



The
Sittingbourne School
Empowered through Learning

Swale
ACADEMIES
TRUST

Special Educational Needs / Disabilities and Inclusion Policy 2025 / 2026

Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

Document Management:

Date Approved: February 2026
Date Reviewed: February 2026
Next Review Date: February 2027
Approved By: Local Governing Body
Responsible for Review: Mr P Southall / Mr N Smith



The
Sittingbourne School
Empowered through Learning

Name of School: The Sittingbourne School

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Web address: www.thesittingbourneschool.org.uk

Headteacher: Nick Smith

Strategic Lead for DEND: Pete Southall, Deputy Headteacher

SENDCO: Laura Jewiss

Chair of Governors: Lynn Lawrence

SEND Governor: Nicola Collins

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Orla Wheeler

Designated Teacher for looked after children: Orla Wheeler

Legislation

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Schools Admissions Code, DfE 2014
- Governance in Academy Trusts 2024

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies

- Trust SEND principles
- Behaviour and discipline policy
- Equalities policy and objectives
- Accessibility plan
- Anti-bullying policy

These can be found on the school's website or available upon request.

SEND and Inclusion Policy

Introduction and Aims

This policy outlines The Sittingbourne School's commitment to inclusive Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision, ensuring compliance with national legislation and local authority guidance. Our aims are to:

- Provide effective support for students with SEND, enabling positive outcomes.
- Foster an inclusive environment where all students can access school life.
- Equip students with the skills for fulfilling lives.
- Support students to achieve their aspirations.
- Promote co-production with students and parents/carers.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of supporting professionals.
- Ensure consistent implementation and governor oversight of this policy.

This document also provides information on the ordinarily available provision for children and young people with SEND as defined by:

Special Educational Needs Mainstream Core Standards (ordinarily available provision): [Special Educational Needs Mainstream Core Standards](#)

It serves as a guide for meeting statutory duties and informing stakeholders about our SEND practices. This policy works in conjunction with our SEND Information Report. The SEND Information Report is updated annually or if necessary, when changes to the information may be required during the academic year.

Information about the support that the Local Authority and other services provided in the Local Offer for SEND can be found here:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs>

The policy is divided into 15 sections:

1. Leadership and management of SEND/ Roles and Responsibilities
2. The kinds of special educational needs that are provided for in our school
3. Identification and assessment of SEND
4. Assessing and reviewing outcomes
5. Transition
6. The approach to teaching children with SEND
7. Curriculum and learning environment
8. Training and continuing professional development (CPD) for staff
9. Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of SEND provision
10. Inclusion
11. Emotional and social development and well-being
12. Involving specialists
13. Funding for SEND
14. Data protection
15. Complaints

1. Leadership and Management of SEND/ Role and Responsibilities

The SENDCO

All maintained schools and academies are required by law to have a named SENDCO who is a qualified teacher and has been awarded the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (prior to September 2024) or The National Professional Qualification for SEND (from September 2024).

SENCOs must complete the qualification within three years of taking up the post.

Our SENDCO is Laura Jewiss who has achieved the National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination. The SENDCO is responsible for overseeing the provision of SEND across both of our Specialist Resourced Provisions and within mainstream. The school SEND team also comprises three Assistant SENDCO's. Liz Dunk, Katie Thomson, Sally Hills and a specialist teacher for the deaf, Sharon Prichard.

The SEND Leadership Team can be contacted via the school's contact form available on our website.

The SENDCO has an important role to play with the headteacher and governing body with regards to the strategic oversight and implementation of The Sittingbourne School's SEND policy and development.

They will:

- Oversee the day-to-day responsibility and implementation of the SEND policy.
- Ensure all statutory requirements are adhered to throughout the year.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with SEND using the graduated approach – Assess, Plan, Do, Review to review and monitor provision for all students with SEN.
- Communicate and provide all staff with the key SEND and medical information, advice, guidance, and strategies to support students with SEND ensuring high quality provision across the school/academy.
- Collaborate with teachers, support staff, parents and carers regarding all aspects of their child(ren)'s provision including interventions and outcomes.
- Offer professional guidance to staff to secure high quality inclusive provision in the classroom and throughout the school day.
- Collaborate with curriculum leaders to remove barriers to learning.
- Develop and lead the whole school continued professional development to ensure high quality provision for all students with SEND.
- Liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after child or young person has SEND.
- Liaise with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 regarding reasonable

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adjustments and access arrangements.

