TAKE 1 STUDIOS

SEND POLICY

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

2026/27

Document control	Details
Created by	Naomi Fearon
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Applies to	Take 1 Independent School
Linked lead	SENCo / Headteacher
Safeguarding link	Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team

1. Introduction

This policy sets out Take 1 Independent School's approach to identifying, understanding and meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It updates the September 2025 policy while retaining Take 1's commitment to inclusive practice, early identification, partnership with families, pupil voice and preparation for adulthood.

Take 1 Studios is an independent school providing alternative education for pupils aged 14-16. Many pupils arrive following disrupted education, exclusion, persistent absence, unmet need or difficulty engaging in previous settings. SEND may be identified before admission, emerge during placement, or interact with safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, mental health, communication and social circumstances. These factors must be considered together rather than in isolation.

2. Legal and guidance framework

Take 1 Studios will meet the duties that apply to it as an independent school and will use the SEND Code of Practice as a key framework for good practice, particularly where pupils have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans or placements are commissioned by local authorities. Where a statutory duty applies differently according to the school's legal status, Take 1 Studios will follow the duty that applies to its registration and any relevant placement or commissioning arrangements.

- Children and Families Act 2014, including Part 3 on children and young people with SEND.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate against disabled pupils and the duty to make reasonable adjustments.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015, current published version).
- Independent School Standards, including the April 2026 guidance.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, statutory guidance updated July 2026.
- Ofsted's renewed Education Inspection Framework and non-association independent school inspection arrangements in force during 2026/27.
- Nottingham City SEND Local Offer, Graduated Approach and EHC needs assessment arrangements where Nottingham City is the relevant local authority.

3. Definition of SEN and disability

Under section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014, a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A school-age child has 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 educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

A disability under the Equality Act 2010 is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A pupil may be disabled without having SEN, and may have SEN without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability.

4. Areas of need

The SEND Code of Practice describes four broad areas of need. These help schools plan provision but do not replace an individual assessment of the pupil.

Area	Examples / possible presentation
Communication and interaction	Speech, language and communication needs; social communication differences; autism-related needs.
Cognition and learning	Specific, moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties; literacy/numeracy difficulties; dyslexia/dyscalculia-type profiles.
Social, emotional and mental health	Difficulties with emotional regulation, anxiety, relationships, attention, behaviour or mental health which create barriers to learning.
Sensory and/or physical	Hearing or visual impairment, physical disability, sensory processing needs or medical/physical needs affecting access to education.

Pupils may have needs across more than one area. Behaviour, poor attendance or disengagement can be a form of communication and may indicate unmet SEND, safeguarding or wider needs. They must not automatically be treated as evidence of SEN, nor should SEND be used to explain away safeguarding concerns.

5. Principles and aims

- Place the pupil's views, strengths, aspirations and outcomes at the centre of planning.
- Identify emerging or changing needs quickly and accurately.
- Provide high-quality, adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments as the first response.
- Use a graduated assess-plan-do-review approach where additional support is needed.
- Set ambitious, meaningful outcomes and avoid lowering expectations because a pupil has SEND.
- Work proactively with parents/carers, commissioners, previous schools and relevant professionals.
- Ensure SEND information is understood by staff and translated into consistent classroom practice.
- Track the impact of support on learning, attendance, engagement, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.
- Support successful transition into, through and beyond Take 1.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Key responsibilities
Proprietor / those responsible for governance	Provide strategic oversight; assure themselves that legal duties and the Independent School Standards are met; scrutinise inclusion, outcomes, training and resources.
Headteacher	Overall accountability for the quality of SEND provision, inclusion and implementation of this policy.
SENCo / SEND lead	Coordinate SEND provision; maintain records and provision mapping; advise staff; support assessment and review; liaise with families, commissioners, local authorities and specialists; monitor implementation and impact.
Teachers	Remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils they teach, including where support staff or specialists are involved; plan adaptive teaching and implement agreed adjustments.
Support staff	Deliver agreed support under appropriate direction; contribute observations and evidence; promote independence rather than dependency.
DSL / safeguarding team	Work with the SENCo where SEND and safeguarding intersect, while maintaining clear safeguarding decision-making and records.
All staff	Know the needs and adjustments of pupils they work with, follow plans consistently, raise emerging concerns promptly and maintain high expectations.

7. Identification and holistic assessment

Take 1 will not wait for a diagnosis before responding to an identified barrier to learning. Identification will draw on multiple sources and distinguish between SEND, gaps caused by disrupted education, attendance, English as an additional language, trauma, safeguarding concerns and other contextual factors, while recognising that these can coexist.

