DDAT Protocol for Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND)

January 2026

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To be reviewed: February 2027

This protocol supports Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT) schools in ensuring inclusive, legally compliant, and consistent practice across all schools, with particular focus on Part-Time Timetables (PTTs), Alternative Provision (AP), and exclusion procedures. It reflects DDAT's vision for SEND, as defined in the Trust's SEND Strategy, and supports a child-centred, aspirational, and compassionate approach.

(**Appendices to this protocol form part of the Trust's required procedures and must be followed in full. Responsibility for their implementation and compliance rests with the school.)**

1. Introduction and Aims

DDAT believes all children are entitled to access an ambitious, knowledge-rich curriculum in a supportive and nurturing environment. This protocol ensures that all actions relating to SEND, exclusions, and part-time timetables are informed by the SEND Code of Practice, DDAT policies, and a commitment to equity and inclusion.

At DDAT, we are committed to fostering a culture of inclusion across all of our schools. Our approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is underpinned by high-quality, inclusive teaching that recognises and responds to the diverse needs of every pupil.

We promote a clearly articulated and consistent framework across our schools that ensures inclusion is not an add-on, but integral to daily classroom practice. This is built on the belief that all children have the right to learn and thrive in a setting that values their individuality and promotes equality of opportunity.

Commitment to Statutory Duties and Equity

All DDAT schools adhere to the statutory responsibilities set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015), ensuring a graduated approach to SEND support (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) and a commitment to early identification and intervention. We also uphold our duties under the Equality Act 2010, striving to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations among all pupils.

Meeting the Needs of Pupils with EHCPs

For pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), schools will strive to develop and tailor their provision to meet each child's individual needs effectively. This includes working collaboratively with families, external agencies, and Local Authorities to ensure that provision is appropriately resourced and monitored for impact.

The EEF '5-a-Day' Model for Inclusive Practice

To support inclusive teaching, DDAT advocates the Education Endowment Foundation's '5-a-day' approach as a practical model for embedding best practice for all learners, particularly those with SEND:

1. **Scaffolding** – Ensuring all pupils can access the curriculum with tailored support

2. **Explicit instruction** – Making learning clear through modelling and guided practice

3. **Cognitive and metacognitive strategies** – Teaching pupils how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning

4. **Flexible grouping** – Organising pupils in varied and purposeful ways to maximise learning

5. **Use of technology** – Enhancing access and engagement through effective technology integration

This model supports the Trust's belief that inclusive practice benefits all pupils and is a cornerstone of quality-first teaching.

2. Part-Time Timetables (PTT)

2.1 Purpose

Part-time timetables should only be used in exceptional circumstances and as a temporary measure to meet individual pupil needs. They must never be used as a long-term solution or as a behaviour management strategy. Schools must maintain high expectations and clear reintegration plans.

2.2 Required Information and Procedure

Please ensure that PTT requests are submitted using the Derby City or Derbyshire PTT form where appropriate. Please also ensure that the PTT is also updated on Arbor. If you have any issues or questions then please contact Trust Schools data and performance lead.

Before implementing a PTT, the following must be completed:

- Risk assessment and safeguarding analysis

- Multi-agency planning meeting including SENCO, parents, and relevant professionals

- Parental consent and completion of Derby City/Derbyshire PTT forms (Notification, Update, Closure)

- Recording on safeguarding systems (CPOMS/MyConcern)

- Ongoing fortnightly reviews and a clear phased return plan

Refer to Appendix A: Part-Time Timetable Checklist.

3. Alternative Provision (AP)

Alternative Provision may be used as a short-term intervention for pupils experiencing significant barriers to accessing mainstream education, including SEMH needs, medical reasons, or reintegration following suspension or exclusion.

3.1 Conditions for Use

- AP must only be used where a graduated response has been followed and evidence-based support has been attempted in school

- AP and provision planning should reference hub-level provision collaboration

- Internal AP provided by the school for its own pupils is recognised as **In-School Units (ISUs)** and may be used for:

  - Planned behavioural or pastoral intervention

  - A final preventative measure for pupils at risk of exclusion

- AP must not be used as an informal exclusion or a mechanism for permanent removal

- All placements must include a risk assessment, safeguarding arrangements, and written parental consent

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must maintain oversight of pupils in AP

- All AP providers must be quality assured and offer appropriate curriculum access, qualified staff, and meaningful assessment and feedback

3.2 Monitoring and Reintegration

All AP placements must:

- Be reviewed at least in accordance with Derbyshire/ Derby City timescale protocols with input from school, family, pupil, and relevant professionals

- Have clearly defined outcomes and a reintegration plan

- Be reported anonymously to the Local Authority / LTC to support accountability and monitoring of vulnerable groups

4. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion should always be a last resort, considered only after all other strategies have been exhausted.

