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Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

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1. Introduction & Ethos

Fenland Schools Federation is made up of Townley Primary School & Nursery and Friday Bridge Community Primary. We strive to create a sense of community and belonging for all our pupils. We have an inclusive ethos with high expectations, a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and systems for the early identification of talents, abilities and barriers to learning.

It is a statutory requirement that schools have a member of staff with designated responsibility for the coordination of SEN provision (SENDCo). Across the Federation, the SENDCo is Mrs Shelley Steer.

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (September 2014) and has been written with reference to the following statutory guidance and documents:

- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (September 2014)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, June 2018)
- Regulations on the publication by schools of SEN information (2014)
- Guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (August 2017).
- Safeguarding policy (Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE September 2023)
- Accessibility Plan (see school website)
- Teachers' Standards (2012)

This policy was ratified by the governing body before publication on the school website.

2. Definition of SEND

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made at school. A child has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age **or**
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the type of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special education provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools. Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. The Code of Practice (2015) identifies four broad categories of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory or physical needs

Difficulties may exist within either one of these domains or more than one and may be as follows:

1. Cognition and Learning

- Dyslexic tendencies
- Specific literacy difficulty
- Speech and language

- Moderate learning difficulties
- Dyspraxia
- Dyscalculia
- 2. Communication and interaction**
 - ADHD
 - ASD
- 3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health**
 - Self esteem
 - Trauma
 - Adverse Childhood Effects (ACEs)
- 4. Sensory and Physical**
 - Hearing
 - Visual
 - Physical

Across the Federation, in recent years we have experience of working with children who have the following:

- PEG feeding
- Epilepsy
- Allergies
- Vision difficulties
- Autism
- ADHD
- Medical conditions
- Neurodiversity
- Trauma
- Specific literacy difficulties (dyslexic tendencies)
- Demand avoidance
- Dysregulation / sensory issues
- Low self esteem
- Social and emotional difficulties
- Mental Health
- Pre-verbal conditions
- Global developmental delay
- Hyperinsulinism (blood sugar monitoring)
- Toileting needs
- Feeding needs
- Interaction and communication

3. Aims & Objectives

Our aim is to provide every child with access to a broad and balanced education, with entitlement to the National Curriculum, as specified in the SEN Code of Practice. We are fully committed to the principle of equality as described by the Equalities Act (2010). Under this legislation, disability is a 'protected characteristic,' which means that we take every possible step to ensure that no discrimination occurs, and any barriers are quickly identified and addressed, making reasonable adjustments so that all children can make progress and achieve. We strive to ensure all children

with SEND can access the same curriculum entitlement as children without SEND wherever possible*.¹

Across the Federation, we aim to:

- Ensure that every child experiences success in learning and achieves to the highest possible standard
- Value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the school
- Develop the self-esteem of every child
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and pupils
- Work closely with external agencies, where appropriate
- Ensure all staff have access to training and advice to support high quality teaching and learning for all pupils
- Work with the governing body to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role.

4. Graduated Approach

All teachers across the Federation are teachers of children with SEND. Teaching of such children therefore is a whole school responsibility. The staff and governors of the school are committed to identifying and providing for the needs of all children in a wholly inclusive environment. At the heart of every classroom for every child is a continuous cycle of assessing, planning, teaching and reviewing. This takes into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children. As part of this process teachers will identify children whose:

- specific or overall attainments are lower than that of their peers starting at the same baseline
- progress fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- progress fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- attainment gap widens between themselves and their peers

As a first response, the school will address any difficulties or barriers to learning through High Quality Teaching using the Cambridgeshire Ordinarily Available Toolkit (see <https://www.cambslearntogether.co.uk/cambridgeshire-send/cambridgeshire-send-oap-toolkits/primary-and-secondary-send-oap-toolkit>) and a first cycle of class-teacher led APDR. For some children targeting these areas will see their learning improve. If a child continues to make less than the expected progress, the class teacher will gather further information including the voice of the child and liaise with the SENCO to decide if the child has SEND and whether a second cycle of APDR is required. If it is decided that the child has SEN, SEN Support will begin, and the child will at this point be recorded on the SEND register. SMART targets and regular reviews ensure provision is both timely and effective.

5. Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP)

The Federation is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive education for all pupils. This section outlines the provision that is ordinarily available within our schools to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), without the need for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These strategies form part of our graduated response and are based on the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

- Inclusive, high-quality teaching is the foundation of SEND support.

¹ An example of this being impossible to provide the same might be where physical adaptations to the structure of the building might be required, such as making the swimming pool accessible for children who require hoisting. In this case alternative provision would be provided in consultation with the child, parents and caseworker.

