



Equality, Community, Growth

The Maples
Independent Primary School

The Maples – Special Educational Needs Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

The Maples



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This policy is written to comply with the Independent School Standards and is based on the National Curriculum and Ofsted framework.



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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to provide a personalised and holistic approach to education, ensuring that every student is valued as an individual and receives the tailored support they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe that by celebrating each child's unique strengths, we can cultivate a sense of belonging, confidence, and independence, preparing them for a fulfilling life beyond school.

Objectives:

- to identify how best to meet each child's special educational needs
- to ensure that children with special educational needs and disabilities access all of the activities, experiences and curriculum on offer
- to ensure that all learners make their best possible progress
- to ensure parents are informed of their child's special needs and provision and that there is effective communication between parents and school
- to ensure that learners express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their school offer
- to promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate.

2. Vision

At The Maples, we empower our pupils by giving them the freedom to flourish and grow through personalised, inclusive learning journeys, so that all can reach their full potential. Every opportunity is taken to promote confidence and emotional wellbeing to enable pupils to leave as successful and valued members of the wider community.

At The Maples, our vision is to create an inclusive and nurturing learning environment where every child, regardless of ability or need, is empowered to achieve their full potential. We are committed to fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and high aspirations for all students with SEND.

3. Legislation and guidance

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

- SEND and AP Improvement Plan (DfE, 2023) – now forming the basis of the national SEND and Alternative Provision reforms.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice Review 2025 – currently in final consultation (due to replace 2015 version in late 2025).
- KCSIE 2025 – reinforce links between SEND, safeguarding, and mental health (Part 2, paragraphs 131–140).
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance (DfE, 2022) – section on reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Dec 2023 update) – especially the strengthened focus on early help and multi-agency collaboration.

This policy also reflects the DfE's SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (2023), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), ensuring that the school's provision aligns with current statutory duties and best practice guidance.



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4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our school, we are committed to creating an inclusive and nurturing learning environment where every pupil, regardless of their needs or abilities, can access a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum. We believe that all pupils should have the opportunity to thrive, achieve, and fulfil their aspirations both academically and personally.

We achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching approaches, curriculum design, and the learning environment to remove barriers and ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 The four areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into four broad areas. Pupils may have needs that span more than one area, and these 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 on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.



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AREA OF NEED	
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific learning difficulties, which impact one or more particular aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia• Moderate learning difficulties• Severe learning difficulties• Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which are 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	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example, as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment• A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

6. Mental health and SEND

The school recognises that mental health difficulties can be both a cause and a consequence of special educational needs. We ensure early identification, appropriate intervention, and joined-up support through close collaboration between the SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, pastoral team, and external health professionals.



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7. Roles and responsibilities

All staff at The Maples share collective responsibility for supporting the emotional, social, and behavioural development of our pupils. Our strong nurturing ethos underpins every aspect of school life and is embedded in classroom practice, curriculum design, and daily interactions. Staff work collaboratively to create a safe, supportive environment that promotes emotional regulation, positive relationships, and personal growth.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) has strategic oversight of all SEND provision across the school. This includes ensuring early identification of needs, coordinating targeted support, overseeing the implementation of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and working in partnership with teachers, support staff, families, and external professionals to secure the best outcomes for every pupil.

7.1 The SENCO/ Headteacher

The SENCO at our school is Tania Beales.

They will:

- Work with the Executive Headteacher and proprietors 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 provision 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 graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- 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 made
- 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 the pupil's SEN and the provision for them is sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the Executive Headteacher and proprietors 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 Head of School, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- 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



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- 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
- 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
- Monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- 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 SLT 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
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7.2 The Proprietary Body

The proprietary body is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favorably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND



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7.3 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 set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

7.4 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 (in person and via phone call) to discuss their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- 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
- Invited to an Annual Review to discuss their child's progress and amend their EHCP if necessary

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

7.5 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.



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8. Our approach to SEND support

As a SEND school, The Maples caters for a range of SEND needs. The range of needs of our students is:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Specific Learning Difficulties including Dyslexia and Dyspraxia (SpLD)
- Attachment Disorder
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Moderate Learning Disability (MLD)
- Moderate Speech and Language Needs

Social, Emotional and Mental Health /Educational Behavioural Difficulties:

- SEMH difficulties are overarching terms for children who demonstrate difficulties with emotional regulation and/or social interaction and who may be experiencing mental health problems.
- Children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may have immature social skills and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships. These difficulties may be displayed through the child or young person becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour.

ASD

An Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong, complex developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them. Individuals with an ASD diagnosis will show a range of characteristics, and no two individuals are affected in exactly the same way. All individuals with ASD share, to differing extents, the triad of impairments affecting their ability to:

- understand and use non-verbal and verbal communication (for example, not fully understanding the meaning of gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice).
- understand social behaviour, which affects their ability to interact with others
- think and behave flexibly — which may be shown in restricted, obsessional or repetitive activities, a limited imagination and/or difficulty with change

In addition, some children and young people with ASD have sensory needs related to enhanced or reduced perception of sounds, sights, smell, touch, and taste, which affect their responses to and integration of these sensory inputs. They may also have coordination and planning difficulties, as well as unusual sleep and behaviour patterns.