- Referral and commissioning information, EHC plans and previous SEN records.
- Baseline and curriculum assessments, literacy/numeracy information and progress data.
- Attendance, behaviour and engagement patterns.
- Teacher and support-staff observations across different contexts.
- Pupil voice and parent/carer views.
- Safeguarding and wellbeing information where relevant and appropriate to share.
- Advice from educational psychology, speech and language therapy, health, social care or other specialists.
- Screening tools where appropriate; screening does not by itself constitute a diagnosis.

Where a pupil enters Take 1 with incomplete information, the SENCo will seek relevant records promptly from the placing school, local authority or commissioner and ensure staff receive the information necessary to support the pupil safely and effectively.

8. Graduated approach: Assess - Plan - Do – Review

Stage	Take 1 approach
Assess	Identify strengths, barriers and needs using the evidence above. Establish a baseline and consider the pupil's views, family knowledge and any specialist advice.
Plan	Agree intended outcomes, reasonable adjustments, teaching strategies, interventions, responsibilities, frequency/duration and how impact will be measured. Record this in the pupil profile, provision map or individual plan as appropriate.
Do	Teachers implement the agreed classroom provision. Targeted interventions complement rather than replace access to high-quality teaching. Staff receive the information and support required to deliver the plan consistently.
Review	Review impact at least termly, and sooner where need or risk changes. Use evidence rather than simply recording that an intervention occurred. Decide whether to continue, adapt, intensify, seek specialist advice or step support down.

The cycle is iterative. Lack of progress should trigger a review of the quality, suitability and implementation of provision before assuming the pupil is unable to progress.

9. SEN Support, EHC plans and local authority processes

Where a pupil requires provision additional to or different from that ordinarily available at Take 1, this will be planned and reviewed through the school's graduated approach. Where a pupil has an EHC plan, Take 1 will work with the placing local authority, parents/carers, pupil and relevant professionals to deliver the provision for which the school is responsible under the placement arrangements and to support progress towards the plan's outcomes.

If, despite relevant and purposeful action, a pupil continues to have significant needs and limited progress, the school may discuss with the family and commissioner whether an EHC needs assessment should be requested. Parents and young people also have independent rights to request an assessment. For Nottingham City pupils, requests and updates are managed through the Council's EHC processes and EHC Hub.

Take 1 will contribute fully to annual reviews and other statutory reviews where it is the pupil's education provider, supplying clear evidence about progress, provision, attendance, engagement, current need and preparation for adulthood.

10. Reasonable adjustments and access to learning

Take 1 will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and will not discriminate because of disability. Adjustments are based on individual need and may include changes to teaching, communication, environment, routines, equipment, assessment access, sensory support, movement breaks, seating, task structure or adult support. Reasonable adjustments do not mean removing all boundaries or expectations.

Behaviour and attendance responses should consider disability and SEND, including whether an adjustment, additional support or different approach is required, while maintaining safety and the rights of others.

11. Curriculum, teaching and interventions

- The intended curriculum remains ambitious and accessible, with adaptation that enables pupils to participate rather than unnecessarily narrowing entitlement.
- Teachers use explicit instruction, modelling, scaffolding, chunking, checking for understanding, appropriate vocabulary support and retrieval/repetition where useful.
- Interventions have a clear purpose, baseline, intended outcome and review point.
- Small-group or 1:1 support, assistive technology and specialist programmes are used where evidence indicates they are appropriate.
- Support staff are deployed to promote participation and independence, not to separate pupils unnecessarily from teachers or curriculum.
- Exam access arrangements are considered and evidenced in accordance with the relevant awarding-body/JCQ requirements.

12. Attendance, behaviour and SEND

Take 1 Studios recognises that persistent or severe absence, lateness, lesson avoidance, dysregulation and repeated behaviour incidents can signal unmet need. SEND and attendance leads should work together so that barriers are understood and support is coordinated. Attendance expectations remain high, but adjustments and support should be considered where disability or SEN affects attendance or participation.

A pupil must not be informally excluded, sent home or placed on a reduced/part-time timetable simply because their SEND is difficult to meet. Any arrangement affecting full-time education must be lawful, time-limited where appropriate, regularly reviewed, clearly recorded and made in the pupil's best interests with the relevant parties involved.

13. Safeguarding and SEND

KCSIE 2026 emphasises that pupils with SEND, disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding barriers. Staff must remain alert to the possibility that indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation may be mistakenly attributed to a pupil's disability, behaviour or communication needs.

- Safeguarding concerns are reported through Take 1's safeguarding procedure and are not managed only as SEND or behaviour issues.
- Communication needs and reasonable adjustments are considered when a pupil is sharing a concern or participating in safeguarding work.
- Attendance, peer relationships, online activity, exploitation risk, bullying and child-on-child abuse are considered as part of the wider picture.
- The DSL and SENCo share relevant information on a need-to-know basis and coordinate support without blurring their respective roles.

14. Pupil voice and partnership with parents/carers

Pupils will be supported to understand their strengths, needs, support and next steps in a way that is accessible to them. Their views should influence plans and reviews, including preparation for adulthood.