- Be the key point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services .
- Ensure the school keeps up-to-date records of all students with SEND.
- Ensure any SEND students who have a part time timetable is agreed with parent/carers, is registered on the KELSI website and a clear re-integration strategy is planned in conjunction with the parent/carer and student.
- Hold status in order to have capacity and authority to make change.
- Ensure genuine coproduction and collaboration with the wider community.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively.
- To keep up to date with key national and local SEND development.
- Attend key meetings organised by the local authority to ensure they have up-to-date strategic and operational information.
- Is fully involved in all aspects of transition planning whether phased or in year regarding students with SEND. Ensuring parents/carers are fully informed throughout the transition period.
- Work closely with other colleagues and SENDCOs in their Trust and Community of Schools.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Work closely with the SENDCO and SEN link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision across the school.
- Work with the SENDCO and governors to ensure the school adheres to all legislative and statutory guidance keeping up to date with all key national and local policies and expected SEN practice.
- Ensure the SENDCO has sufficient time and resources to effectively carry out their role.
- Work closely with the SENDCO to carry out their duties employing the Graduated Approach, using their 'best endeavours' and when required making reasonable adjustments to ensure the school/academy is providing high quality SEN provision.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision for students with SEND, their progress, and outcomes.
- Have the responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual students or SEND provision for groups of students.

The Governors

Our Governing Body has a legal responsibility to students with SEN as defined in the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice 2015.

The SEND Governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings.

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- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability provision within the school and update the governing body following monitoring visits.
- Work with the Headteacher and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school.

The named Governor is responsible for the strategic oversight of the arrangements and provision for students with SEND.

The SEND Governor will:

- Carry out monitoring visits on behalf of the Governing Body to ensure high quality and effective provision is in place and in line with the SEND Code of Practice statutory and Local Authority guidance and expectations.
- Report to and raise awareness of SEND issues raised during monitoring visits and meetings at Governing Body meetings.
- Work closely with the SENDCO and Headteacher to ensure the strategic review and development of the SEND Policy, SEND Information Report and provision in the school.

Teachers

All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs. Our SENDCO provides a vital strategic role and provides significant advice and support to teachers, but the responsibility for the learning and progress of all children lies with the teacher.

'High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the starting point in responding to students who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and SEN support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.

Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students, and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.' (DfE/DoH SEND Code of Practice 2015: 25)

Every teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every student in their class
- Instilling high aspirations for every student
- Delivering a broad balanced curriculum embedding high-quality inclusive teaching strategies and resources
- Working closely with teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan, monitor, track and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be transitioned and embedded in the classroom
- Working with the SENDCO to review each student's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

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We set high expectations for all students whatever their prior attainment. We use assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. We deliver high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised and meets the individual needs of the majority of children. Some children/young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this and we use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. (COP 1.24, 6.12)

All students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. In the details of the curriculum provided in each year, we include details of how the curriculum is adapted or made accessible for students with SEND. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to student achievement. We do what is necessary to enable children to develop, learn, participate, and achieve the best possible outcomes irrespective of whether that is through reasonable adjustments for a disabled child or special educational provision for a child with SEND. (COP 6.12, 6.82, 1.34)

Parents and carers

Parents and carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress socially, physically, emotionally, or academically or if there are any changes to provision that have been advised by key external professionals working with their child following an appointment.

Parents/ carers are actively involved in all aspects of the decision-making process through meetings or agreed forms of communication and are afforded every opportunity to contribute to discussions regarding their child's SEND provision.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We will:

- Have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of parents/carers.
- Provide parents/carers with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making.
- Support parents/carers in order to facilitate the development of their child to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.
- Meet with the parents/carers of children at least three times each year.
- Provide an annual report for parents/carers on their child's progress.

If there are any disagreements with parents about SEND support for their child, we will work with them to try to resolve these. If parents have a complaint, they can use the school's complaints procedure. Details about this are available from the school office or on the school website. (COP 1.1, 6.64, 6.65, 11.71)

The Student

Seeking the voice of the student is an important aspect of ensuring the SEND provision is highly effective for every student with SEND. Students are given every opportunity to express their view and provide information to support review

meetings as part of our Graduated Approach in year meetings and for students with an EHCP the statutory Annual Review. However, the voice of the student can be sought at any time throughout the school year.

Students at The Sittingbourne School are able to express their views through: Student questionnaires – identifying how they like to learn.