- Provision is proactive, flexible, and tailored to individual needs.
- Collaboration with parents/carers and external professionals is essential.
- Support is reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.

Provision is grouped under the four broad areas of need and may be as follows:

1. Cognition and Learning

- Adaptive teaching with clear, achievable steps.
- Visual supports (word banks, diagrams, colour coding).
- Chunked instructions and regular understanding checks.
- Access to concrete resources (counters, number lines, manipulatives).
- Additional processing time and reduced cognitive load.

2. Communication and Interaction

- Visual class timetables
- Consistent routines.
- Simplified language.
- Clear, short instructions.

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

- Positive behaviour strategies (e.g. praise).
- Movement breaks and activities integrated into the day.
- Clear expectations and boundaries with visual prompts.
- Key adult support
- Peer mentoring opportunities.

4. Sensory and Physical

- Reduced visual and auditory distractions in classrooms.
- Clear pathways and uncluttered spaces for mobility.
- Flexible seating options (e.g. leg bands for chairs).
- Sensory breaks and calming resources.
- Adapted equipment (pencil grips).

Teachers regularly assess the impact of strategies and adapt provision as needed. The SENDCo oversees implementation and provides strategic guidance as needed. Parents/carers are involved in discussions about support and progress. Where needs cannot be met through OAP alone, the graduated response will escalate to targeted and specialist support.

Targeted Support

When OAP strategies are not sufficient, targeted support provides additional, time-limited interventions to address specific needs. These may be:

- Delivered in small groups or individually alongside high-quality teaching.
- Time-bound and measurable with clear entry and exit criteria.
- Linked to identified needs through assessment and observation.
- Monitored and reviewed regularly for impact.

Examples of Targeted Support

- **Cognition and Learning:** Precision teaching for phonics or number facts; small-group interventions for reading comprehension or maths fluency; pre-teaching of key vocabulary or concepts; overlearning of key vocabulary of concepts.

- **Communication and Interaction:** Speech and language programmes delivered by trained staff; social skills groups using structured activities; use of now/next boards.
- **SEMH:** Nurture groups or emotional literacy interventions; check-in/check-out systems with a key adult; daily emotion check-ins; access to a safe space or calm corner.
- **Sensory and Physical:** Fine motor skills programmes; adapted PE sessions or physiotherapy exercises under guidance.

Monitoring and Review

- Teachers assess the impact of strategies and adapt provision as needed.
- SENDCo oversees implementation and provides guidance.
- Parents/carers are involved in discussions about support and progress.
- Where needs cannot be met through OAP and targeted support, the graduated response will escalate to specialist provision or an EHCP request.

There will be some pupils for which this is not enough and they will need specialist provision over and above our OAP and targeted support. For these children, they will access specialist provision and it is likely that they will be additionally supported via external agencies. External agencies that may be contacted for this additional support and include Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, CAMHS, Educational Psychology, and SEND services.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

We will identify and provide support as early as possible for pupils who have additional needs in any of the above categories to remove or overcome any barriers to progress. We will monitor progress carefully to ensure that any interventions are having the desired effect. The provision will be adjusted and reviewed in the light of regular assessment. This is referred to as a 'graduated approach.' At all times, the provision is discussed with parents and carers so that there is open dialogue and continuity of practice at school and at home.

Where a child is falling just below national expectations for their age group and starting points, they will be offered 'catch-up' programmes. These are usually delivered by the class teacher or teaching assistant and are designed to be short and highly focused.

If, despite quality first teaching and targeted 'catch-up' support, a child is still falling below age-related expectations and is not making the progress expected, further exploration and advice will be needed. With parental agreement, external agencies will be contacted to provide this additional assessment and professional advice and guidance for school staff, so they can make the adjustments and provision required.

Where a child's needs require additional support beyond what is usually available and funded within the school's existing budget, the school may apply for an Education and Healthcare Plan. Sometimes, this is already in place when a child reaches statutory school age. This Plan will articulate how best the additional funding will be utilised to support the child to attend mainstream school.

The process is described in detail on the Cambridgeshire website:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/education-health-and-care-plan-ehcp/>

By law, all Local Authorities must publish their SEND Local Offer. This provides information about education, health and social care provided both by the Local Authority as well as partners in the

voluntary and community sectors. There are useful links for parents to organisations that can help with the process.

The Cambridgeshire Local Offer can be found by clicking on this link:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/>

Across the Federation we foster close working relationships with parents and carers in order to ensure children receive early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND, leading to appropriate intervention and provision and support to make social, personal and academic progress.

In cases where more frequent regular contact with parents is necessary, this will be arranged based on the individual pupil's needs. Where specific advice, guidance and support are required, the SENDCo may signpost parents of pupils with SEND to other services locally.

