



Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Newark Orchard School

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1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out Newark Orchard School's statutory duties and operational approach to special educational needs and disability (SEND). It applies to all pupils on roll, all staff (including supply and peripatetic staff), governors and volunteers.

Newark Orchard School is an all needs special school. All pupils attending the school have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Accordingly, this policy focuses on high-quality specialist provision, robust multi-agency working, and rigorous review of outcomes.

2. Vision and principles

We are committed to an ambitious, inclusive education for every pupil. Our approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- High expectations and ambition for all pupils, regardless of starting point or complexity of need.
- A rights-based approach that respects the voice, views and wishes of children and young people.
- Co-production with parents and carers, and partnership working with health and social care.
- Early identification of barriers to learning and proactive removal of those barriers.
- Evidence-informed practice: teaching and interventions are selected, implemented and evaluated using the best available evidence.
- A focus on outcomes (not just provision), including preparation for adulthood and next steps.
- Reasonable adjustments and accessibility by design, ensuring no pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage because of disability.
- Safeguarding, wellbeing and dignity: we prioritise safety, health, communication and emotional security as prerequisites for learning.

3. Legal and policy framework

This policy should be read alongside the school's SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan and Equality Information and Objectives. It is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance (England):

- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3).
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance, last updated 12 September 2024).
- Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty and reasonable adjustment duties).
- Education Act 1996 and Education Act 2005 (including Ofsted inspection duties).
- Education (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) (England) Regulations 2008.
- Statutory guidance: Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR (as relevant to information handling and sharing).
- Children Act 1989, Care Act 2014 and other relevant safeguarding and wellbeing legislation where applicable.

The school also aligns its SEND practice with the current Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and associated inspection guidance for state-funded schools (for use from November 2025).

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, the school publishes a SEND Information Report on its website. This describes the school's arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND and how this links to the Nottinghamshire SEND Local Offer.

4. Definitions

The definitions of special educational needs (SEN) and disability are set out in section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies 4 broad areas of need (which may overlap):

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

Pupils must not be regarded as having SEN solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

5. Newark Orchard School context and graduated provision model

Newark Orchard School educates pupils with a wide range of SEND, often with co-occurring needs. Provision is delivered through an integrated educational and therapeutic approach, supported by small class sizes, specialist equipment, and an environment adapted to pupils' sensory, physical and communication needs.

Although all pupils have an EHCP, we still apply a graduated approach within specialist provision (Assess–Plan–Do–Review). This ensures that teaching, therapy and support remain responsive as pupils develop, circumstances change, and outcomes are refined.

Our provision model can be understood across three tiers:

- Universal specialist provision: high-quality, adaptive teaching; communication-rich classrooms; structured routines; and access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Targeted provision: time-limited, planned interventions addressing specific needs (e.g., communication programmes, sensory regulation plans, catch-up learning, social communication groups).

- Individualised provision: personalised programmes and provision specified in EHCPs, including specialist therapies, equipment, intimate care, and bespoke risk management.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Effective SEND practice is a whole-school responsibility. Key roles include:

6.1 Governing body

- Ensures statutory duties in relation to SEND and disability are met.
- Approves and monitors this policy and the SEND Information Report.
- Holds leaders to account for the quality and impact of provision, including outcomes and the effective use of resources.
- Ensures there is a named governor with oversight of SEND.

6.2 Headteacher

- Provides strategic leadership for SEND across the school and ensures a culture of high expectations and inclusion.
- Ensures staffing, training, safeguarding and resources enable delivery of EHCP provision.
- Ensures appropriate systems for assessment, progress monitoring, record-keeping and quality assurance.
- Ensures complaints are handled in accordance with the school's complaints procedure.

6.3 SENCO and SEND leadership

The school has a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who works with senior leaders and class teachers to maintain and improve SEND practice. The SENCO is a qualified teacher (or the headteacher) and meets mandatory qualification requirements where applicable.

- Provides expert advice to staff and supports high-quality adaptive teaching and curriculum access.
- Coordinates assessment, planning and review processes, including contributions to EHCP annual reviews.
- Leads the development and evaluation of the school's SEND offer and provision mapping.
- Supports effective partnership working with parents/carers and external professionals.
- Quality assures the implementation of EHCP provision and monitors the impact on outcomes.
- Ensures the SEND Information Report is reviewed and published.

6.4 Class teachers

- Are accountable for the progress and outcomes of pupils in their class, including those receiving targeted or individualised provision.
- Plan and deliver high-quality adaptive teaching informed by assessment and the pupils' communication, sensory and learning profiles.
- Implement EHCP provision and school plans consistently, including any risk assessments and healthcare arrangements.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and contribute to annual reviews and multi-agency planning.

6.5 Support staff and specialist staff

- Deliver programmes and support as directed, in line with training, care plans, communication profiles and risk assessments.
- Contribute to assessment information and review processes through professional observations and recorded outcomes.
- Support pupils' independence, communication and self-regulation, avoiding over-reliance and promoting agency where possible.