4.1 DDAT Expectations

- Schools must follow DDAT and statutory policies fully before considering permanent exclusion

- Emergency multi-agency meetings must be convened

- Please ensure that DDAT SIT team are informed of any decisions through notifying the PA to the CEO who will inform the CEO, DCEO and SIT.

- Meetings must include family voice, review of support to date, exploration of alternatives, and an agreed action plan

- DDAT will strongly endorse engagement with Derby City and Derbyshire Local Authorities to avoid permanent exclusion wherever possible

The School Improvement Team remains available to discuss:

- Permanent Exclusion (PEX) considerations

- Managed moves

- Complex SEND, parental, or behaviour-related meetings

Before excluding a pupil with SEND, the Trust expects:

- A clearly documented graduated response (Assess–Plan–Do–Review)

- All reasonable adjustments to have been trialled and reviewed

- Appropriate specialist advice (e.g. EPs, health, outreach, PINS) to have been sought and followed

- A clear reintegration plan where appropriate

- The pupil's voice and lived experience to be captured

- Alternatives to exclusion to be fully considered

Additional considerations:

- Clear understanding of what is happening for learning

- Recording of what works as well as what does not, including any 'circuit breaker' impact

- Regular reviews, typically every six weeks

5. Embedding the SEND Strategy

This protocol reflects the principles of the DDAT SEND Strategy, ensuring that:

- All teachers are teachers of SEND

- The graduated response is consistently implemented

- Partnerships with parents and external agencies are central to decision-making

- Pupils with SEND are supported to achieve ambitious outcomes in inclusive classrooms

- Use of AP and exclusion is reviewed in relation to disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups

All inclusion-related protocols, guidance, and training must be:

- Strategically planned

- Signed off at Executive Team level – Deputy CEO

- Implemented consistently across the Trust

6. Governance, Accountability and Leadership Expectations

This protocol operates within, and must be applied in conjunction with, DDAT Trust policies and statutory guidance. While the Trust provides strategic direction, support, and oversight, responsibility for compliance with this protocol and associated policies sits firmly at school level.

Local Trust Committees (LTCs provide strategic oversight and challenge in relation to the Trust's statutory duties towards pupils with SEND. This oversight does not replace the school's responsibility to act lawfully and in line with Trust policy.

Headteachers, as the responsible persons for their schools, must ensure that LTCs receive appropriate, anonymised information enabling oversight of:

- Use of part-time timetables

- Use of alternative provision

- Suspension and exclusion patterns for pupils with SEND

- Assurance that the graduated response has been applied prior to any reduction in provision

Reporting should focus on patterns, trends, and impact rather than individual case management. This will be termly though the headteacher's report.

Headteachers retain full operational responsibility and accountability for ensuring that decisions are compliant with Trust policy, lawful, proportionate, evidence-based, safeguarding-informed, and regularly reviewed.

Trust-level monitoring will be used to identify trends, assure consistency, and inform strategic development; however, it does not transfer accountability away from the school.

7. Headteacher Guidance: SEND-Informed Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Apply the graduated response rigorously and in line with Trust policy
- Ensure all decisions comply with statutory guidance and DDAT policies
- Use PTTs and AP sparingly, with clear purpose, evidence, and review
- Engage parents early and transparently
- Maintain safeguarding oversight at all times
- Capture pupil voice
- Report appropriately to LTCs
- Review arrangements regularly and act promptly

Don't

- deviate from Trust policy or statutory guidance
- use PTTs or AP as informal exclusion
- bypass the graduated response
- allow temporary arrangements to drift or become embedded
- rely solely on behaviour narratives
- exclude without exhausting alternatives
- leave governance uninformed

8. Parental Communication

DDAT is committed to working supportively with families while maintaining appropriate accountability at school level. Headteachers are best placed to lead these conversations, ensuring responses align with Trust policy and values.

When engaging with parents, schools should hold firm to the shared vision that every child can embrace *life in all its fullness* (John 10:10), reflecting DDAT's values of Inclusivity, Integrity, and Community.

9. Staff Well-Being and Support

DDAT recognises that inclusive education depends on supported and resilient staff. As part of the Trust's inclusion strategy:

- Regular SSIO meetings provide structured professional support

- Safeguarding and SEND supervision meetings offer protected spaces for reflection and guidance

DDAT will further develop protocols to:

- Embed staff well-being within inclusion practice in collaboration with the Well-being Strategy

- Record and review incidents of staff injury related to pupil dysregulation, ensuring accountability, learning, and continuous improvement

This protocol should be read alongside the DDAT SEND Strategy, Alternative Provision Policy, Part-Time Timetable guidance, Suspension and Exclusion Policy, and the Trust's Steps for Suspension guidance to ensure full consistency and compliance.

