



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY POLICY

To include **Early Years Foundation Stage**



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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Scope of document

Policy for Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties, Disabilities and Inclusion. This policy applies to all pupils in school, including Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy takes account of the following documents and guidance: -

- Accessible Schools: Summary Guidance DFES (2002) (now DfE)
- Independent School Standards 2019
- Equality Act (2010) *updated 2014*
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (came into force May 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools DfE (November 2018)
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2015) Equality and Human rights Commission
- SEND Code of Practice for 0 to 25 years – statutory guidance January 2015 (*updated September 2024*)
- Special Educational Needs – A Guide for Parents/Carers (March 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA 2001) *updated August 2025*
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2020) *updated Sep 2023*
- Supporting Mental Health in schools and colleges (DfE 2017) *updated May 2018*
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015) *updated August 2017*
- The Children and Families Act (DfE 2014) *updated 2024*
- ISI framework (latest version)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

This policy is to be read in conjunction with all other policies. Please cross refer to the following policies: -

- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying
- Assessment for Learning
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- EAL policy
- Confidentiality
- Curriculum
- Equal Opportunities
- First Aid
- Administering of Medicines and Supporting children with Medical Conditions
- Health and Safety including Out of School Activities and Visits
- Social Moral Spiritual Cultural
- Relationships Sex Education

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in addition, when regulatory updates are published.

Introduction

Brackenfield School welcomes all pupils who can benefit from the opportunities we offer and who can flourish in the caring environment we have established. Treating every pupil as an individual is very important and all pupils are welcome including those with special educational needs. At Brackenfield we value the individuality of all our pupils, and we are committed to giving all pupils every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. This policy has been written to help ensure that this happens for every pupil in our school, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, attainment, disability or background. Central to the inclusive ethos of the school is the determination to provide an environment and an experience in which learning, and the growth of expertise can take place within a supportive, stimulating, happy and cooperative community. Respecting each pupil's unique personality, experiences, interests, strengths and weaknesses, we aim to maximise the development of our pupils.

We are committed to the principle that early identification of pupils' needs combined with early intervention will enable them to fulfil their full potential - academically, socially, physically and emotionally and we endeavour to ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of both the pupil and their parents are considered to promote full participation in any decisions.

Teachers are responsible for the progress and development of the pupils in their class and will monitor progress and provide appropriate experiences and tasks in order to stimulate, challenge and remove barriers to learning. In doing so, teachers will identify both pupils of exceptional ability and pupils who display any difficulties in learning. We believe that all pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and our teachers set high expectations for every pupil whatever their prior attainment. The provision for the special educational needs of these pupils will be in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

We recognise that pupils have a right to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them from the early years and their views will be given due consideration according to their age, maturity and capability.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

We advise parents of pupils with any special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the Headmaster and SENCO before accepting a place at the school to ensure that adequate and effective provision can be made.

Parents should provide a copy of any EHCP, Educational Psychologists or medical reports/assessments if their child has already been diagnosed with any learning difficulties or disabilities.

Pupils with SEN include those who have difficulties with their Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Sensory and Physical Needs. A pupil has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age

Disabled children who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 i.e. '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their

ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Pupils with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but we recognise that there can be an overlap between disabled children and those with SEN.

Whilst some pupils are admitted to the school with information in existence about their needs, more often these needs will become apparent as a pupil progresses through the school. Whenever possible, the needs of these pupils will be met by the class teachers and the support staff to ensure that they have access to the whole curriculum. Where learning difficulties are more complex, additional teaching/learning support will be provided as appropriate. This can either be on a short term basis to help overcome specific difficulties, or a programme of intervention over a longer period of time.

Aims

- To ensure equal opportunities for all pupils.
- To ensure that the individual needs of all pupils are met to promote their educational and social development.
- To promote a positive attitude to all pupils which values what each pupil brings to the school.
- To raise and maintain self-esteem of the pupils with a strong focus on high aspirations and improving outcomes.
- To provide an appropriate but stimulating learning environment with challenging experiences to motivate the pupils and extend their learning, whilst affording them the opportunity to regularly experience success.
- To ensure all pupils are fully included within the school community whatever their needs or disabilities.
- To develop a sense of responsibility in pupils for their own learning and behaviour.
- To promote close and supportive links between home, school and the community: involving parents and pupils in both reviewing and developing provision as well as the learning process.
- To provide school staff and the school community with guidelines on how to achieve maximum levels of participation from all pupils in all aspects of school life.

Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for everyone in the school. School leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCo, identify any patterns in the identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching. We recognise that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges, and this is reflected in our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy as well as in the high levels of pastoral support. The identification of SEND underpins the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.

