Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Date policy last reviewed: Harvest Term 2026

Contents

1. Statement of Intent
2. Legal Framework
3. Objectives
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Identifying SEND
6. Safeguarding
7. SEN Support
8. Admission
9. Transition
10. Partnership with Parents/Carers
11. SEND Funding
12. Educational Health Care Needs Assessments and Educational Health Care Plans
13. Reviewing Educational Health Care Plans
14. Complaints
15. Staff Training
16. Data and Record Keeping
17. Publishing Information
18. Partnership Working
19. Local Offer
20. Monitoring Procedures

1. Statement of Intent

At the Free School Norwich we believe that all pupils are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve their best. Together we support pupils to **Thrive, Strive and Achieve**, through an inclusive and safe environment, preparing them for adulthood. We are committed to providing an inclusive environment and challenging curriculum, with provision which is tailored to meet the needs of all pupils.

This policy outlines the framework we will use to provide an appropriate high-quality education for all pupils with SEND. Through the successful implementation of this policy, we aim to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

The school will work with the Local Authority (LA) in ensuring that the following principles underpin this policy:

- The involvement of pupils and their parents/carers in decision-making.
- The early identification of pupils' needs and early intervention to support them.
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High-quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of this policy, a pupil is defined as having SEND if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.
- A disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age in mainstream settings.
- Special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream settings.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation 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
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2024

This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2015) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

3. 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.
- Fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with SEND as set out in the SEND code of practice.
- Fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with disabilities as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The **Board of Trustees** will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently across the school.
- Ensuring the school meets its duties in relation to supporting pupils with SEND.
- Ensuring that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCo for the school.

The **Head** has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with high quality teaching and a positive and enriching learning environment for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. This includes:

- Ensuring that the school holds high expectations for all pupils with SEND.
- Establishing and sustaining practices that enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensuring that the school works in collaboration with parents, carers and external agencies to identify any additional needs and to provide support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensuring the school fulfils its statutory duties under the SEND code of practice.
- Work with the Board of Trustees to ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENDCo for the school.
- Ensuring that the SENDCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- Ensuring that the SENDCo has/is completing the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators.
- Regularly and carefully reviewing the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils with SEND.

The **SENDCo** will be responsible for:

- Collaborating with the Board of Trustees and Head, to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

- The day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy.
- The coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND.
- Advising on a graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Liaising with the parents/carers of pupils with SEND.
- Being a key point of contact for external agencies.
- Liaising with the potential future providers of education to ensure a smooth transition.
- Working with the Board of Trustees and the Head to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date, in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.
- Being familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and working with external agencies and specialists.

The **Teachers** will be responsible for:

- Planning and reviewing support for pupils with SEND, in collaboration with parents/carers, the SENDCo and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aiming to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- Ensuring every pupil with SEND is able to access the full curriculum.
- Being accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class, including those with SEND.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided to any pupils with SEND who they are working with.
- Understanding and implementing strategies to identify and support pupils with SEND with the support of the SENDCo.
- Communicating any changes in behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern with relevant parties.

5. Identifying SEND

We recognise that early identification and effective provision improves long-term outcomes for pupils. As part of the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils, we have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND as outlined below:

- Concerns are highlighted to the SENDCO through observation and conversation with parents/carers, teachers and other professionals; data analysis of progress/attainment and behaviour trends or changes.
- If the universal provision is not enough to support the child; the teacher and SENDCO will produce a Learning Plan to document further strategies used to support the child. This will be shared with parents/carers for their input.
- If the additional strategies are enough to support the child, their name will be noted on the SEN Register as 'monitor'.
- If the additional strategies are not enough to support the child, further investigation, support and advice from specialists or external agencies will be sought. Learning Plans will be developed in accordance with specialist advice and progress will be monitored. The child will be noted on the SEN Register as 'SEN Support'.
- Learning Plans will be reviewed 2 - 3 times a year to ensure that the provision that is in place is adequate.
- If the additional strategies are still not supporting the child and we have been though at least 2 cycles of Assess, Plan, Do, Review* (APDR), parents/carers and school will come together to consider next steps.

*Please note, the APDR cycle is explained in Section 7 of this policy.

6. Safeguarding

Evidence shows that pupils with SEND are often more vulnerable to safeguarding challenges. We recognise 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.
- 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.
- A different cognitive understanding and being unable to understand the difference between fact or fiction in online content.

Our Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that these additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse. Care will be taken to notice, record and investigate any safeguarding concerns. We will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with SEND and additional needs.

7. SEND support

Once a pupil has been identified with SEND, we employ a graduated approach to meeting the pupil's needs. This is done through the adoption of the four-part cycle: Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR). The process is as follows:

- **Assess -** establishing a clear assessment of the pupil's needs.
- **Plan -** agreeing the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.
- **Do -** implementing the agreed interventions and support
- **Review -** analysing the effectiveness of the interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress in line with the agreed review date.

Following the review stage, if needs are not being met, the process starts again with further assessment. Where higher levels of need are identified, the school will access specialised assessments, support and advice from external agencies and professionals.

In circumstances where a pupil with SEN has not made expected progress, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the needs of the pupil, we will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA), in consultation with parents/carers.

8. Admission

We ensure that we meet our duties set under the DfE's 'School Admissions Code' 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 that has named the school in their EHC plan.
- Considering applications from parents/carers of children who have SEND but do 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/carers of pupils with SEND from applying for a place.
- Ensuring the school's oversubscription arrangements will not disadvantage children with SEND.