6.6 Parents/carers and pupils

- Parents/carers are partners in planning and reviewing provision, and are encouraged to share information that supports effective practice.
- Pupil voice is sought and represented in ways that are meaningful and accessible (e.g., AAC, objects of reference, visuals, advocacy).

7. Admissions, placement and transitions

Admissions are coordinated by Nottinghamshire County Council in line with local authority processes and national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. A pupil must have an EHCP naming Newark Orchard School to be admitted.

7.1 Entry and induction

- Individualised transition planning with the family and current setting.
- Information gathering from education, health and care professionals (including therapy reports and risk assessments).
- Baseline assessment of communication, cognition, physical/sensory needs, and wellbeing.
- A phased transition where appropriate, with a named key adult and clear communication pathways.

7.2 Transitions within school

- Structured handover between staff, including updated communication profiles, regulation plans, and risk assessments.
- Visits and familiarisation with new environments and routines, adapted to individual needs.

7.3 Preparing for adulthood and next steps

From Year 9 onwards, annual reviews include a Preparing for Adulthood focus: employment (where appropriate), independent living, community inclusion, and health. The school works with families, the local authority and partner agencies to plan transitions to post-16 education, training or adult services.

8. Assessment, planning and review

Assessment is continuous and multi-disciplinary. We use a combination of observational assessment, formal and semi-formal measures (where appropriate), and therapeutic input to establish pupils' strengths, needs and barriers to learning.

8.1 Assess–Plan–Do–Review

All pupils' provision is planned through a cyclical process:

1. **Assess:** gather assessment information and professional/parental insights to understand need and barriers to learning.
2. **Plan:** set clear, measurable outcomes and agree provision, including who will deliver it, frequency, and success criteria.
3. **Do:** implement the plan consistently, using trained staff and appropriate resources.
4. **Review:** evaluate impact against outcomes; refine, increase or reduce provision accordingly.

Plans may include EHCP outcomes, class-level targets, therapy plans, regulation plans, communication profiles and risk management arrangements. The level of documentation and review frequency is proportionate to need and risk.

8.2 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and annual reviews

The school coordinates the annual review process in line with statutory requirements and local authority guidance. Reviews are person-centred and outcome-focused.

- Parents/carers and relevant professionals are invited, and the pupil's views are captured in an accessible format.
- Provision is reviewed against impact and outcomes, with evidence included (progress data, work samples, therapy reports, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing information).
- Recommendations are made where changes are required (e.g., amended outcomes, updated provision, phase transfer planning).
- Where appropriate, interim reviews are arranged (for example, when needs change significantly or risk increases).

9. Teaching, curriculum and inclusion

High-quality teaching is the foundation of the school's SEND provision. We implement adaptive teaching strategies and carefully selected interventions. Our approach is consistent with evidence that structured, explicit teaching; effective scaffolding; and creating a positive learning environment support pupils with SEND. Students follow a provision or curriculum model dependent on their individual needs.

9.1 Adaptive teaching and classroom practice

- Clear routines and predictable structures to reduce cognitive and emotional load.
- Explicit instruction, modelling and guided practice, with systematic rehearsal and retrieval.
- Scaffolding and chunking to support working memory and processing.
- Use of multi-sensory resources and concrete materials to support conceptual understanding.
- Communication-rich environments, including AAC, visuals, signing and structured language approaches as appropriate.
- Planned opportunities for generalisation across contexts (classroom, community, learning outside the classroom).

9.2 Communication and interaction support

- Individual communication profiles that specify effective strategies and systems (AAC, signing, symbols, objects of reference).
- Staff training and coaching to ensure communication approaches are used consistently across the day.
- Collaboration with Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) to embed targets in everyday teaching and care routines.

9.3 Social, emotional and mental health, behaviour and regulation

We take a proactive, relational approach to wellbeing and behaviour. Where behaviour is a barrier to learning or safety, we use functional understanding and positive behaviour support.

- Regulation plans and sensory strategies informed by assessment and observation.

- Positive behaviour support plans based on functional analysis, with a focus on teaching alternative skills.
- Consistent routines, clear expectations and reinforcement systems adapted to pupils' needs and communication abilities.
- Multi-agency input where risk is heightened (e.g., CAMHS, Educational Psychology, social care).
- Physical intervention is used only as a last resort, in line with policy, training and statutory guidance.

9.4 Curriculum access and reasonable adjustments

The curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced and ambitious, while meeting individual needs. Reasonable adjustments are made to remove disadvantage arising from disability, including adjustments to environment, communication, timetables, assessment and access arrangements.

- Use of assistive technology and specialist equipment where needed.
- Exam and assessment access arrangements in line with awarding body requirements (where applicable).
- Accessibility features across the site (e.g., lifts, hoists, wheelchair access) and planned improvements through the Accessibility Plan.
- Safe, dignified care arrangements (including intimate care) that enable participation in learning.

