.

The school will take a whole-school approach to inclusion. Support for individual pupils will sit within a clearly defined, strategic framework that promotes inclusive practice for all. The school will proactively plan its inclusive provision through its inclusion strategy, setting out how it will remove barriers to learning and how available resources will be used to strengthen inclusion.

The school will align its practice with national guidance and emerging inclusion standards, ensuring that its approach is evidence-informed and that inclusion is built into systems, environments, and curriculum design.

Through this universal offer, the school will aim to ensure that the majority of pupils' needs are met effectively within mainstream provision, reducing the need for escalation and ensuring that support is timely, proportionate, and responsive.

8. SEND Support

The school recognise their statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. High-quality, adaptive teaching will be the first response to pupils who have or may have SEND and forms part of the school's universal offer.

High-quality teaching

Teachers at the school will:

- Set high expectations for every pupil.
- Deliver adaptive teaching that removes barriers to learning.
- Plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard.
- Provide appropriate support for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- Be responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

Personalised teaching and learning involves providing every student with opportunities to: make progress in their learning; achieve; and participate, within the same learning environment. High-quality teaching which is adapted to support the needs of individual students is our first and most important step in responding to students who may or may not have SEND. Outstanding teaching that enhances students' opportunities to make significant steps in their learning and progress is likely to facilitate outstanding learning and progress for all students.

Additional support and intervention cannot compensate for a lack of good quality planning and teaching, so time and resources have been invested in the professional learning of teaching staff to maintain this as a priority across Minerva Learning Trust. The teacher remains accountable for the learning and progress being made by all students in their classroom.

All teachers in the Trust should embed the Minerva Teaching and Learning Principles and their school's SEND Non-negotiables in their day-to-day practice. For further guidance on the key principles and expectations for Teaching and Learning at Minerva Learning Trust, you can find the Teaching and Learning Policy Statutory Information - Minerva Learning Trust

Identifying the need for additional support

Decisions on whether to make special educational provision for pupils will be based upon:

- Discussions between the teacher and SENCO.
- Analysis of the pupil's progress – using internal formative and summative assessments, alongside national data, and expectations of progress.
- Discussion with the pupil and their parent.
- Professional judgement informed by evidence-based approaches.

Where additional needs are identified that cannot be met through the universal offer alone, the school will provide targeted support.

Graduated approach

Once a pupil has been identified with SEND, the school will employ a graduated approach to meeting the pupil's needs. This will be through the adoption of a four-part cycle – **assess, plan, do, review** – whereby earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined, and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. The process is as follows:

- **Assess**: A clear understanding of the pupil's needs will be established, drawing on assessment data, teacher observations, parental views, and, where appropriate, specialist advice.
- **Plan**: Adjustments, interventions and support will be agreed, alongside intended outcomes and a clear review date.
- **Do**: The agreed support will be implemented. Class teachers will retain responsibility for the pupil's progress.
- **Review**: The effectiveness of the provision will be evaluated against agreed outcomes.

Targeted and targeted plus support

In line with emerging national reform proposals, SEND support may align with flexible layers of provision.

- **Targeted support** – delivered within mainstream classroom provision.
- **Targeted Plus support** – involving specialist advice and multi-agency collaboration.

Where appropriate, the school will seek advice from external professionals and work collaboratively with education and health services to strengthen provision.

Provision and outcomes will be recorded securely and may, in future, align with digital Individual Support Plans (ISPs), subject to statutory guidance.

Escalation to specialist support

Where, despite purposeful and sustained intervention, a pupil does not make expected progress, the school will, in consultation with parents, consider requesting an EHC needs assessment.

The school will ensure that all reasonable adjustments and graduated support have been implemented before seeking statutory assessment.

Pastoral and communication support

The school will consider whether additional pastoral support, mentoring or communication support is required to enable pupils with SEND to access learning effectively.

English Additional Language (EAL)

The school recognises that having EAL does not equate to having SEND.
Where pupils with EAL make slower progress, the school will carefully assess whether this relates to language acquisition or an underlying special educational need. Consideration will be given to the pupil's home language, culture, prior educational experience, and broader development.

