

"Inspiring all to soar to new heights."

Inspiring children to soar to new heights. Isaiah 40:31

Challenge ● Creativity ● Collaboration ● Critical Thinking ● Courage

Downham C of E Primary School

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy 2026

Staff consulted: 01.09.2025

Review Date: *Annual review*

1. Purpose and status of this policy

This policy sets out how Downham C of E Primary School identifies, assesses, plans for, provides and reviews support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It should be read alongside the school's SEN Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Equality Policy, Medical Conditions/Medicine Administration Policy, Behaviour Policy, Attendance Policy, Safeguarding Policy and complaints procedure.

The school will keep its SEN Information Report up to date annually and will update information during the year where there are relevant changes. The school will make the information accessible to parents, carers, pupils and other interested parties.

2. Legislative and guidance framework

The policy is informed by the current statutory framework and guidance applicable to schools in England, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014, particularly Part 3 concerning children and young people with SEND.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, including Schedule 1 requirements for the SEN Information Report.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Equality Act 2010 and the school's duties concerning disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments.
- Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10, concerning the school's accessibility plan.
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Relevant Department for Education guidance concerning SENCO responsibilities and qualifications.

The school will review this policy when relevant legislation, statutory guidance or local authority arrangements change.

3. Our aims and principles

- To identify SEND at the earliest appropriate opportunity and respond to need rather than relying solely on diagnostic labels.
- To provide high-quality, ambitious teaching for all pupils and additional provision where this is required.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and reduce barriers to participation, learning and communication.
- To enable pupils with SEND to participate fully in the life of the school alongside their peers.
- To use an Assess–Plan–Do–Review approach and evaluate whether provision is improving outcomes.
- To involve pupils and parents/carers as partners in assessment, planning, provision and review.
- To promote positive emotional, social and mental wellbeing.
- To work collaboratively with the Local Authority and relevant health, social care and voluntary sector services.

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- To maintain and develop staff expertise through appropriate continuing professional development. To maintain high expectations for attainment, progress, independence, participation and preparation for the next stage of education.

4. What are SEN and disability?

The school uses the definitions set out in the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010. A child or young person has SEN where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision. A disability under the Equality Act 2010 is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The school recognises that SEN and disability overlap but are not synonymous. A pupil may be disabled without having SEN, and a pupil may have SEN without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability.

5. Broad areas of need

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

The school recognises that pupils may have needs in more than one area and that needs may change over time.

6. Identification and assessment

The school may identify that a pupil requires additional support through:

- concerns raised by parents/carers, pupils, teachers, external agencies or a previous school;
- screening or assessment on entry or following a concern;
- whole-school attainment and progress information;
- teacher observation and assessment;
- attendance, behaviour, wellbeing or participation information where this indicates a barrier to learning;
- information from health, social care or other professionals;
- the pupil asking for help.

Identification will consider the pupil's strengths, barriers to learning, progress, development, participation, communication and wellbeing. The school will avoid treating a medical diagnosis alone as a requirement for SEN support.

7. What parents/carers should do if they have concerns

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak first with the class teacher, although they may contact the Headteacher/SENCO Team directly where this is more appropriate. The school will listen to parents' concerns, aspirations and information about their child and will explain the next steps.

SENCO Team contacts: Ms T Walker and Miss Bailey, 01268 710387.

senco@downham-ceap.essex.sch.uk

8. Graduated approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Assess

The school will gather and analyse relevant information, including attainment, progress, classroom evidence, pupil and parent views, and information from other professionals where available.

Plan

Where additional or different provision is required, the intended outcomes, provision, responsibilities, review arrangements and measures of success will be recorded. Parents/carers and the pupil will be involved.

Do

The agreed provision will be implemented, normally through the class teacher with advice and support from the SENCO Team and other professionals where appropriate. Provision may include classroom adaptations, targeted intervention, specialist strategies, equipment or adult support.

Review

Progress and the impact of provision will be reviewed at least termly. The school will consider whether provision should continue, change, reduce, increase or escalate.