Parents/carers are key partners. Take 1 will communicate concerns early, explain support clearly, seek family knowledge, share plans/reviews and provide opportunities to discuss progress. Where the pupil is placed by a local authority or another school, communication will also include the commissioner as appropriate.

15. Preparation for adulthood and transition

For Take 1's 14-16 cohort, preparation for adulthood is integral to SEND provision. Planning will consider further education, training and employment; independent living skills; community participation; health and wellbeing; communication; travel and self-advocacy, according to the pupil's needs and aspirations.

- Gather and transfer relevant SEND information securely when pupils join or leave.
- Begin post-16 planning early and work with families, careers advisers, colleges/training providers and local authorities.
- Support pupils to understand and communicate the adjustments and strategies that help them.
- Where a pupil has an EHC plan, ensure transition work contributes to relevant outcomes and statutory review processes.

16. Working with external agencies and Nottingham City

Where appropriate, Take 1 works with educational psychology, speech and language therapy, CAMHS/mental health services, health professionals, social care, specialist teaching services, local authority SEND teams, Family Help and other agencies. The precise services involved will depend on the pupil and commissioning arrangements.

For Nottingham City pupils, the Council's SEND Local Offer provides information about education, health and care services. Nottingham City describes the Graduated Approach as the usual route through which most pupils with SEN receive support before an EHC needs assessment is considered.

17. Accessibility

Take 1 will maintain and review arrangements to improve access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, physical environment and information. The school's Accessibility Plan should be read alongside this policy. Individual accessibility and evacuation needs will be considered through risk assessment and reasonable adjustment planning.

18. Staff training and professional development

SEND is a whole-school responsibility. Training will be informed by the needs of the current cohort and may include autism, ADHD/attention and executive functioning, speech/language/communication, literacy difficulties, SEMH, trauma-aware practice, sensory/physical needs, assistive technology, adaptive teaching and safeguarding pupils with SEND.

The SENCo/SEND lead will share relevant changes in national and local guidance. Leaders will check not only whether training has been attended, but whether agreed strategies are understood and implemented in practice.

19. Monitoring, evaluation and governance

Area	Evidence reviewed
Identification	Timeliness and quality of assessments; accuracy of pupil profiles/plans; emerging needs.
Provision	Implementation of reasonable adjustments, classroom strategies, interventions and specialist advice.
Impact	Progress from starting points, attendance, engagement, qualifications/accreditation, wellbeing and preparation for adulthood.
Pupil/family experience	Pupil voice, parent/carer feedback, complaints/themes and participation in reviews.
Staff capacity	Training, confidence, consistency of practice and access to specialist advice.
Governance	Termly/regular reporting to leaders and governors/proprietor, with challenge and follow-up actions.

The renewed Ofsted inspection approach for non-association independent schools places explicit attention on inclusion, timely and accurate identification of need, staff implementation of the graduated approach, accessibility of the curriculum and the impact of support. Take 1 will use these principles for self-evaluation without treating inspection criteria as a substitute for legal duties.

20. Records, confidentiality and information sharing

SEND records will be accurate, up to date and stored securely. Staff will have access to the information they need to teach and support pupils effectively. Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately with parents/carers, commissioners, local authorities and professionals. Safeguarding information remains subject to the school's safeguarding recording and information-sharing arrangements.

21. Complaints

Concerns about SEND provision should initially be raised with the SENCo/SEND lead or Headteacher so that they can be addressed promptly. If the matter is not resolved, the school's formal Complaints Policy and Procedure should be followed. This does not remove any separate statutory rights a parent or young person may have in relation to an EHC needs assessment, EHC plan or disability discrimination.

22. Review and linked documents

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, school registration, commissioning arrangements or the needs of the cohort materially change.

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy 2026/27
- Behaviour / C.A.R.E. Policy 2026/27
- Attendance Policy 2026/27
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Complaints Policy and Procedure 2026/27
- Admissions and Placement Policy
- Online Safety / Mobile Phone arrangements
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions and relevant health/safety procedures

Appendix 1 - Staff SEND quick check

Question	Expected practice
Do I know the pupil's strengths, needs and agreed adjustments?	Check the current pupil profile/plan and ask the SENCo if anything is unclear.
Am I adapting teaching before relying on withdrawal/intervention?	Use high-quality adaptive teaching as the first response.
Is the strategy actually being implemented consistently?	Record and address implementation gaps before judging impact.
How do I know support is working?	Use progress, engagement, attendance, work, pupil voice and other agreed measures.
Could this behaviour/absence indicate unmet need or safeguarding risk?	Consider the wider picture and report safeguarding concerns immediately.
Has the pupil had a voice in the plan?	Make participation accessible and meaningful.
Do we need specialist advice or a further review?	Raise this with the SENCo rather than allowing support to drift.