Across the Federation, pupils with SEND and their parents/carers can expect that the SENDCo will:

- Co-ordinate provision for children with SEN
- Advise and support staff on SEN matters
- Maintain the SEN register and oversee the records of all children with SEN
- Co-ordinate and develop school based strategies and interventions for the identification and review of children with SEN
- Ensure that appropriate educational provision is made for all those on the SEND register
- Liaise with parents and carers of children with SEN
- Maintain strong links with external agencies
- Provide the governing body with timely and accurate evaluations of the effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Liaise with local high schools so that support is provided for Y6 pupils as they prepare to transfer.

Across the Federation, pupils with SEND and their parents/carers can expect that class teachers and support staff will:

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Ensure that work matches the ability of all children and enables them to make good progress
- Manage pastoral care and behaviour for learning
- Track the progress of pupils
- Listen to and take into account of pupils' thoughts and opinions
- Ensure their classroom is an inclusive environment for all children

Across the Federation, pupils with SEND and their parents/carers can expect that the Governing Body will:

- Nominate a governor with responsibility for monitoring the work of the school in respect of children with SEND. This is currently Mrs Lorna Kirk.
- Develop and monitor the policy
- Keep up to date and knowledgeable about the provision and deployment of funding, equipment and resources
- Ensure that inclusive provision is made for pupils who have SEND
- Ensure that the school's provision is in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice

- Ensure that the quality of SEND provision is closely monitored, evaluated and reviewed
- Produce an annual report on the implementation of the SEND policy

Admission arrangements

The admission arrangements for pupils with SEND are set out in legislation. In Cambridgeshire, the Admissions arrangements are set out on the county website. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's needs with the Headteacher when visiting the school and applying for admission.

Involve parents and children in the development and review of provision

7. Training & Quality Assurance

Our SENDCo has experience in this role and is undertaking the National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. We have a team of teaching assistants who are trained to deliver SEND provision. Our training is bespoke and linked to the needs of specific children. Staff receive regular Continuing Professional Development on different SEND strategies and adaptive teaching techniques. The SENCO monitors provision termly and reports to governors. Inclusive teaching checklists and observation tools are used to maintain high standards.

8. Funding & Resources

All pupils with SEND will have access to additional support from the school's budget, which will be used to provide additional equipment, facilities, and support. The allocation of these additional resources is prioritised according to need. Pupils with the most complex needs may be eligible for further funding provided by the Local Authority as part of an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). The school will work with parents at all times to make the most appropriate use of funding and apply for any further support. Resources are allocated based on need and reviewed regularly.

9. Transitions & Admissions

The class teacher will assess each child's current levels of attainment on entry and build upon the pattern of learning and experience already established. If your child already has an identified SEN, the information received from their previous school will be used by the teacher to:-

- provide starting points for the development of their learning
 - identify and focus attention on how to support your child within their class
 - form the basis for planning the next steps of your child's learning
 - involve you and your child in implementing a joint learning approach at home
- Your child will continue to receive SEN Support in school and be part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Process.

10. Complaints & Concerns

Concerns should be raised with the class teacher, then SENCO, followed by the Headteacher. If unresolved, the Federation's complaints policy applies.

11. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How will you help my child to learn and make progress?

All teachers are responsible for the children in their class. This includes children with SEND. We hold half-termly Pupil Progress Meetings to ensure that all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable. Pupils with SEND receive support that is most appropriate for their needs in class. All staff receive regular training to ensure they are making the best possible provision. Please contact the class teacher in the first instance to discuss any concerns you have about your child's learning.

Q. Where can I find information, support, and advice about SEND?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The legislative framework for supporting children and young people with SEND in education.

Cambridgeshire Local Offer – for information about the range of services and organisations that can assist children and families who live in Cambridgeshire

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/>

Norfolk Local Offer - for information about the range of services and organisations that can assist children and families who live in Norfolk

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer>

Cambridgeshire SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

An independent service for families that can assist with: Confidential support, advice and information about special educational needs, preparing for meetings with education professionals, information on your rights and responsibilities as a parent, children's rights and SEN law and guidance and local support groups and voluntary organisations

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/local-offer-care-and-family-support/send-information-advice-and-support-service-sendiass/>

<https://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/>

Supporting parents of children with disabilities/additional needs in Cambridgeshire

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/parenting-and-family-support/>

Help and support for all families, early help, information for parents and looking after someone else's child

Q. How will you support my child with their behaviour?

We try to work with parents and families to ensure we understand children and the reasons for their behaviour. If they have an underlying SEN, it is important that we work with you to determine the best approach in class. For children with diagnoses of specific conditions where there are related behaviour issues, we ensure that staff and other children are aware of these. We have clear expectations and boundaries to keep pupils safe and ensure they enjoy school. In the case of disagreements or minor incidents, we use principles of Restorative Justice to settle these matters and give all pupils the chance to explain, apologise and learn.