Support will be tailored accordingly and based on evidence-informed practice.

9. Early Years Pupils with SEND

All early year's providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND and to promote equality of opportunity. These requirements are set out in the EYFS framework.

The school recognises that the earliest years of life are fundamental to securing positive long-term developmental, educational, and social outcomes, particularly for children with SEND. Early identification and timely intervention will be central to the school's approach. Acting early will help prevent learning gaps from becoming entrenched and reduce the need for more intensive support later.

Early identification and timely support

The school will ensure that all staff working in the early years are alert to emerging developmental differences and respond without delay. The school will:

- Listen carefully to parents and carers when they express concerns about their child's development, recognising families as key partners.
- Listen to and value children's views, where developmentally appropriate.
- Monitor and review the progress and development of all children through ongoing assessment and observation.
- Identify and respond to emerging needs without requiring a formal diagnosis before support is provided.
- Follow a graduated approach through the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle.
- Inform parents when special educational provision is being made and involve them fully in planning and review.

The school will place particular emphasis on early support for speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), social communication, emotional regulation, and emerging social, emotional, and mental health needs, recognising the strong evidence that early intervention in these areas leads to improved outcomes.

Partnership with families and Best Start Family Hubs

The school recognises that families need coordinated, timely and locally accessible support. The school will:

- Work in partnership with Best Start Family Hubs, which will act as a central point of access for advice, early help, and integrated services.
- Engage with SEND practitioners based within Best Start Family Hubs to ensure families receive appropriate guidance and direct support at the earliest stage.
- Signpost families to local health, education, and care services where appropriate.
- Support parents in accessing integrated advice and intervention before escalation of need.
- The school will contribute to collaborative working between education, health, and care professionals to ensure families do not experience fragmented or duplicated support.

Integrated developmental checks and information sharing

The school recognises the importance of effective developmental checks in early identification. The school will:

- Contribute to and make effective use of the EYFS age-two progress check.
- Work collaboratively with health colleagues to support alignment with the Healthy Child Programme development review.
- Promote integrated reviews where possible.
- Ensure clear and consistent information sharing arrangements are in place between early years staff and health professionals, in line with data protection requirements.
- Minimise duplication and reduce gaps in identification at transition points.

High-quality inclusive early years provision

The school will provide high-quality early years education with a strong focus on:

- Communication and language development.
- Social interaction and emotional regulation.
- Early literacy and numeracy foundations.
- Play-based learning.
- Independence and confidence.

Provision will be adapted to meet individual developmental needs, ensuring that children with SEND engage fully alongside their peers.

The school will ensure that early years educators access appropriate professional development, including national training opportunities and evidence-based resources aligned with emerging National Inclusion Standards.

Where required, the school will draw on advice from education and health professionals through multi-agency collaboration and emerging 'Experts at Hand' models of support.

Sufficiency and access

The school will work with the LA to support effective sufficiency planning for early years places, including for children requiring specialist provision. The school will contribute relevant information to support local accountability and planning.

Transition to school

The school recognises that effective transition into Reception is critical.
The school will:

- Share information securely and promptly between early years settings and Reception staff.
- Engage in partnership work to strengthen transitions from nursery to school.
- Implement best practice in Reception teaching to support early language, communication, and inclusion.
- Use evidence-informed approaches, including structured early language interventions where appropriate.

10. Admissions

The school will ensure it meets its duties set under the DfE's 'School Admissions Code,' the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010 by:

- Not refusing admission for a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for SEND.
- Not refusing admission for a child who has named the school in their EHC plan.
- Considering applications from parents of children who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan.
- Not refusing admission for a child who has SEND but does not have an EHC plan because the school does not feel able to cater for those needs.
- Not refusing admission for a child who does not have an EHC plan.
- Not discriminating against or disadvantaging applicants with SEND.
- Ensuring policies relating to school uniform and trips do not discourage parents of pupils with SEND from applying for a place.
- Adopting fair practices and arrangements in accordance with the 'School Admissions Code' for the admission of children without an EHC plan.
- Ensuring the school's oversubscription arrangements will not disadvantage children with SEND.
- Ensuring that tests for selection are accessible to children with SEND, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary.