Headmaster

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Regularly monitoring the SEN policy and procedures and regularly evaluating their implementation and effectiveness (including formally once per year).
- Ensuring that a framework is in place which maintains regular assessment of pupils' work and progress.

- Meeting with parents and pupils to discuss planned support and interventions.
- Regularly reviewing how expertise and resources are used to address SEN through the School Improvement Plan to ensure whole-school provision.

SENCo

(The SENCo is Mrs Amy Wardell)

The Deputy Head and SENCo have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND including those with Education Health & Care Plans (EHC plans). The SENCo provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, pupils, parents and carers and other agencies and is aware of the services provided under the local offer.

The role of the SENCo:

- to have the relevant qualification and experience to ensure that detailed implementation of support is available for pupils with SEND, ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to pupils with SEND and the school's approach to identifying and meeting SEND
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the school
- liaising with professionals or agencies such as educational psychologists, health, social care and LA support services
- to provide advice and guidance to early years practitioners on the development of inclusive early learning environments
- to help make the links between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for pupils with SEND
- to provide advice and practical support on approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the SEND Code of Practice
- to develop and disseminate good practice
- to support the development and delivery of training
- to liaise with parents of pupils with SEND and inform and advise them of support services available

Additional responsibilities:

- to work closely with the Deputy Head to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- advise on a graduated approach to providing SEND support
- ensure that the records of all pupils with SEND are kept up to date
- inform staff of any change to requirements and providing advice which may be of benefit to their teaching and the pupils learning.
- maintain the SEND, ACE (adverse childhood experiences) and Talents and Interests registers (plus others as needed)
- monitor effectiveness of specific intervention programmes
- work in partnership with parents to help them understand their child's specific learning needs and how they can be met.
- support individual pupils who need SEND support

- to liaise with other schools to ensure reasonable adjustments are in place and to plan a smooth transition
- ensure that Education Health and Care Plans are reviewed annually by the local authority.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND.

As part of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 (*revised 2014*) we will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. Addressing individual requirements in meeting the needs of individual pupils, a range of teaching strategies and classroom management styles are used. These will be reviewed and their effectiveness considered at times of Individual Learning Provision Plan (ILPP) review.

In general teachers will ensure that:

- activities are provided to encourage pupils to work at their own levels in groups or as individuals – neither so difficult as to frustrate or so easy as to bore; skills and knowledge will be introduced in small amounts and in logical order; concepts will be established slowly through the varied revisiting and practice of knowledge and skills.
- sensitivity will be shown towards pupils whose limitation in talking and listening, reading, writing and number work influence their learning in other areas of the curriculum; appropriate help will be given to overcome such weaknesses.
- tasks will be stimulating and a variety of good quality resources will be used including SMART boards, laptops and assistive technologies.
- pupils with specific hearing or sight problems will be carefully positioned in the room and where necessary teaching staff will wear a microphone to support those who have hearing impairment.
- pupils will be made aware of expectations in terms of time, behaviour, work etc and be encouraged to share the responsibility for their progress.
- whenever possible progress will be celebrated/rewarded; one to one tuition will be provided where needed.
- where a pupil experiences significant difficulties, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements are considered as part of SEND planning and review.

Arrangements for co-ordinating the provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs at Brackenfield School adheres to the following inclusive principles:

- We aim to meet the needs of all our pupils by focusing on inclusive practices and removing any barriers to learning.
- Early identification of potential areas of difficulty ensures that lessons are planned to address these and thus remove barriers to pupil achievement.
- Within the school, staff and pupils will be constantly involved in the best ways to support all pupils' needs within the school and there is flexibility in our approach to find the best provision for every pupil.
- Within each class, teaching and learning styles and organisation will be flexible to ensure effective learning and recognising the needs of individual pupils will be a

fundamental part of this process. However, we are not a specialist Independent school and rely on a range of external specialists to help us meet our pupils needs.

Progress and Achievement

At Brackenfield School, we believe that all pupils are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can develop into confident adults who achieve their potential. We recognise the importance of quality teaching for pupils with SEND and monitor the progress and development of pupils closely to promote early identification and assessment of pupils as having SEND. Class and subject teachers, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These assessments seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual abilities.

This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the pupils previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

The graduated response enables us to revisit, refine and revise provision as we develop an understanding of pupils' individual needs and what supports them in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This includes our approach to dealing with referrals.

