

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy



Every Child, Every Moment, Empowered to Achieve

Approved by:	Headteacher and Local Academy Board	Date: July 2026
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1. Vision

At Heron Park, we are committed to the success of every child—**Every Child, Every Moment, Empowered to Achieve**. Our vision is to empower children to reach their full potential and strive for excellence in all they do.

Guided by our school motto—**"We care, we play, we grow and always try our best"**—pupils are nurtured in an environment that values kindness, curiosity, and ambition. We aim to build a sense of belonging and community through our inclusive practices.

We foster a love of learning by creating engaging, supportive spaces where children feel inspired to explore, question, and grow. Through high-quality teaching and a culture of encouragement, we help every child become confident, capable, and ready to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

Heron Park Primary Academy is an inclusive school where everyone is made to feel welcome. Our vision aims to ensure that all children enjoy high-quality learning experiences through which they can achieve their full potential.

Through our inclusive ethos, we encourage all children to be actively involved in their own learning. This involves valuing all pupils and staff equally and reducing barriers to learning and participation. We want children with SEND to develop the confidence to aim for what they want in life and have the perseverance to overcome any barriers to achieving the best they possibly can.

This policy describes our approach to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and reflects the SEND Code of Practice.

For more information about how we support children with SEND please also see our SEND Information Report on our school website <http://heronparkprimaryacademy.co.uk/>

There is information about the support of the Local Authority and other services provided in the East Sussex Local Offer for SEND.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out governors'/trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND

- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

3. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our school we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfill their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum, and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life. This is further achieved through the use of our Ordinarily Available Provision (O.A.P) as well as specific scaffolding and intervention for those who need it thinking about 'who gets what, when?'.

4. Definitions

Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational 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.

Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into four broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than one area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are autistic often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have: • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.
Sensory and/or physical	Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. Pupils may have: • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The SENCO

The SENCO at our school is Mrs Gemma Owen. Our SENCo is also our Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion.

They will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made.
- Work with the headteacher and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provisions made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned.
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner.
- Work with the headteacher and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate.
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy.
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's 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.

6. The Local Academy Board

Our Local Academy Board (LAB) fulfills its statutory duty towards children with SEND or disabilities in accordance with the guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice. In particular, the governing body, ensures:

- arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions (3.66)
- a SEND information report is published annually (6.79)
- there is a qualified teacher designated as a SENCO for the school.(6.84)

In addition, our governing body works with the SENCO and Headteacher in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision, including establishing a clear picture of the resources available in the school.

The governing body also ensures that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to admissions, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements and publishes information about this that includes specific and measurable objectives. (6.87, 6.97, 6.90, 3.8, 1.27, 1.28, xix,xxi)

The SEND link governor

The SEND link governor is currently Mr Stewart Ashworth

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the governing board on this.
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

The Headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school.
- Work with the SENCO and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress.
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils.
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties.
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register.
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review.
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's 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.

Class Teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach.
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report.
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
- Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them.
- Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the agreed outcomes.
- Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.
- Listen to the parents' concerns and agree aspirations for the pupil.

Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child.
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs.
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil.
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress.

The school will consider the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes

- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. SEN information report

The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

You can access our SEN information report on our school website;

<https://www.heronparkprimaryacademy.org/>

8. Our approach to SEND support

Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

Identification of SEND

A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to the provisions normally available to pupils of the same age. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND.

Equally, attainment in line with chronological age does not necessarily mean that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean a child has SEND.

To enable us to identify a pupil as requiring SEND support a range of sources of information are considered. This includes:

- School assessment data
- Medical reports
- Specialist reports
- Teacher concerns
- Parent concerns
- Pupil concerns

For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age. However, for other children, difficulties become evident only as they develop.

Where a decision is made to include a child on the SEND register and provide SEND support parents will be formally notified.

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. They will also complete an identification form outlining concerns and strategies that have already been used to support the pupil.

Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

Then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

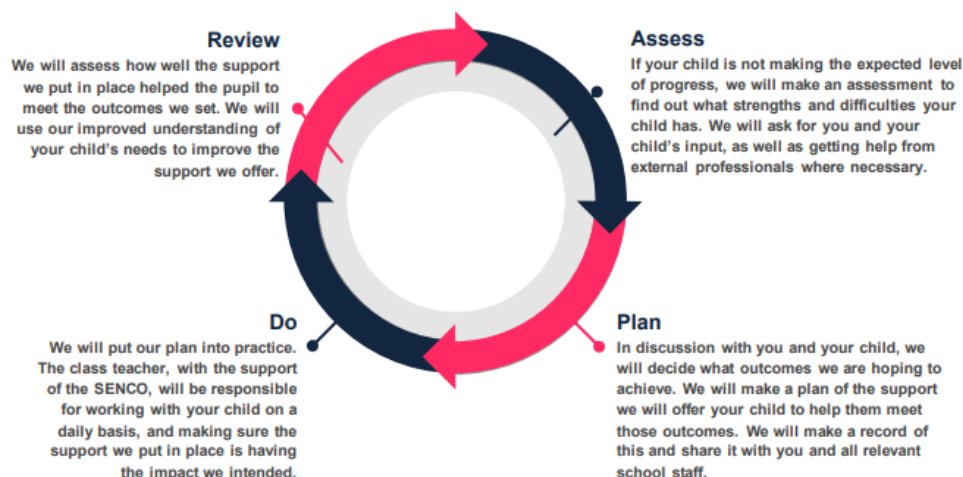
- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

The graduated approach to SEN support

We will follow the 'graduated approach' to meeting your child's SEN needs. The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review. These cycles are reviewed three times a year with targets and provision matched to the outcomes we want children to be able to achieve. Review meetings are held with teachers and parents at least 3 times a year to ensure that plans are reviewed and that all parties are working together to provide support that is based on achieving the best outcomes for children.



1. **Assess**

The pupil's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. **Plan**

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our management information system, EDUKEY, and will be made accessible to staff in a pupil passport or individual support plan (ISP)

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. **Do**

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

4. **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

Levels of support

School-based SEN provision

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEN budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps.
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach three times a year.
- Using pupil questionnaires.
- Monitoring by the SENCO.
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans.
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents.

9. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteacher and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

10. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- GPs or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services and other LA-provided support services
- Communication, Learning and Autism Support Service (CLASS)
- Team Around the School Setting service (TASS)

11. Admission and accessibility arrangements

Whenever SEN is identified on the admissions form to our school, a tour is arranged to enable parents to discuss their child's needs and offer school the opportunity to discuss provision that can be provided at Heron Park. We will often liaise with your child's previous SENCO to ensure that we can replicate support (where able) as quickly as possible to ease transition to our setting.

Children with EHCPs are admitted to Heron Park via a consultation process with County in which we are given the opportunity to review your child's EHCP to ascertain whether we feel we are able to meet your child's needs at our school.

We aim to include all pupils in the full life of our schools through having high expectations, a broad and balanced curriculum, after school activities where appropriate, school trips etc. We also raise awareness of disability amongst the school community and plan to include all pupils in our work. We communicate in a manner using a method that means all pupils will access the curriculum as far as possible.

Our school building varies in age and therefore accessibility, however where possible ramps and access points etc are in place to ensure accessibility. ICT equipment, screens etc are considered to improve the ability for disabled access and use.

Through planning we provide as broad and balanced curriculum as possible. This involves the Teaching and Learning Policy, classroom organisation and support, deployment of staff, information and training. We will endeavor to find as many ways as possible to successfully pass information to pupils, whether it is written, auditory, pictorial etc. We will also use technology to assist in this matter, training and the expertise of specialists where appropriate.

Relevant school policies including our 'Accessibility Plan' and 'Equality Policies' can be found on our school website.

- [Policies | Heron Park Primary Academy & Nursery](#)

12. Complaints about SEND provision

If you are concerned about any aspect of the education provided this should be first discussed with the class teacher. Most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work hard to ensure the children in their class are happy and making progress so welcome the opportunity to resolve anything affecting this. If a complaint cannot be resolved in this way, complaints can be made to our Headteacher. You will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

Our school complaints policy can be requested via our school office or accessed on our school website www.heronparkprimaryacademy.org

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

If you feel that our school discriminated against your child because of their SEND, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disabilitydiscrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal.

For more information on this you can access www.localoffer.eastsussex.gov.uk

13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by our SENCo **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be shared with the governing board and Headteacher.

14. Links with other policies and documents

Legislative Acts taken into account when compiling this policy include:

- [Schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [Paragraphs 6.2 and 6.79 to 6.81 of the SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#)

Relevant school policies underpinning this policy can be found on our school website. This includes our SEN information report.

- [Policies | Heron Park Primary Academy & Nursery](#)