10. Medical needs, nursing support and personal care

Many pupils have medical needs that require specialist input. The school meets its duties under statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

- Individual Healthcare Plans are in place where required and are reviewed at least annually, or sooner if needs change.
- Staff receive training commensurate with the needs they support (e.g., administering medication, gastrostomy, epilepsy management), with competence recorded.
- Medicines are managed safely, with clear storage, administration and recording procedures.
- Risk assessments are completed for medical and care procedures, educational visits and transport where appropriate.

The school works closely with specialist nursing, therapy and medical professionals to ensure pupils' health needs are met and do not create avoidable barriers to learning.

11. Working in partnership with parents/carers and pupils

We recognise parents and carers as experts in their child. Effective partnership improves outcomes and builds trust.

- Regular communication through agreed channels (e.g., home-school communication, phone, email, online platforms).
- Formal opportunities to review progress, including annual reviews and planned meetings.

- Workshops and events where appropriate to support home–school consistency (e.g., communication strategies, sensory regulation).
- Signposting to independent support and advice services, including Nottinghamshire SENDIASS, where required.

Pupils’ views are actively sought in accessible and meaningful ways. The school uses a range of approaches to ensure pupils influence their provision and experience.

12. Record keeping and information sharing

Accurate, timely record keeping supports consistency, safety and accountability. The school maintains and shares information proportionately, lawfully and in line with data protection requirements.

- Key documents are accessible to relevant staff (e.g., EHCPs, annual review reports, risk assessments, healthcare plans, communication profiles and behaviour/regulation plans).
- Information is shared with external professionals when necessary to support assessment, planning and review, with consent sought where appropriate.
- Safeguarding and safety considerations take precedence where information sharing is required to protect a child or young person.

13. Multi-agency working and the Local Offer

The school works closely with external agencies to deliver integrated support and to contribute to statutory processes. We also signpost families to Nottinghamshire’s SEND Local Offer: www.nottinghamshire.sendlocaloffer.org.uk

Agencies commonly involved include:

- Nottinghamshire County Council Integrated Children’s Disability Service (ICDS) and SEND casework teams.
- Educational Psychology Service.
- Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT).
- Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy.
- Special School Nursing and wider health services.
- Children’s Social Care and Early Help.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and other mental health support where appropriate.
- Voluntary and community sector partners supporting families.

The school participates in multi-agency planning and review and contributes to joined-up support for pupils and families.

14. Resources and funding

Resources are allocated to ensure the school can deliver EHCP provision and maintain safe staffing, specialist teaching and therapeutic support. The school uses a transparent, needs-led approach to deployment.

- Funding is aligned to pupils' assessed needs and EHCP provision, including specialist equipment and adaptations where required.
- Senior leaders regularly review class structures, staffing ratios and skill mix to ensure provision is safe and effective.
- Additional funding streams (where applicable) are used to support identified priorities and reduce disadvantage.

15. Workforce development and training

We maintain a planned programme of professional development so that staff have the knowledge and competence to meet pupils' needs effectively.

- Induction training covers safeguarding, SEND practice, communication approaches, behaviour and regulation, and health and safety.
- Ongoing training is prioritised for key needs (e.g., Autism, AAC, dysphagia awareness, moving and handling, medical procedures, trauma-informed practice).
- Coaching and practice development are used to ensure consistency and to embed training into day-to-day practice.
- The SENCO and leaders maintain oversight of training needs through supervision, performance development and quality assurance.

16. Monitoring impact, accountability and continuous improvement

We evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision through triangulation of evidence. This supports continuous improvement and Ofsted readiness.

- Progress towards EHCP outcomes and curriculum outcomes, using appropriate assessment systems and professional judgement.
- Quality of education monitoring, including lesson visits, work scrutiny and learning walks focused on inclusion and adaptive teaching.
- Therapy impact reporting and joint planning reviews with health professionals.
- Attendance, behaviour and wellbeing indicators, including analysis of incidents and restrictive intervention data.
- Parent/carer feedback, pupil voice and annual review feedback.
- Governance oversight through reporting and challenge.

Findings inform the School Development Plan and the school's self-evaluation, aligned to the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

17. Concerns, complaints and dispute resolution

We aim to resolve concerns quickly and informally wherever possible. Parents/carers should initially discuss concerns with the class teacher or SENCO. If concerns remain, they should be escalated to a senior leader, and then, if necessary, the headteacher.

Formal complaints are managed in line with the school's complaints policy. For matters relating to EHCP decisions made by the local authority, parents/carers may also access disagreement resolution services, mediation, and the SEND Tribunal. The school will signpost families to independent advice services as appropriate.

18. Related policies and documents

- SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour / Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

19. Evidence base and further reading

Our approach is informed by statutory guidance and high-quality evidence, including:

- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and associated SEND legislation and regulations.
- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance reports on SEND and behaviour.
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and inspection guidance (from November 2025), and DfE statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

20. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local authority processes.