2. The Kinds of Special Educational Needs That Are Provided For In Our School

At The Sittingbourne School we will ensure our 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of students with the following kinds of special educational need as described in the SEND Code of Practice through a graduated approach:

Communication and interaction – this includes children/young people with speech language and communication needs (SLCN) and those with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Cognition and learning – this includes children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). This also includes children/young people with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties – social, emotional and mental health difficulties may manifest themselves in many ways including becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. Other children/young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or physical needs - this includes children/young people with visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI) and physical disability (PD) (COP 6.28-6.35) .

At The Sittingbourne School, we have two Specialist Resourced Provisions. One for students with bilateral, severe to profound hearing loss and another for up to 6 students per year who have an identified speech and / or language disorder as their primary need.

3. Identification and Assessment of SEND

In line with this SEND Code of Practice (DfE/DoH 2015) students at The Sittingbourne School are identified as either having no SEND, having SEND with support, or having a SEND with an Educational Health and Care Plan.

A student has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age.

We will assess each student's current skills and level of attainment on entry to the school. We will make regular assessments of progress for all students. These will seek to identify students making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.

This is progress which:

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

The first response to less than expected progress will always be high quality teaching targeted at the student's area of weakness.

In identifying a child as needing SEND support, the class teacher, working with the SENDCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs including the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data.

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. (COP 6.15, 6.17, 6.23, 6.45)

Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND. (COP 6.21, 6.24)

We are alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age. However, for other children difficulties become evident only as they develop. (COP 6.20)

We recognise that parents/carers know their children best and listen and understand when parents'/carers express concerns about their child's development. We also listen and address any concerns raised by children/young people themselves. (COP 6.20)

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Where it is decided to provide a student with SEND support the decision will be recorded in school records and we will formally notify parents. We are required to make data on the levels and types of SEND within the school available to the Local Authority. This data collected through the School Census, is also required to produce the national SEND information report. (COP 6.43, 6.48, 6.73, 6.83)

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with a student with SEND or have an additional need are made fully aware of the provision that each individual student requires through the SEND information on Bromcom and individual student passports.

SEND support will be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes.

Where, despite taking relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND needs of the child, the child/young person has not made expected progress, consideration will be given to requesting an Education, Health and Care assessment. This request can be made by the school or by parents/carers. (COP 6.63)

In considering whether an EHC needs assessment is necessary, the Local Authority will consider the evidence of the action already being taken by the school to meet the child's SEND needs. An EHC needs assessment will not always lead to an EHC plan. (COP 6.63)

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child/young person, to secure improved outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. The EHC plan also specifies the arrangements for setting shorter-term targets at school level. (COP 9.2)

4. Assessing and Reviewing Outcomes

We record evidence of student progress, with a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEND support provided. We record details of additional or different provisions made under SEND support. This forms part of regular discussions with parents/carers about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. (COP 6.72, 6.73)

SEND support takes the form of a four-part cycle: assess, plan, do and review. Decisions and actions are revisited, refined, and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. (COP 6.44).

Clear dates for reviewing progress are agreed and the parent/carer, student and teaching staff will be clear about how they will help the student reach the expected outcomes. The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the student's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. (COP 6.43, 6.53)

Reviewing an EHC plan

EHC plans are used to actively monitor children's progress towards their outcomes and longer-term aspirations. They must be reviewed as a minimum every 12-months. Reviews will be undertaken in partnership with the child/young person and their parents/carers, and will take account of their views, wishes and feelings. The review will focus on the child/young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan. The review will also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. Parents/carers, a school representative, and other relevant, external professionals, will be invited to the review meeting.

Before the meeting we will:

- Give notice to all parties at least two weeks before the meeting and seek advice and information about the child.
- Send out any advice or information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks before the meeting.

We will prepare and send out a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting. (COP 9.166, 9.168, 9.176, 6.56)

Where a child is looked after by the Local Authority, we will endeavour to synchronise EHC plan reviews with social care reviews. (COP 10.20)

5. Transition

The great majority of children with SEND or disabilities, with the right support, can find work, be supported to live independently, and participate in their community. We encourage these ambitions right from the start. Our SEND support includes planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education, key stages, year groups and preparation for adult life. We will agree with parents and students the information to be shared as part of this process. We support children so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships. This is particularly important when children are transferring from one phase of education to another. (COP 6.57, 8.7, 8.8)

If a child has an EHC plan, this will be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to moving between key phases of education. The review and any amendments must be completed by 15 February in the calendar year of the transfer. (COP 9.179)

We ensure that students from Year 8 until Year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance. For students with EHC plans, reviews from Year 9 will include a focus on preparing for adulthood and we will cooperate with the Local Authority to support the development of a post -16 study programme tailored to their needs. (COP 6.13, 8.26, 9.184)