The school is committed to being an inclusive mainstream setting and will seek to meet the needs of pupils with SEND within its resources and in line with statutory duties.

Arrangements for admissions are set out in the school's Admissions Policy and are published on the school website.

Naming in an EHC Plan

Where the LA consults the school about naming it in a child's EHC plan, the school will respond within statutory timescales.

The school may make representations to the LA where it believes that placement would be unsuitable on the grounds permitted by law, including where it would be incompatible with:

- The efficient education of others, or
- The efficient use of resources.

Before making such representations, the school will consider whether reasonable adjustments, additional support, or alternative arrangements could enable the placement to be successful.

11. Exam access arrangements

An examination access arrangement granted in Year 6 will not automatically carry over into Year 7. In KS3, access arrangements may be considered where a need is identified by teachers and/or parents and communicated to the SENCO, provided the relevant examination board criteria are met.

In KS4, pupils with SEND will be formally assessed to determine eligibility for access arrangements in external examinations.

A pupil requiring an access arrangement will not necessarily be placed on the SEND register, nor will they automatically require a targeted support plan.

12. Transition

The school recognises that effective transition planning is essential to securing positive educational, social, and emotional outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Transitions will be carefully planned, timely and person-centred.

Transition planning will apply to:

- Primary to secondary transition
- Transition to post-16 education, training, or employment
- Preparation for adulthood

Primary to secondary transition

The school will:

- Begin transition planning early, particularly for pupils with SEND.
- Provide additional visits, information sessions, and transition activities where appropriate.
- Ensure that receiving staff are fully informed of the pupil's strengths, needs, and successful support strategies.
- Engage parents and pupils in transition planning.

Transition for pupils with EHC plans

Where pupils have EHC plans, the school will:

- Ensure that annual reviews are held in sufficient time prior to key phase transfers.
- Contribute to reviews in line with statutory timescales.
- Work with the LA to plan and, where necessary, commission appropriate provision at the next setting.
- Ensure that pupils and parents are actively involved in discussions about future placements.

Preparation for adulthood

The Trust and its schools recognise that preparation for adulthood should begin early and not be limited to post-16 planning.

The school will:

- Support the development of independence, resilience, and self-advocacy skills.
- Ensure access to independent careers guidance where appropriate.
- Engage with further education providers, employers, and external agencies to support progression.
- Promote opportunities for pupils with SEND to participate fully in school life and wider community experiences.

Multi-agency partnership

The school will work collaboratively with the following to ensure that transitions are coordinated, information is shared securely and families receive consistent support.

- Primary schools
- Secondary schools and colleges
- The LA
- Health services
- Best Start Family Hubs
- External professionals

13. Involving pupils and parents in decision making

The school is committed to working in partnership with all parents in the best interests of their child and will provide an annual report for all parents on their child's progress. Parents will be treated as equal partners in planning and reviewing support.

The school will provide regular information to all parents about their child's progress. Where a pupil is receiving SEND support, structured review meetings will take place at least three times each academic year. The class teacher, supported by the SENCO where appropriate, will meet with parents to agree outcomes, review progress, and refine provision.

The school recognises that families should not have to navigate complex systems or wait for difficulties to escalate before receiving support. Communication will be clear, timely and coordinated. Where appropriate, families will be signposted to additional sources of support, including LA services and Best Start Family Hubs.

The planning that the school implements will help parents and pupils with SEND express their needs, wishes and goals, and will:

- Focus on the pupil as an individual, recognising their strengths as well as needs.
- Be easy for pupils and their parents to understand by using clear, ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon.
- Enable the pupil to express their views, wishes and aspirations in developmentally appropriate ways.
- Recognise the expertise of parents.
- Identify meaningful, measurable outcomes.
- Tailor support to the needs of the individual.
- Organise assessments to minimise demands on parents.
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.

Where pupils receive SEND support, parents will be involved at each stage of the graduated approach ('assess, plan, do, review').

In line with emerging national reforms, the school recognises that pupils may access different layers of support over time. Parents will be informed and involved in decisions about movement between Universal, Targeted, Targeted Plus and Specialist support, ensuring transparency and shared understanding.

