



Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy



Last reviewed in January 2026

Designated Special Educational Needs & Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO)

Every school must designate a qualified teacher as SENDCO. In line with amended SEND Regulations (from 1 Sept 2024), SENDCOs appointed after 1 Sept 2024 must complete the National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENDCOs within three years of appointment.

At Highgate Infant School, our SENDCO is Mr Sam Birkinshaw, who has held the NASENCo qualification since 2020. Our SENDCO works across a number of small schools within Unity Education Trust, which is in line with guidance for small schools within the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

Aims and Objectives

At Unity Education Trust we are committed to meeting the needs of all pupils and aim to minimise barriers for learning so that all pupils feel valued and achieve their potential.

We adopt a Trust approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). All staff work together to ensure the inclusion of all pupils. We also work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that all of our pupils' needs are met.

We believe that:

- All children with SEND should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- All children with SEND can make progress and deserve to have their progress regularly monitored, recognised and celebrated.
- All children with SEND and their families have the right to be involved in assessing progress and determining support.

For transparency, the following are published on our website: SEN Information Report; Accessibility Plan; Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy; Behaviour policy; Admissions arrangements; and links to the Local Offer and SENDIASS.

We fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments (which may include auxiliary aids and services) so disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. We maintain and publish an Accessibility Plan to increase curriculum access, improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information; the plan is implemented, resourced and reviewed on a rolling cycle. (See: Equality Act 2010, Schedule 10; DfE guidance on the Equality Act in schools.)



Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND)

The SEND Code of Practice provides the following definition:

A child or young person has Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

SEND Information Report

Our SEN Information Report is published on the school website, reviewed annually, and complies with Regulation 51 and Schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (section 69 Children and Families Act 2014).

Each school in the Trust sets out its SEND information in the SEND Information Report developed by the staff and parents of the school. This report is accessible on the school's website and is intended to provide parents with the information that they require to make informed decisions about their child's education. The four key aims of our local offer is for it to be collaborative, accessible, comprehension and transparent. We maintain a rolling CPD plan for SEND (e.g., autism, SEMH, speech and language, sensory needs) and publish a summary of relevant staff training/qualifications in our SEN Information Report.

Categories of SEND

The SEND and Disabilities Code of Practice 2015 identifies four categories of SEND.

Communication and interaction	Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
Cognition and learning	Sensory and/or physical

Norfolk County Council guidance on the Provision Expected at SEND Support (PeaSS) splits the Communication and Interaction into two separate areas: Speech and Language & Social Communication and Interaction. It also identifies 3 separate areas from the Sensory and Physical Areas: Deafness, Visual Impairment, & Physical disability and Sensory needs.

Pupils identified within school as having SEND will be registered under one of the Norfolk PeaSS categories. The categories of need are identified on SEND plans alongside their Individual Needs Descriptors (INDES). More details on the INDES can be found in the Identification and Assessment section of this policy.

Local Norfolk tools (e.g., PeaSS/INDES) help describe needs and provision but do not replace the national legal tests in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice, the school will use its best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by pupils' SEN; we will inform parents when we are making special educational provision and ensure pupils with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN.



Identification and Assessment

The Trust is committed to early identification of special educational needs and adopts a graduated approach to meeting pupil's special educational needs in line with the 2015 Code of Practice. The school recognises that early identification is key to improving long term outcomes for pupils.

To assist teachers in early identification of children with special educational needs we regularly assess and monitor children's progress against the national curriculum and Foundation Stage Profile. Action is taken if the pupil is making less than expected progress despite high quality targeted teaching within the classroom.

If a pupil is making less than expected progress the pupil will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) in order to decide if additional provision is required. Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the school takes action to remove barriers to learning and put effective provision in place. This SEND support should take the form of a four-part cycle which is known as the graduated approach. For this, the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review (APDR) is adopted.

Pupils identified as having SEND will be supported at an appropriate level. This may be internally, with school supporting and meeting pupils needs, or if required school will request additional support and further advice from external agencies to ensure pupil progress and that the pupils' needs are met.

Requests for additional support through Norfolk County Council, including funding, require the use of the Individual Needs Descriptors (INDES).