Pupils can be added to the Learning Support Register (with or without a formal diagnosis of SEND) in the following ways:

1. SENCo receives a referral request from Class Teacher

SENCo meets with teacher to discuss concerns and gains further information:

- Looks at class work
- Looks at assessment scores
- Observations in class
- Speaks with the pupil

2. Initial concern from parents

- SENCo meets with the parents to discuss their concerns. This would usually involve the class teacher.

3. Initial concern from a pupil

- SENCo meets with pupil to discuss his/her concerns. This would usually involve the class teacher or parents.

Following referral, the SENCo will advise on strategies to employ and monitor progress closely. Parents will be informed of the provision plan put in place, given copies of any Individual Learning Provision Plans (if necessary) and will be contacted at the end of the intervention if the pupil no longer needs specialised support, or to discuss progress after this period of monitoring and future provision will be agreed. Where a pupil is identified as

having SEND, action will be taken to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. The special educational provision draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent reviews and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEND of the children.

SEN Support

All those who teach and support pupils with SEND have the highest aspirations for them and the individualised needs and the views of the pupil are kept at the heart of all strategies and approaches. An Individual Learning Provision Plan (called a “Pupil Passport”) will be kept for any pupil with a statemented Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). This will highlight the pupil’s strengths, challenges and give support strategies. All the information on this document will be taken directly from any specialist report we receive and in close communication with the child’s teachers. There will also be a front sheet, completed by the SENCO and pupil, to give the pupil a voice about their support and specific needs. This, plus the Pupil Passport, will be given to all relevant teachers to enable them to plan support for pupils with SEND.

Our first point of support will always be with Quality First teaching in class and pupils will be educated with their peers unless there are valid reasons for removing them. If we feel the pupil will benefit from some individual or small group support we will take them for specialist intervention sessions with our Learning Support team.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans

The majority of pupils with SEND will have their needs met within school, however, for pupils with more complex needs where additional provisions may be required, an application will be made to the Local Authority for them to conduct an assessment of education, health and care needs and prepare an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP).

Due to the independent status of the school, we do not receive the same Local Authority support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities which mainstream schools receive. However, we can access the expertise of external consultants as and when this is appropriate.

Where a pupil has an EHCP in place, the Local Authority must review that plan as a minimum every twelve months and we will cooperate with the local authority in the review process and, as part of the review, we will convene and hold annual review meetings on their behalf.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs

Social, emotional and mental health needs is a term used to describe a wide range of pupils who can present in a number of ways including:

- Being challenging and disruptive
- Being withdrawn or isolated
- Lacking concentration
- As having difficulties with social skills
- Being hyperactive

These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained, whilst other pupils may have additional needs such as Autism Spectrum Condition/Disorder (ASC/ASD), attention deficit disorder ([ADD](#)), attention deficit hyperactive disorder ([ADHD](#)) or attachment disorder to name a few. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that

a pupil has SEND. Where there are concerns, the possibility of causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues should always be considered. Whether a pupil is considered to have social emotional and mental health difficulties depends on the nature, frequency, persistence, severity and the abnormality of the difficulties as well as their cumulative effect on their behaviour and/or their emotional wellbeing compared with what might be expected of pupils of the same age.

We recognise that academic, personal, social and emotional success are inseparable and ensure that any sign of difficulty is immediately identified and addressed, with referral to our Director of Welfare. They will liaise with parents and the SENCo who will, if necessary, arrange for further intervention. Reasonable adjustment will be made where necessary. (See Behaviour Policy)

N.B. All Staff members should be alert to other events that can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to pupils having SEND but it can have an impact on wellbeing and sometimes this can be severe.

Use of data and record keeping

Our record keeping complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 and our provision for pupils with SEN ensures that accurate and recent data is recorded to provide evidence of pupil progress as well as a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided. This information is stored securely and used to inform regular discussions with parents about their child's progress.

Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists are also recorded as part of this overall approach and this is shared with parents in regular parent evening consultations, separate meetings or written reports which show the pupil's progress.

Disability

We will comply with the Equality Act 2010 (*amended 2014*), which sets out the legal obligations that we have towards disabled pupils. The school remains committed to promoting equality for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school by ensuring that:

- we don't directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled pupils
- disabled pupils are not treated 'less favourably'
- we make reasonable adjustments including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not significantly disadvantaged compared with their peers
- we publish an accessibility plan to show how, overtime, we will increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information.

Medical Conditions

We will support pupils with medical conditions and use Individual Healthcare Plans to specify the type and level of support required to meet the needs of such pupils.