All the above difficulties mean that young people are often highly anxious as they try to make sense of the world, and this may affect their behaviour.

Specific Learning Difficulties:

The term 'Specific Learning Difficulty' (SpLD) is a term that refers to a difference or difficulty with particular aspects of learning.



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The most common SpLDs are dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia. An individual may have one of these independently or in combination with others, and there is a continuum from mild to severe. All children and young people have different abilities to think, remember and learn; these are the cognitive skills. When an individual has difficulties or weaknesses in just one or two areas, in contrast to average or good cognitive skills, this is called a Specific Learning Difficulty, for example, struggling to form letters and hear word sounds.

Attachment Disorder

Attachment disorder is a condition shown in children and young people by a lack of emotional responsiveness, especially to caregivers and by emotions such as fear and sadness. Often, this disorder will mean that the individual has difficulty forming healthy attachments.

Moderate Learning Difficulties:

Children and young people with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) will generally have attainments below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions. They have much greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under-developed social skills.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs:

Some children and young people find it difficult to listen, understand and communicate with others and may need support to develop the skills involved. SLCN is the umbrella term most commonly used to describe these difficulties. Children and young people with SLCN may have difficulty with only one speech, language or communication skill, or with several. Children may have difficulties with listening and understanding or with talking or both. Each child also has a unique combination of strengths. This means that every child with SLCN is different. The provision to support SLCN at The Maples is referred to as SALT (Speech and Language Therapy).

8.1 The graduated approach to SEN support

When a pupil starts at The Maples, we will ensure to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

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 considered. 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 needs. 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.



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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 required. This information will be recorded in our SharePoint and will be made accessible to staff in an Individual Education Plan.

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 opinions 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.

8.2 Support at The Maples

All children at The Maples have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Provisions/actions that are additional to or different from that is available to all will be recorded in an IEP. The school SENDCo compiles and reviews each student's IEP alongside each child's class teacher every full term.

The IEP will set targets for the pupil and will detail:

- the short-term SMART targets set for or by the child linked to EHCP outcomes
- criteria for success
- the teaching strategies to be used that will link to planning
- the provision to be put in place
- resources required to implement the teaching strategies
- evidence and IEP review discussions termly
- who and when the plan is to be reviewed by

The IEP will be reviewed every term and the outcomes will be recorded. Where possible, pupils who are cognitively able to will participate fully in the review process.

If the school has evidence that a pupil is making insufficient progress despite significant support and intervention, we may seek further advice and support from outside professionals. These professionals will be invited to contribute to the monitoring and review of progress. Pupils and parents will be fully involved and kept informed about the involvement of external agencies and proposed interventions.



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At The Maples, some children also have defined physical disabilities as well as their primary SEND needs. The school SENDCo liaises with all existing medical professionals involved with the child and family to ensure students with a physical disability have a care plan as well as an IEP. The SENDCo will seek advice and support from other health and medical professionals for any new identified medical and health needs.

The Maples has wheelchair access with one disabled toilet available. There are trained members of staff in the administration of medication, and the needs of children with special dietary requirements can be fully met.

Most children who attend The Maples arrive and leave via school transport; all of our transport vehicles also have disability access.

SEND Interventions

Our SENDCo designs and implements a SEND intervention programme throughout the school. Some of the more commonly used interventions are:

- Lego Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy, in addition to SALT, is provided by external services
- A bespoke Nurture provision, available to every child (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants)

The level of intensity of each intervention is determined by the level of need for each child. The three levels of interventions are:

- Low-level interventions
- Medium-level interventions
- Intensive level interventions

8.3 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 in every cycle of SEN support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

For further information, please see our curriculum policy.

9. Expertise and training of staff

Regular, ongoing training is provided to all teaching and support staff to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. The Head of School and SENDCo work together to monitor staff expertise and identify specific training needs through lesson observations, pupil progress reviews, and staff feedback. Identified needs are incorporated into the school's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plan, ensuring a responsive and proactive approach to professional learning. Training opportunities may include internal workshops, external courses, and collaborative learning with other settings, with a particular focus on developing inclusive classroom practice, differentiation, and understanding of specific learning needs.



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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
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

11. Admission and accessibility arrangements

All children at The Maples have an Education Health Care Plan. They are referred to the school by the Local Authority SENMAS team. If a school placement is offered and granted by the Local Authority SEND panel, the SENDCo begins reviewing which class is most suitable for the child to join and starts preparing for the new student's admission. The SENDCo sets an initial IEP and a phased introduction to school life, tailored to each child's individual needs and confidence, in partnership with other professionals and the child's family.

12. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the Head of School. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their problems, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the Executive Headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy (Please see website).

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they 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](#).

13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

13.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether we are meeting the objectives set out in section 1.



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We will evaluate how adequate our SEND provision is with regard to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- Pupils' progress and attainment
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

13.2 Monitoring the policy

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

It will be approved by the proprietary body.

14. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Curriculum policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Child protection and Safeguarding policy
- Complaints for parents and carers policy

This policy is written so it complies with the Independent School Standards and is taken from the National Curriculum and Ofsted framework.