6. The Approach To Teaching Children with SEND

We set high expectations for all students whatever their prior attainment. We use assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. We deliver high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised and meets the individual needs of the majority of children. Some children/young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this and we use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. (COP 1.24, 6.12)

7. Curriculum and Learning Environment

At The Sittingbourne School all students irrespective of need access a broad and balanced curriculum which is delivered through high quality inclusive teaching to enable every student to make progress and reach their full potential socially, emotionally and academically. When required to do so, we will make reasonable adjustments to support students with SEND. The school/academy set high expectations and aspirations for each individual student, working together with them, and their parents/carers to ensure that students with SEND become confident and independent children and young people who are able to successfully transition to the next phase of their education or adult life. (COP 6.12, 6.82, 1.34)

8. Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Staff

We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes: identifying particular patterns of need in the school, reviewing, and where necessary improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered. (COP 6.37, 6.77)

Where interventions are required, we ensure staff have sufficient skills and knowledge to deliver the intervention effectively. (COP 6.50). The quality of teaching for students with SEND, and the progress made by students, is a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. (COP 6.4)

9. Evaluating the Effectiveness and Impact of SEND Provision

We maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of students to provide a basis for monitoring their effectiveness and impact. We use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all students. This helps us to develop the use of interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so. (COP 6.74, 6.76, 6.77)

10. Inclusion

We are committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, and fostering good relationships. Students with SEND engage in the activities of the school together with those who do not have SEND and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school and in any wider community activity. (COP xix, 8.8)

As the champion of families, children, and young people our collective priorities are to be certain that all children and young people are engaged with and included in the provision of high-quality inclusive education. Ensuring that, whatever their circumstance or ability, our children have a sense of belonging, feel respected, are valued for who they are and develop the knowledge and skills required for adult life. In doing so, we strive to achieve a continuous improvement in standards, a significant narrowing of achievement gaps for vulnerable groups of learners and a wholly inclusive education system which ensures:

- **Equitable access for all.** Sufficient, appropriate, quality education provision is available for all children and young people in Kent.
- **No child is left behind.** All children and young people are supported to be engaged fully in their education.
- **Effective collaboration.** There is collaboration and multi-agency working providing a self-informing, sustainable system which supports the education of all.' (KCC: CATIE p 2-3)

11. Emotional and Social Development and Well-Being

We support the emotional, mental and social development of children with SEND and disabilities by providing extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to their views and implementing measures to prevent bullying. (COP 4.32) We make provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

12. Involving Specialists

We will always involve a specialist where a child makes little or no progress over a sustained period or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those of students at a similar age despite evidence-based SEND support delivered by appropriately trained staff. Parents are always involved in any decision to involve specialists. We may involve specialists at any point to advise on early identification of SEND and effective support and interventions. (COP 6.59)

We work with parents/carers and agencies to consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions to support the child's progress. Together, we agree on the needs of the child, responsibilities and the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which it is reviewed. Records of involvement of specialists are kept and shared with parents and teaching staff. (COP 6.59, 6.62, 3.7, 3.25)

Where a child is looked after by the Local Authority, we will work closely with other relevant professionals involved in the child's life as a consequence of being looked after. (COP 10.7) We work closely with the Local Authority and other providers to agree on the range of local services and clear arrangements for making appropriate requests. Some services may be commissioned directly. (COP 6.61, 3.13)

13. Funding for SEND

We have an amount identified within our overall school budget, called the notional SEND budget. This is not a ring-fenced amount. We provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of our school budget including any resources targeted at particular groups such as the student premium. (COP 6.96, 6.97)

In some circumstances, parents/carers may request a Personal Budget. A Personal Budget is an amount of money identified by the Local Authority to deliver provision set out in an EHC plan where the parent/carer or young person is involved in securing that provision. (COP 9.95,9.98)

14. Data Protection

Education Health Care plans (EHC plans) will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it. EHC plans will not be disclosed without the consent of the child's parents/carers, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the child. (COP 9.211)

See our Data Protection policy for more information.

15. Complaints

Complaints about SEND provision at The Sittingbourne School should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. They will be referred through the school's complaints policy.

Parents/carers of students with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first tier SEND tribunal if they believe that the school has discriminated against their child. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

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

All complaints relating to a named member of staff must be sent to the headteacher.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, pages 246 and 247 of the SEND Code of Practice [SEND Code of Practice](#)

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the SENDCO or Headteacher as detailed above.