Appendix 1

Part-Time timetables- Please complete the following and store on Arbor:

Why a part time timetable? *Has the LA policy for reduced timetable been adhered to?* *Has AP been considered?* *Have the child's needs been fully considered? EHCP? Behaviour plans? Social care involvement? Health?* *What has been done up to this decision? How has this been logged?* *Have you consulted external agencies for support?* *Have you implemented nurture strategies?* *Have you considered staggered timetable?* *Have resources and staffing been considered?* *How have you involved parents in the provision?* *Have you sought support from other schools in the trust?*
Meeting *Convene a meeting between the Headteacher, SENCO, the pupil's parents and relevant LA/Trust professionals to discuss the appropriateness of a part-time timetable. The class teacher will be involved should this be necessary.*
Part-time timetable planning and consent form *Rationale* *Objectives and timescales, review dates* *Plan for phased return* *Support identified* *Written approval from parents*
Sharing with professionals *Complete the relevant Derbyshire/Derby City PTT forms:* *Notification* *Update* *Closure* *Governors*
Review meetings *Recorded on My Concern/ CPOMS/ School own system*
Chronology *Record fortnightly meetings*
Safeguarding *Pupil signs in and signs out* *Give consideration to the safeguarding implications of the pupil being away from the school site for a longer period of time*

Appendix 2

<u>**Emergency meeting agenda for children at risk of permanent exclusion**</u>

Welcome and Introductions

- Attendee introductions and confirmation of roles

- Purpose and urgency of the meeting

- **Ask how the child is currently doing if not in school. Give parents/ guardians the opportunity to reflect**

Overview of Concerns

- Summary of school's concerns

    o Behaviour incidents and patterns

    o Academic engagement

    o Social, emotional, or safeguarding issues

- Recent escalation or key incidents triggering the meeting

Support to Date

- Review of current support in place (risk assessments, draft EHCP, interventions, early help, parent support workshops)

- Family engagement and views

- Agency involvement to date

SEND and Inclusion Pathway

- Update on EHCP status or request

- Alternative provision discussions (if applicable)

- LA involvement: IYFA, SEND casework, outreach

- Timescales for any upcoming decisions or moves

Minimising Risk of Exclusion

- Immediate support options:

    o Staffing, environment adjustments, timetabling

    o Therapeutic or specialist input

    o External mentoring / behaviour outreach

- Safeguarding and wellbeing implications

- Consideration of managed move or short-term provision

Action Planning and Agency Contributions

- Agree short-term and medium-term actions

- Assign responsibilities and deadlines

- Identify lead professional for case coordination

Next Steps and Review Date

- Confirm agreed actions

- Set date for next review/check-in

- Clarify communication methods and meeting notes circulation

Appendix 3

Steps for Suspension

DDAT Concise Headteacher Guide: Suspensions & Permanent Exclusions

1. Before Any Suspension or PEX

- Establish facts using the balance of probabilities.

- Allow the pupil to give their account.

- Consider SEND, SEMH, safeguarding, bullying, mental health, contextual factors.

- Ensure the graduated response has been completed for SEND/SEMH.

- Consider alternatives: in-school adjustments, risk assessments, timetable changes, therapeutic support, off-site direction, managed move.

2. When Suspending a Pupil

- Make a lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate decision.

- Inform parents immediately (phone + written).

- Written notice includes: reason, length, Day-6 provision information, rights to representation.

- **Notify:** Local Trust Committee, LA, social worker/VSH where applicable.

- Arrange suitable work; for suspensions >5 days in a term, full-time education from Day 6.

Note: The school is fully **responsible for deciding whether a suspension is appropriate** and **for determining the number of days issued**. All suspension decisions must be lawful, reasonable, fair, and proportionate, and the duration must reflect the nature and seriousness of the incident. The school must ensure that the number of days applied is justified, compliant with statutory limits, and recorded accurately.

3. Permanent Exclusion – Required Process

Permanent exclusion must only be considered when there is a serious breach or persistent breaches AND remaining in school would harm others.

Mandatory Step Before PEX: Emergency Multi-Agency Review Meeting (agenda attached)

This meeting must take place before a permanent exclusion decision is made.

Purpose:

- Review all support provided

- Confirm needs have been addressed

- Explore whether any final adjustments could avoid PEX

- Ensure pupil and parent voice

- Confirm that all reasonable steps have been exhausted

4. Decision and Immediate Actions After Emergency Meeting

- Notify parents immediately (phone + written).

- Written notice includes: PEX decision, reasons, rights to LTC meeting, IRP, SEND expert.

- Notify: LTC, LA, home authority, social worker/VSH.

- Arrange full-time education from Day 6.

- Prepare full evidence bundle for LTC.

5. Local Trust Committee Requirements

- Must meet within 15 school days.

- Provide evidence: chronology, statements, SEND paperwork, graduated response, risk assessments, safeguarding info.

6. After the LTC Decision

- If not reinstated, parents must receive IRP information.

- Cannot remove pupil from roll until: 15 days with no IRP request OR parents decline IRP.

- If IRP requested, wait for panel outcome.