9. Transition

When a new child joins our school, we complete a thorough transition process. This includes collating records from parents/carers, previous settings and any external agencies or specialists who have worked with the child. We then use the collated information, alongside our own assessments and observations to enable us to provide the appropriate level of support.

When children leave the school, information will be shared to support the continuing provision required for the pupil. A successful transition will be supported through any means felt necessary, for example, additional school visits.

Where child has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), these will be reviewed in sufficient time prior to a pupil moving between key phases of education.

10. Partnership with Parents/Carers

We firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers that will enable children and young people with SEND to achieve their potential. We do this by:

- Keeping parents/carers informed about SEND provision or assessment.
- Working effectively with all other agencies supporting children and their parents/carers.
- Providing all information in an accessible way.
- Encouraging parents/carers to inform school of any difficulties they perceive their child may be having or other needs the child may have which need addressing.
- Allowing parents/carers opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the school can help their child
- Sharing and agreeing targets for their child.
- Making parents/carers aware of the Norfolk Educational Needs and Disability, Information, Advise and Support Service (SENDIASS): https://www.kids.org.uk/sendiass
- Where the LA provides a pupil with an EHCP, we will involve the parents/carers in discussions surrounding the implementation of the plan's provisions.
- Where necessary, we will facilitate support from an advocate to ensure the parent/carer's views are heard and acknowledged.

11. SEND Funding

Where additional pupil needs are identified the school will use its delegated funding allowance to provide support for the benefit of pupils identified with SEND. Our School's Notional Allocation of Funding for SEND is used universally to ensure all children with SEND receive provision expected at School Support.

When a child receives a level of support which is over and above that which can be provided by Notional Funding, school can submit a request for Element 3 Funding. The LA provide additional funding based on their own policies. Any additional funding will not be attached to an individual child but will instead be allocated to the 'cohort' of children. We can then use any additional funding to better meet need.
For further information on Element 3 funding visit the LA website - Element 3 funding - What is Element 3 funding? - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council

12. Education Health Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) and Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP)

On occasions where despite having taken action to identify, assess and meet the needs of a pupil with SEND they have not made the expected levels of progress, the school will consult with parents and consider requesting an EHCNA.

As part of the EHCNA, the school will meet its duty by:

- Responding to any request for information as part of the EHCNA process.
- Providing the LA with any school-specific information and evidence about the pupil's profile and progress.
- Gathering any advice received from relevant professionals regarding their education, health and care needs, desired outcomes, and any special education, health and care provision that may be required to meet their identified needs and achieve desired outcomes.

If, following the assessment, the LA decides not to issue an EHCP, the school will be provided with written feedback collected during the EHCNA. We will use this information to contribute to the graduated approach and inform how the outcomes sought for the pupil can be achieved through our provision.

Where the LA decides to issue an EHCP, it must consult the prospective school by sending a copy of the draft plan and consider their comments before deciding whether to name it in the pupil's EHCP.

We will admit any pupil that names our school in an EHCP and will ensure that all those teaching or working with a pupil are aware of the pupil's needs and that arrangements are in place to meet them.

13. Reviewing Educational Health Care Plans

We will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress alongside the EHCP Outcomes, during the year and conduct a formal EHCP Annual Review.

We will:

- Work with the LA and relevant individuals to ensure an annual review meeting takes place.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the meeting.
- 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.
- 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 EHCP to the LA, keeping parents involved at all times.
- 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 EHCP.
- Clarify to the parents and pupil that they have the right to appeal the decisions made regarding the EHCP.
- 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.

If a pupil's needs significantly change, the school will request a re-assessment of an EHCP.

14. Complaints

Our Complaints Policy is available on the school website.

If a pupil or parent/carer is unhappy with any matter regarding SEND they should in the first instance raise their concern with the class teacher.

If the problem is not resolved, reference should then be made to the SENDCo before discussion with the Head. If satisfaction is not achieved through discussion with the Head the complaint is referred to the SEND Trustee.

In the unlikely instance of the matter not being resolved, parents may wish to seek further advice and support from SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and

Support Service). This is a free statutory service which provides information, advice and support to parents/carers and children/young people and those with SEND and Disabilities.

Tel: 01603 704070
Email: norfolksendiass@norfolk.gov.uk

15. Staff Training

The school is committed to the learning and development of all its staff members. We ensure that CPD provision allows staff to develop their awareness, skills, and practices in identifying, educating, and assessing pupils with SEND.

We currently have qualified Trauma, Thrive, Norfolk Steps and Dyslexia Support practitioners as part of our staff team. Professional development aims to improve our practice, develop our school environment and improve outcomes for pupils at our school.

16. Data and Record Keeping

All information about pupils will be kept in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

The school's records will:

- Include details of SEND, outcomes, action, 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.
- Be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it, so far as reasonably practicable.

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

Confidentiality

The school will not disclose any EHCP 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 the headteacher (or equivalent position) of the setting at which the pupil is intending to start their next phase of education.

17. Publishing information

We will publish information on the school website about the implementation of this policy. The information published will be updated when necessary.

The SEN Information Report will be published on the school website. It will include all the information outlined in *Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25 years*.

18. Partnership Working

We will assist the LA in carrying out their 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).

We will endeavour to work with specialists and external agencies to seek assessment, advice and support for children with SEND when it is deemed necessary.

19. Local Offer

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

We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide for pupils with SEND. The LA's webpage is a good source of support and information about services available locally that can help families develop their understanding of their child's needs.

SEND Local Offer - Norfolk County Council

20. Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Head in conjunction with the Board of Trustees and the SENDCo; any changes made to this policy will be communicated.

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