INDES are a framework of standardised terms, co-produced and facilitated by Norfolk's Inclusion and SEND team, breaking down the broad areas of SEND into seven specific sections which describe need:

- Physical disability (including physical and neurological impairment, medical, independence and sensory)
- Deafness
- Visual impairment
- Speech and language
- Social communication and interaction
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Learning and cognition difficulties (including behaviour for learning)

When identifying a child or young person's needs as part of the assess, plan, do, review process (SEND Code of Practice, 2015), professionals use statements within the above that best describe presentation of need from typically developing (INDES 0) to complex (INDES 7). These numbers are shared with the authority, and are also listed on the child's SEND Support Plan.



Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

If pupils have a high level of need and are not making adequate progress through support provided from school and external agency intervention school may apply for an EHCP. In these cases, statutory assessment can be applied for, with the local authority deciding on the most suitable provision to meet pupil needs. If the outcome is that an EHCP will be provided then the local authority will set out the provision needed, following multi agency meetings, and this will be reviewed at least yearly.

Parents also have the right to apply for an EHC Needs Assessment for their child, but we would always encourage parents to speak with the school's SENDCo before doing so to identify any opportunities for collaborative work around the process. Parents should also contact the SEND and Inclusion line for advice on how best to seek support for their child. This can be reached Monday to Friday 9am-5pm on **0333 313 7165**.

More information on the EHCP process, including parental applications, can be found on the Norfolk County Council Website here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40673/Education-health-and-care-EHC-plans>

Provision

Planning focuses on delivering high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to meet the individual needs of the majority of pupils. Some children need educational provision that is additional to or different from this.

Pupils who need provision that is different from or in addition to classroom provision will be recorded on the SEND register and their individual plans will be recorded and shared with pupils, parents and carers. These are developed to support pupil progress in areas where the pupil requires additional support. These are written in conjunction with any teachers, support staff and any other professionals involved with the pupil. The staff will also have a conversation with the pupil to discuss things they like and things they find difficult. These conversations will help teachers to identify support for the pupil.

Transition

SEND pupils are supported through all aspects of transition with individual need being the driver for planning, preparation and provision. Transitions can be difficult for a child with SEND and steps are taken to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible

If a pupil moves to another school their needs will be discussed with the SENDCO from the new school and will ensure that all documents are passed on as quickly as possible.

When pupils transfer to another school the SENDCO will discuss the specific needs of pupils with the relevant staff and transition visits will be arranged between the two schools.



Medical conditions

The governing board fulfils its duty under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Our separate 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions' policy sets out arrangements for Individual Healthcare Plans, staff training and emergency procedures, in line with DfE statutory guidance (2014, updated).

'The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils. Where children and young people also have special educational needs, their provision should be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the Healthcare Plan. Schools are required to have regard to statutory guidance supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE, 2014).' Extract taken from SEND Code of practice 2015.

We adhere to the above and ensure pupils with medical needs have their needs met through appropriate arrangements and adaptations, which often take the form of Individual Healthcare Plans. Where these are required they will be developed in liaison with parents, the school nurse and/or other medical professionals.

Admissions, Behaviour/Exclusion and Attendance

Admissions comply with the School Admissions Code (2021) and the Equality Act 2010 (no less favourable treatment for disabled pupils).

Behaviour and exclusion practices consider SEN/disability and reasonable adjustments, following DfE exclusion guidance. Our behaviour and exclusions policies are available on our school website.

Attendance support follows DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' (Aug 2024), including careful, time-limited use and review of any reduced timetable as a short-term reasonable adjustment. The school's attendance policy is available on the school website.

Complaints

Concerns about day-to-day SEN support should follow the UET Complaints Policy (available on the school and UET website).

Disagreements about Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessments or plans follow statutory routes:

- If the complaint is relating to any element of an EHCP that is already in place, this can also be referred through to the Local Authority's EHCP co-ordinators in the first instance.
- Parents/young people have the right to mediation and to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), which also has extended powers to make non-binding recommendations on health and social care. The school will provide information on these rights with relevant decisions.