Provision and agreed outcomes may, in future, be recorded through digital systems such as Individual Support Plans, subject to statutory guidance.

- Where the LA provides a pupil with an EHC plan, the school will:
- Involve parents and pupils fully in planning how the provision will be delivered.
- Clarify the intended impact of provision.

- Ensure parents understand review processes and statutory rights.
- Contribute meaningfully to annual reviews and phase transfer reviews.

Where necessary, the school will facilitate support from an advocate or independent supporter to ensure that parents' views are heard and acknowledged.

The school will ensure that discussions with pupils and parents increasingly focus on longer-term aspirations, independence, and preparation for adulthood, particularly from Year 9 onwards where applicable

14. Funding for SEND Support

Where additional pupil needs are identified, the school will use its delegated funding allowance to provide early intervention support for the benefit of pupils identified with SEND.

Where pupils with SEND have been receiving early intervention support but are still not making sufficient progress, the school will consider accessing high needs top-up funding from the LA to provide additional specialist support

15. EHC Needs assessment and plans

The school recognises that, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of a pupil, some pupils may not make expected levels of progress. In these cases, the school will consult with parents and consider requesting an EHC needs assessment.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the SEND of the pupil, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and prepare them for adulthood.

In line with emerging national reform proposals, statutory support may in future align with nationally defined Specialist Provision Packages, which will outline evidence-informed packages of provision for pupils with the most complex needs. The school will monitor legislative changes and adapt practice in line with any revised statutory framework.

Requesting an EHC needs assessment

Before requesting statutory assessment, the school will ensure that:

- High-quality adaptive teaching has been consistently implemented.
- Targeted and, where appropriate, Targeted Plus support has been delivered and reviewed.
- External professional advice has been sought where appropriate.
- Parents and the pupil have been fully involved in planning and review.
- Evidence demonstrates that needs cannot be met through available mainstream provision.

The decision to request an EHC needs assessment will be made in consultation with parents and informed by evidence from the graduated approach.

Contributing to the EHC needs assessment

As part of the statutory process, the school will:

- Respond to requests for information within six weeks of receipt unless statutory exemptions apply.
- Provide detailed information about the pupil's needs, provision delivered and impact over time.
- Supply evidence from assessment data, professional advice, and review documentation.
- Contribute to the identification of desired outcomes across education, health, and care.
- Engage constructively with multi-agency partners to support coordinated planning.

If an EHC plan is not issued

If the LA decides not to issue an EHC plan, the school will:

- Consider the written feedback provided.
- Strengthen and refine provision within the graduated approach.
- Continue to involve parents and relevant professionals in reviewing support.

Where an EHC plan is issued

Where an EHC plan is issued:

- The LA will consult the school before naming it in the plan.
- The school will provide its response within 15 days.
- The school will admit any pupil for whom it is named in an EHC plan.
- All relevant staff will be informed of the pupil's needs and the provision required.
- Provision will be implemented in full and monitored for effectiveness.

In line with emerging reform direction, statutory support may in future align with clearly defined Specialist Provision Packages delivered within mainstream or specialist settings. The school will ensure readiness to operate within any revised national framework.

Multi-agency and review responsibilities

The school will work collaboratively with the LA, health services, and other professionals to ensure that:

- Provision is coordinated and delivered effectively.
- Outcomes remain appropriate and ambitious.
- Reviews are timely and person-centred.
- Transition planning is embedded within annual reviews.

For pupils under five with complex needs, the school will work closely with the LA and health partners to ensure timely access to specialist assessment and provision in line with national guidance.

16. Reviewing EHC Plans

The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the year and conduct a formal review of the EHC plan at least annually.

The school will:

- Cooperate with the LA and relevant individuals to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the LA if requested.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the meeting, such as representatives from the LA SEN, social care, and health services.
- Seek advice and information about the pupil prior to the annual review meeting from all parties invited, and send any information gathered to all those invited, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- Ensure that sufficient arrangements are put in place at the school to host the annual review meeting.
- Contribute any relevant information and recommendations about the EHC plan to the LA, keeping parents involved at all times.
- Lead the review of the EHC plan to create the greatest confidence amongst pupils and their parents.
- Prepare and send a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting, setting out any recommendations and amendments to the EHC plan.
- Clarify to the parents and pupil that they have the right to appeal the decisions made regarding the EHC plan.
- Where possible for LAC, combine the annual review with one of the reviews in their care plan, in particular the personal education plan (PEP) element.
- Where necessary, provide support from an advocate to ensure the pupil's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Where necessary, facilitate support from an advocate to ensure the parent's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Review each pupil's EHC plan to ensure that it includes the statutory sections outlined in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', labelled separately from one another.