Pupils on Entry to the School

Each pupil with a disability requires special consideration and we follow the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 for any pupil who meets the legal definition of disabled. If adjustments need to be put in place, we will discuss these thoroughly with parents and, if appropriate, their medical advisers before the child becomes a pupil at the school. We recognise that

some disabled pupils may also require specialist support from our SENCo and non-teaching support staff and we will discuss this issue with parents before their child enrolls at our school.

Definition of Disability

The term includes disabled children, young people and adults, as pupils, employees, parents and carers.

The definition of disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments including:

- cancer
- diabetes
- epilepsy
- HIV
- multiple sclerosis
- hearing or sight impairments
- mobility difficulties
- people with mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities

Pupils with disabilities

A small number of pupils in our school have disabilities and consequently need additional resources or care. At Brackenfield, we are fully committed to providing an environment that allows these pupils full access to all areas of learning. This involves providing additional learning resources. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for these pupils, for example by providing extra time for them to complete activities or by adapting the resources available. In their planning teachers will ensure that they give pupils with disabilities the opportunities to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers will ensure that they:

- take account of the pupil's pace of learning and the equipment they use
- take account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example visual aids
- adapt or offer alternative activities in those subjects where pupils are unable or find it difficult to manipulate tools or equipment or use certain types of materials
- allow opportunities for all pupils to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies
- use assessment techniques that reflect pupils' individual needs and abilities.

The promotion of equality for pupils with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties or Disabilities

We are committed to providing equal access for all pupils to the broad and balanced curriculum and there will be no discrimination against pupils with special educational, pastoral or medical needs at the point of Admission.

- Every opportunity will be taken to make pupils with such needs welcome to our school and reasonable adjustments will be agreed with parents.
- Families of all pupils admitted to the school are made aware of our inclusive ethos.
- All school policies and procedures aim to promote inclusion of pupils with a range of learning needs.

- Our Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable. Clear, prompt and decisive action will always be taken to deal with any incidents of bullying such as name calling or making fun of pupils who are different.
- Opportunities for staff training for teaching and support staff will be included to increase awareness of disability, equality, supporting individual needs across the curriculum and for dealing with specific health issues.
- All pupils will be encouraged to work together and support one another.
- The achievement of all pupils will be recognised and celebrated. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties or Disabilities are not disadvantaged by:
 - Making provision for pupils who need medication during the school day e.g. inhalers, anti-epilepsy drugs, Ritalin, Insulin.
 - Making provision for pupils with hearing or visual impairment.
 - Agreeing Individual Learning Plans with parents and planning additional support that pupils need and what impact we expect it to have and by when.
 - Ensuring staff who supervise playtimes facilitate inclusion of all pupils.

Medical Facilities

We have a large number of staff qualified as Paediatric First Aiders. Our First Aid/Medical Room is available for pupils who become ill during the day or who need minor First Aid/Medical treatment. Pupils who become ill during the day are carefully supervised by an appropriate member of staff and parents are contacted immediately if necessary. More information can be found in our First Aid and Administering Medication Policy.

All complaints should be addressed to the Headmaster to be dealt with immediately. Consultation with the SENCo and staff members will happen promptly followed by a response to parents and any necessary action will be formally planned and put into action.

Transition Arrangements

As an Independent School, links with mainstream schools only exist on an informal basis. Nevertheless, when pupils transfer to Secondary School, or other schools in the area, the Headmaster, Director of Welfare or SENCo will liaise with the new school and relevant documentation will be forwarded to the destination school to ensure that their individual needs are communicated.

Conclusion

Brackenfield strives to be a fully inclusive school and we will do all we can to support pupils with SEND. Teachers will ensure the needs of pupils are met as well as possible through quality first teaching and will analyse assessment data carefully to flag any pupils who need additional support, with or without a SEND diagnosis. There is excellent communication between the teachers and SENCo and if both determine that extra support is necessary, then this will be put in place after discussions with the pupils' parents. This support may be for a few weeks or may be for a longer period.

If a pupil has a diagnosed Specific Learning Need, the SENCo will write an Individual Learning Provision Plan (Pupil Passport) which will aid the teachers in supporting the pupil to maximise their potential. These will be reviewed termly and parents will be a key part of this process.

If a pupil is deemed to require external support in the form of an EHC Plan then the SENCo will liaise with the Local Authority and parents of the pupil to facilitate this process.

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| Name of policy Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy | Policy reviewed/amended date September 2021 (V2) August 2022 (V3)- Policy name amendment September 2022 (V4) September 2023 (V5) June 2024 (V6) Sept 2024 (7) Sept 2025 (8) |
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