Where progress remains inadequate despite appropriate and well-delivered provision, the school will seek further advice and consider whether an EHC needs assessment should be requested, in discussion with parents/carers and the pupil as appropriate.

9. Provision and teaching

- High-quality teaching is the first response to pupils' needs.
- Teachers will adapt teaching, resources, questioning, scaffolding, grouping, pace and the learning environment where appropriate.
- The curriculum and learning environment will be adapted to reduce barriers and improve access.
- Specialist equipment, assistive technology and/or additional adult support may be used where appropriate.
- Interventions will have a clear rationale, intended outcomes and review arrangements.
- Intervention will not routinely replace access to high-quality classroom teaching or unnecessarily limit curriculum entitlement.
- Provision and reasonable adjustments will be communicated to relevant staff and reviewed for effectiveness.

10. Individual Support Plans, outcomes and review

For pupils receiving SEN support, the school uses Individual Support Plans. These are jointly written by the SENCO Team and class teacher, with the class teacher leading termly meetings with parents/carers.

Plans should, where appropriate, record:

- the pupil's strengths and needs;

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- the pupil's and parents'/carers' views and aspirations;
  specific and measurable outcomes;
- the provision and reasonable adjustments to be made;
- who is responsible for each element of provision;
- how progress and impact will be measured;
- the review date;
- any external advice and actions arising from it.

11. Pupil voice and participation

The school will seek and record the views of pupils with SEND in a way that is appropriate to their age, development and communication needs. Pupils should be supported to understand their strengths, needs, outcomes and provision and, where appropriate, to contribute to Individual Support Plans, reviews, transition planning and decisions about reasonable adjustments.

Where a pupil cannot communicate their views in a conventional format, staff will use appropriate communication methods and seek advice where necessary.

12. Parent/carer partnership

- Parents/carers will be involved in assessment, planning, review and decisions about support.
- Parents/carers will receive information about progress towards agreed outcomes at least termly where SEN support is in place.
- Parents/carers may request meetings with the class teacher or SENCO Team when they have concerns or relevant information to share.
- The school will provide information in an accessible form where reasonably required.
- The school will explain the contribution parents/carers can make to supporting their child's learning and wellbeing.

13. Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required. Accessibility will be considered across:

- the curriculum and teaching;
- the physical environment;
- school trips, clubs and other activities;
- communication and information;
- assessment and examinations where applicable;
- school policies, procedures and routines.

The school's Accessibility Plan will set out relevant actions to increase access to the curriculum, improve the physical environment and improve access to information.

The current policy records that the school building has no stairs and that classrooms are accessible from the main entrance or individual classroom entrances.

14. Inclusion in activities, trips and physical activity

- SEND must not in itself be a reason for excluding a pupil from a school activity.
- Risk assessments will consider individual needs and reasonable adjustments.
- Staffing, equipment, communication and other support will be planned so that pupils can participate as fully as possible.
- Where an activity presents a genuine barrier, the school will work with the pupil and family to identify reasonable alternatives or adjustments.

15. Emotional, social and mental wellbeing

- The school will provide pastoral support and a PSHE curriculum that supports emotional and social development.
- Targeted, evidence-informed small-group support may be used for pupils requiring additional help.
- Pupil and parent/carer voice will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of support.
- Where wellbeing needs are complex or persistent, the school may seek advice from appropriate specialist services with consent where required.

16. Medical needs

Pupils with medical needs will be supported in accordance with the school's policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions. Where appropriate, an individual healthcare plan will be developed with parents/carers, the pupil and relevant health professionals. Staff administering medication will receive appropriate training and will follow agreed procedures.

17. Specialist services and external agencies

Where a pupil's needs require expertise beyond that available within school, the school may seek advice or involvement from relevant Local Authority, health, social care, education and voluntary-sector services.

18. EHC needs assessment and EHCPs

Where a pupil has significant and complex needs and the provision required cannot reasonably be provided through the school's resources and ordinarily available provision, the school may request an EHC needs assessment from the Local Authority. The school will work with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant agencies throughout the process.