If a pupil's needs significantly change, the school will request a re-assessment of an EHC plan at least six months after an initial assessment. Thereafter, the governing board or headteacher will request the LA to conduct a re-assessment of a pupil whenever they feel it is necessary.

Preparing for changes to EHC plans

The school is aware that national SEND reform proposals include changes to the review process for EHC plans.

Subject to legislative change, EHC plans for school-aged pupils may in future be formally reviewed at the end of key stages by the LA. These reviews would draw on appropriate education, health, and care expertise to ensure that provision remains suitable and proportionate. Annual reviews are expected to continue for children in the early years and for young people in post-16 education.

From September 2029, children and young people with existing EHC plans may have their needs considered at key transition points, including the end of primary, secondary, and post-16 phases. Following review, pupils may either:

- Move to a nationally defined Specialist Provision Package.
- Receive support through an ISP alongside access to the Experts at Hand service.

ISPs, where implemented, will record day-to-day provision for pupils receiving targeted or specialist support and will be reviewed at least annually.

During any transition period, children and young people in mainstream settings will retain their existing EHC plans and associated provision until they complete their current phase of education or choose to move to the revised system. The first cohort is expected to begin transition assessment from September 2029, with implementation from September 2030.

The school will monitor legislative developments and will update its policy and procedures once statutory changes are confirmed.

17. Supporting successful preparation for adulthood

The school recognises that support towards greater independence, participation and employability can be life-transforming for pupils with SEND. Preparation for adulthood will begin early and will be centred on each pupil's aspirations, strengths, interests, and needs.

The school will ensure that pupils are supported at developmentally appropriate levels to make successful transitions to the next stage of education, training, or employment, including higher education where appropriate.

Preparation for adulthood will be embedded across the curriculum and wider school experience and will promote:

- Independence and resilience
- Communication and self-advocacy skills
- Social inclusion and participation
- Employability and career readiness
- Positive physical and emotional wellbeing

Secondary schools

The school will:

- Ensure that the EHC plan review includes a focus on preparing for adulthood, with additional focus on transition and preparing for adulthood from Year 9 onwards.
- Build transition planning into the revised EHC plan to identify appropriate post-16 pathways for higher education and employment, and support preparation for independent living, maintaining good health in adult life and participating in society.
- Support preparation for independent living, maintaining good health and participating in society.
- Provide access to independent and impartial careers guidance from Year 8 to Year 13.
- Seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations, and arts and sports groups, to help children understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.
- Engage with FE providers as necessary to help plan for any transitions.
- Share relevant information securely with future destinations to promote continuity of support.

The school's Careers Policy details how the school will fulfil its statutory duties under section 42 of the Education Act 1997 and work with pupils with SEND to ensure they are prepared for the workplace.

18. Staff training and improving practice

The school is committed to the learning and development of all its staff members and training opportunities will be provided and delivered in line with the school's CPD and Training Policy.

The SENDCO will assess staff competencies and ensure that CPD provision allows staff to develop their awareness, skills, and practices in identifying, educating, and assessing pupils with SEND.

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision to respond to the strengths and needs of all students, all staff should undertake training and development as part of their directed time. Some CPD will be coordinated across the Trust by the Minerva CPD Lead. Training which is more tailored to the specific needs of the individual school will be led by members of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for CPD and the SENDCO.

Teachers can also access information about all students electronically via the school's management information system (SIMS) and student profiles (e.g. Provision Map, Student Profiling System).

SENDCOs and Assistant SENDCOs from across the Trust regularly attend the LAs SENCO network meetings and Trust network meetings. All Trust SENDCOs have been involved in various LA working groups, have a wide range of experience as Locality Area SENCOs, delivering training to other SENDCOs etc.