Q. How will you help my child with their social and emotional needs?

In school, we try to help and support children who are experiencing social and emotional difficulties, whether these are temporary or associated with a long-term condition. We help children to

understand their emotions through Personal, Social and Health Education lessons as well as getting to know them all as unique individuals.

If necessary, the school, together with parents, can request additional support from other services, such as a Family Worker, a Play Therapist or Educational Psychologist. The school can contact the services on your behalf.

Q. Are the Federation schools accessible?

There is a ramp at the front of the building and to the Early Years unit. The toilet is accessible for wheelchair users. We ensure that corridors and classrooms are hazard-free environments. We believe very strongly that all children should have the right to be included in all of the school's activities, including extra-curricular provision and trips. If your child requires additional equipment to be able to learn effectively, please make the Headteacher aware of this.

Q. How will my child's medical condition be supported?

We support and encourage children to take responsibility for managing their conditions, including any medication they may need when appropriate. The school will always work with parents to support children and we are prepared to train staff and adapt how we work to ensure that all children receive their entitlement to a good education. If you have concerns about how we will manage your child's condition, please contact the Headteacher, Mrs Maria Higgins.

12. Glossary of key terms

SEND 'jargon-buster' guide for parents and families – a useful A-Z of terms and services

https://ccc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/Local_offer_jargon_buster.pdf?inline=true

13. Related school policies and legislative frameworks

The following Fenland Schools Federation policies are also relevant to pupils with SEND and can be found on the website of both schools.

- Admissions
- Accessibility
- Equalities
- Teaching and Learning

14. Enhanced Resource Base (ERB)

Purpose and Vision

Our vision for the Dragonflies Enhanced Resource Base (ERB) is to create a space where every child feels safe, valued, and empowered to thrive. We dream of a setting where children experience success and take pride in their learning, where they are engaged in classrooms, participating in lessons, and developing a love for reading and learning at a developmentally appropriate level.

We envision a community where children feel a deep sense of belonging, form meaningful friendships, and enjoy being part of a group, working together with trust and enthusiasm. They will play alongside their peers in the playground, eat in the dining hall, and feel seamlessly included within the wider school community. Each child will be able to articulate their aspirations, and speak positively about what lies ahead.

Children in the ERB will develop confidence in themselves and their abilities. They will be empowered to give things a go, trust in themselves again, and regulate their emotions using

effective strategies. Learning will extend beyond the classroom, with opportunities to connect with nature through forest school, engage in hands-on activities like making apple juice, and contribute to their environment through community-minded actions such as helping others and taking care of shared spaces.

This will be a space where every child feels that each day is a fresh start, where they can trust the adults around them, and where they know they are understood and supported. They will build independence, develop self-advocacy skills, and confidently ask for help when needed. At the same time, they will experience the joy of collaboration, working as a team with school staff, peers, and families who are all committed to their success.

The ERB will not only support children but also rebuild trust between families and the school. Parents and carers will feel safe in their relationship with the school, knowing they are listened to and valued as partners in their child's journey. Together, we will create a nurturing, inspiring, and inclusive environment where children flourish—academically, socially, and emotionally—ready to embrace their futures with confidence and hope.

Admission Criteria

Places are allocated to pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for Social Emotional Mental Health difficulties. Admission decisions are made in consultation with the Local Authority, parents/carers, and the school.

Curriculum and Approach

Pupils access a personalised curriculum based on EHCP outcomes, incorporating:

- Core subjects adapted to individual learning profiles.
- Social communication and emotional regulation programmes.
- Opportunities for inclusion in mainstream lessons where appropriate.
- Teaching is delivered by specialist staff trained in SEND strategies, supported by teaching assistants and external professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists, occupational therapists).

Environment

The ERB provides:

- Calm, low-stimulation spaces with neutral colours and soft furnishings.
- Sensory resources and structured routines to reduce anxiety and support regulation.
- Access to outdoor learning and movement breaks.

Staffing and Expertise

Led by a qualified teacher with expertise in SEND.

Supported by teaching assistants experienced in SEMH and other SEND strategies.

Regular input from external specialists as required.

Monitoring and Review

Progress is tracked using appropriate assessment tools (e.g., PIVATS for pupils that are working at a pre-key stage) and EHCP outcomes. Termly reviews with parents/carers and professionals ensure provision remains responsive to pupil needs. Annual EHCP reviews are conducted in line with statutory requirements.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

All ERB staff adhere to the Federation's safeguarding policy. Emotional wellbeing is prioritised

through structured routines, positive relationships, and access to therapeutic interventions where appropriate.