For pupils with an EHCP, provision will be delivered in accordance with the plan. Decisions about provision will be reviewed through the statutory annual review process and in partnership with parents/carers and the pupil.

19. Transition

- Transition planning will begin early enough to identify and reduce barriers.
- For pupils joining the school, information from previous settings will be sought promptly and meetings may be arranged with families.

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- Pupils with SEND will be offered additional transition opportunities where appropriate.
  For pupils moving to secondary school or another setting, relevant information will be shared with the receiving setting.
- For pupils with EHCPs, statutory annual review arrangements will be used to support planning for the next phase of education.

20. Staff expertise, SENCO and governance

The SENCO Team leads and coordinates the school's SEND provision. The school will ensure that the SENCO Team have the status, training, time and access to leadership needed to discharge the role effectively.

From 1 September 2024, the NPQ for SENCOs became the mandatory qualification for relevant newly appointed SENCOs, subject to the transitional and exemption arrangements. The school will ensure that its SENCO arrangements comply with the current statutory qualification requirements.

Staff development will be based on identified pupil needs and will include whole-school awareness, enhanced training and specialist development where appropriate.

The governing body will maintain oversight of SEND provision, including the effectiveness of provision, accessibility, compliance, use of resources and the implementation of improvement priorities.

21. Monitoring, evaluation and impact

The school will evaluate SEND provision using a range of evidence, including:

- progress and attainment data;
- quality of teaching and classroom observation;
- work scrutiny and planning review;
- review of Individual Support Plans and intervention records;
- attendance, behaviour, participation and wellbeing information where relevant;
- pupil and parent/carer feedback;
- staff feedback and professional development records;
- external specialist advice and outcomes;
- analysis of SEND funding and resource deployment;
- transition outcomes and destination information where appropriate.

Evaluation will focus on impact and outcomes rather than simply the amount of support provided. Where provision is not effective, the school will identify actions, responsibilities and timescales for improvement.

22. Resources and funding

The school will use available SEND resources to meet identified needs and will deploy staffing, equipment, specialist advice and interventions according to need. Funding decisions will be informed by pupil need, statutory responsibilities, available resources and the effectiveness of existing provision.

23. Complaints and concerns

Parents/carers who have concerns about SEND provision should normally raise them first with the class teacher or SENCO Team so that the school has an opportunity to resolve the concern. Where a concern remains unresolved, the school's formal complaints procedure should be followed. The governing body will oversee complaints in accordance with the school's published arrangements.

Parents/carers may also seek independent information, advice and support through relevant Local Authority SEND services, mediation arrangements and statutory appeal routes where applicable.

24. Local Offer and parent support

Essex Local Offer: https://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/

The school will provide or signpost parents/carers to independent SEND information, advice and support services and will keep the relevant contact information in its SEN Information Report up to date.

25. SEN Information Report

The school will publish an SEN Information Report containing the information required by Schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and the additional disability/accessibility information required for schools. The report will be reviewed annually and updated sooner where relevant information changes.

The report will cover, as applicable:

- the kinds of SEN for which provision is made;
- identification and assessment arrangements;
- provision and how effectiveness is evaluated;
- progress assessment and review arrangements;
- teaching approach and curriculum/learning-environment adaptation;
- additional support and specialist expertise;
- participation in school activities;
- emotional, social and mental wellbeing;
- SENCO name and contact details;
- staff expertise and training;
- equipment and facilities;
- parent/carer and pupil involvement;
- complaints arrangements;
- partnership with health, social care, Local Authority and voluntary organisations;
- support services for parents/carers;
- transition arrangements;
- the Local Authority Local Offer;
- admission and equality arrangements for disabled pupils;
- steps taken to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably;
- accessibility arrangements and the school's Accessibility Plan.

26. Policy review and approval

This policy will be reviewed at least annually. Earlier review will take place where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, Local Authority arrangements, the school's SEND provision, accessibility arrangements or the role of the SENCO.