19. Identifying SEND

Early identification of students with SEND is critical to their success. The Code of Practice (2014) outlines four broad areas which cover a range of needs which should be planned for. The purpose of identifying of need is to work out what action the organisation needs to take, not to fit the student into a category. We identify the needs of students by considering the needs of the whole child. Often, when students join us, we are already aware of the student's SEND through transition arrangements which are in place between each of our schools and the provision which students attended beforehand (e.g. between primaries and secondaries) and through links with a range of agencies and other professionals. When at school, students may be identified through:

- KS2 SATs results
- Reading tests
- Diagnostic testing
- Referral by the child
- Referral by parents/carers
- Referral by teacher/curriculum area following school procedures
- Referral by outside agencies
- Referral by Progress Leaders
- Pastoral Managers
- Failure to make the expected progress despite high-quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised to meet the needs of the student.
- Student Profiling Systems

The Code of Practice makes it clear that teachers should seek to identify students who are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. When a student has SEND and is not making expected progress despite high-quality, suitably adapted teaching, the Code suggests that teachers should draw on:

- Teacher assessment and knowledge
- Data on progress and behaviour, e.g. whether the rate of progress is widening the attainment gap or failing to match or better the student's previous rate of progress
- Development in comparison to peers, e.g. the rate of progress is failing to close the attainment gap between the student and his/ her peers or making progress which is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- The student's views
- The views and experiences of parents
- Advice from the SEND team and external support services.

Sometimes, more specialist assessments are needed and these can be co-ordinated by the SEND team.
When considering why some students may not be making expected levels of progress, consideration should also be given to factors which are not SEND but may impact on progress and attainment, e.g. attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, EAL, being in receipt of Pupil Premium grant, being a Looked After Child, being a child of a serviceman/woman, disability (although the Code of Practice outlines the 'reasonable adjustment' duty under the Disability Equality legislation, this alone does not constitute SEND).

It should also be noted that whilst slow progress and low attainment may be an indicator of learning difficulties, this does not necessarily mean a child has SEND. Equally, assuming that attainment in line with chronological age does not mean a child has SEND is also wrong. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability, and if left unaddressed may lead to frustration and manifest itself as disaffection, and emotional or behavioural difficulties. It is important to remember that identification is not only about attainment – there can be other things a child is not making progress in.

20. Use of data and technology

The school will adopt a safe, secure, and evidence-informed approach to the use of data, digital systems, and technology to support children and young people with SEND.

All information about pupils will be kept in accordance with the school's Records Management Policy, Data Protection Policy, and Pupil Confidentiality Policy. The school will always comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Record keeping

The school's records will:

- Record details of additional or different provision made under SEND support, with accurate information to evidence the SEND support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact, e.g. through the use of provision maps.
- Include details of SEND, outcomes, actions, agreed support, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists, as part of its standard management information system to monitor the progress, behaviour, and development of all pupils.
- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of the provision made for pupils with SEND.
- Support effective monitoring of progress, behaviour, and development.

- Be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it, as far as reasonably practicable.

The school will use assessment information, progress data, and professional insight to identify emerging barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity. Data will inform planning, review, and evaluation of support to ensure provision remains responsive and effective.

The school keeps data on the levels and types of need within the school and makes this available to the LA and Ofsted.

Digital systems and future deployments

The school will develop and maintain digital systems that support effective record-keeping, secure information sharing and continuity of provision, particularly at transition points.

The school will prepare for potential future national developments, including the possible introduction of digital Individual Support Plans (ISPs), ensuring that systems are adaptable and compliant with statutory requirements.

Any digital tools used by the school, including those incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI), will:

- Be evidence-based and ethically sound.
- Demonstrate clear educational benefit.
- Support high-quality teaching rather than replace it.
- Protect data security and confidentiality.

The school will critically evaluate any screening or identification tools before use and will ensure that any such tools are linked to effective, evidence-informed interventions. Digital tools which incorporate AI will be used in line with the school's Safe use of AI Policy.

Assistive technology may be used where appropriate to support access to learning and promote independence, particularly for pupils with sensory, physical or communication needs. Staff will receive appropriate training to ensure effective and proportionate use.

Confidentiality

The school will not disclose any EHC plan without the consent of the pupil's parents, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the pupil, such as disclosure:

- To a SEND tribunal when parents appeal, and to the Secretary of State under the Education Act 1996.
- On the order of any court for any criminal proceedings.
- For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986, or from the Children Act 1989 relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and LAs.
- To any person in connection with the pupil's application for students with disabilities allowance in advance of taking up a place in HE.
- To the headteacher (or equivalent position) of the setting at which the pupil is intending to start their next phase of education.

The school will adhere to the Pupil Confidentiality Policy at all times.

21. Joint commissioning, planning, and delivery

The school will work closely with local education, health, and social care services to ensure pupils get the right support.

The school will assist the LA in carrying out its statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 by ensuring that services work together where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision (Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

The school will draw on the wide range of local data sets about the likely educational needs of pupils with SEND to forecast future needs, including:

- Population and demographic data.
- Prevalence data for different kinds of SEND among children at the national level.
- Numbers of local children with EHC plans and their main needs.
- The numbers and types of settings locally that work with or educate pupils with SEND.
- An analysis of local challenges or sources of health inequalities.

The school will plan, deliver, and monitor services against how well outcomes have been met, including, but not limited to:

- Improved educational progress and outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Increasing the identification of pupils with SEND prior to school entry.

Where pupils with SEND also have a medical condition, their provision will be planned and delivered in coordination with the EHC plan.

SEND support will be adapted and/or replaced depending on its effectiveness in achieving the agreed outcomes.

22. Local Offer

The school's local governing body will collaborate with and support the LA in developing and reviewing the Local Offer, where necessary and appropriate, to ensure that it is:

- **Collaborative**: Where appropriate, the school will work with LAs, parents and pupils in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. The school will also cooperate with those providing services.
- **Accessible**: The school will collaborate with the LA during development and review to ensure that the LA's Local Offer is easy to understand, factual and jargon-free; is structured in a way that relates to pupils' and parents' needs, e.g. by broad age group or type of special educational provision; and is well-signposted and publicised.
- **Comprehensive**: The school will help to ensure that parents and pupils understand what support can be expected to be available across education, health, and social care from age 0 to 25 and how to access it. The school will assist the LA in ensuring that the Local Offer includes eligibility criteria for services, where relevant, and makes it clear where to go for information, advice, and support, as well as how to make complaints about provision or appeal against decisions.
- **Up to date**: The school will work with the LA to review the Local Offer to ensure that, when parents and pupils access the Local Offer, the information is up to date.

The school will provide the LA with information about their existing SEND provision and capabilities to support pupils with SEND to aid in the drafting of the Local Offer, where required.

23. Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an **annual** basis by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing board; any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff, parents of pupils with SEND, and relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

24. Supporting Students and Families

Additional Information

Parents and students with a Sheffield home address can access the following support:

Sheffield Local Authority's Local Offer can be found here:

LocalOffer | Sheffield (sheffielddirectory.org.uk)

Schools within Sheffield follow the Sheffield Local Authority Admissions Policy. Details on secondary school admissions in Sheffield can be found here:

- Apply for a school place | Sheffield City Council
- Schools within Derbyshire Local Authority Admissions Policy. Details can be found here
- Apply for a school place - Derbyshire County Council

Individual schools/ colleges policies on managing the medical conditions of students can be found on the schools' individual websites. The Minerva Learning Trust policy on Supporting Students with Medical Conditions can be found here – Statutory Information - Minerva Learning Trust

Other agencies which we work with are listed below:

Sheffield Services		
Other Agency	**Office Number**	**Address**
Sheffield Autism Team	0114 2736412	Sheffield Autism Team, Floor 4, North Wing, Moorfoot Building, Sheffield, S1 4PL
Sheffield SENDIAS	01142 736009 SSENDIAS@sheffield.gov.uk	Sheffield SENDIAS Floor 1, North Wing Howden House 1 Union Street Sheffield S1 2SH
Speech & Language Therapy	0114 2262333	Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust, Flockton House, 18-20 Union Road, Sheffield, S11 9EF
MAST (Multi Agency Support Team)	0114 2734450	Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership Floor 2, Howden House 1 Union Street Sheffield S1 2SH
Fusion- Learning Support Team	0114 2507394	Talbot Specialist School, Lees Hall Rd, Sheffield. S8 9JP
Physiotherapy	0114 2717000	Community Occupational Therapy Department, Ryegate Children's Centre, Tapton Crescent Road, Sheffield, S10 5DD
Police	0114 2202020	321 The Common, Sheffield, South Yorkshire. S35 9WL
Social Services	0114 203 9591	Sorby House, 42 Spital Hill, Sheffield, S4 7LG
School Nurse	0114 271 7000	https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/school-nursing/
Community Youth Teams	0114 243 5597	Community Youth Team, Floor 3, Sorby House, 42 Spital Hill, Sheffield. S4 7LG
Sheffield SEN Disability Information, Advice & Support (Parent Partnership)	0114 2736009	Moorfoot Building, Floor 6 North Wing, Sheffield, S1 4PL
Special Educational Needs team (LA)	0114 2037545	https://www.southyorkshirecann.org/item/sheffield-city-council-local-offer-0-25-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/
Sheffield Inclusion and Attendance Team	Sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk	Inclusion and Attendance Team | Sheffield
Sheffield Educational Psychology Service	0114 250 6800	Educational Psychology Service (EPS) | Sheffield
Sheffield Local Offer	SheffieldDirectory@sheffield.gov.uk	Local Offer | Sheffield

25. Supporting Students at School with Medical Conditions

The school recognises that students with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some students with medical conditions may be disabled, and where this is the case, we comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Further details of the arrangements in place to support students with medical conditions, at each provision within the Trust, can be found on the Trust website. This includes the Health and Safety Policy and the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

26. Storing and Managing Information

Minerva Learning Trust Data Protection Policy can be found on the Trust website at Statutory Information - Minerva Learning Trust

27. Accessibility – Statutory Responsibilities

- The DDA, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, placed a duty on all schools and LAs to plan to increase over time the accessibility of schools for disabled students and to implement their plans.
- Schools are required to produce accessibility plans for their individual school and Local Authorities are under a duty to prepare accessibility strategies covering the maintained schools in their area. Individual schools have their own accessibility plans which can be accessed via their websites.
- Schools should identify individual barriers for students through meetings with parents and students and professionals in their existing provision (e.g. primary schools).
- They should also meet with Occupational Therapists and other professionals, e.g. physiotherapists who come into school with the student and help us produce a personalised plan for what the student would need in order to access the school's physical surroundings and the wider curriculum, such as, liaising with school transport services, wheelchair, foot rests, backrest, lift access, changes to the school environment, including structural changes to support access to the school.
- Extra transition visits should be organised to support this process. Information should be shared with teachers and support staff through the Student Profile so that the student's needs are met within the classroom.
- Additional training will be provided for staff where necessary e.g. in manual handling of children.
- If students wish to attend clubs and trips, steps should be put in place to enable this, for example, sourcing a mobility bus. On-going outside agency support (for example, from the Occupational Therapist) and regular reviews with parents, who can contact the SENDCO directly, mean that any change in need can be supported quickly and effectively.

28. Dealing with Complaints

If parents wish to make any comments or complaints, they can do so by following the steps outlined in the Trusts Complaints procedure. This is available on both the Trust website. Statutory Information - Minerva Learning Trust

The school is aware of the formal and informal arrangements for resolving disagreements at a local level and will work with the LA in responding to requests for information as part of procedures for:

- Disagreement resolution.
- Mediation.
- Appeals to the SEND Tribunal.

29. Equality Impact Assessment

The Trust will carry out Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that policies, procedures and practices cater for individuals who share protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the organisation are fair to all. If unfairness is highlighted, the assessment will also seek to show how this can be changed and, where it can't be changed, how it can be improved.

The Trust will monitor the impact of the policy to assess whether there is evidence of a detrimental impact on anyone with a protected characteristic as a result of the application of this policy. The assessment will include consideration of adaptations or changes which can be made to address any issues identified.