



DOWNLANDS COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL

SEN and Disability Policy

Reviewed/ Updated	December 2025
Ratified by Governors	2/12/25
Next Review	December 2026

Downlands Community Primary School Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Policy

Throughout this policy, 'Downlands' refers to Downlands Community Primary School and Downlands Dandelions Pre-School and Out of Hours Club.

The Manager refers to the Manager of Dandelions Pre-School and Out of Hours Club.

INTRODUCTION

All schools must have a Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Policy; also known as a SEN Policy. This is a duty set out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years* (Jan 2015).

A SEN Policy explains how a school will identify and support pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

This is the SEN Policy for Downlands School.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

The *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years* (Jan 2015) explains that a pupil has special educational needs (SEN) if:

- they have a learning difficulty or disability which makes it much harder for them to learn than other pupils of the same age; and
- they require special educational provision to be made for them.

There are four main areas of SEN:

- communication and interaction needs
- cognition and learning difficulties
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical needs

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

More detail about SEN and disability can be found on Dorset's Local Offer.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing body ensures that the school meets the duties set out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years* and [*Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025*](#)

The Governor with oversight of the arrangements for SEN and disability at our school is: THYRZA PICKERING who is contactable via the school office 01258 453348 or by email on office@downlandsschool.org.

CHRISTINE GOODALL, is the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) who has overall responsibility for SEN and disability at our school.

Her duties towards pupils with SEN and disability include:

- To undertake Safeguarding Training specific for children with SEND and disseminate as appropriate.
- Talking to parents with children already identified with SEN on arrival.
- Placing children in a class that will best fit the needs of the child arriving and the children already in class.
- Supporting teaching staff in identifying the children with SEN so early intervention is in place if needed.
- Allocating staff to support children with SEN if needed. This will not necessarily be 1:1 as children are now banded and therefore this might be in small groups by either the Teacher or Teaching Assistant
- Involving outside agencies if deemed necessary in consultation with parents.
- Ensuring that staff fulfil their statutory duties with delivering Quality First Education for every child and keep APDR's if necessary with appropriate documentation and records of the Assess Plan Do Review cycle, up-to-date.
- To monitor the progress of children with SEN through the School's Tracking System and Pupil Progress meetings
- To ensure that parents are informed at all times and that they are working in partnership with the school.
- To keep the SEN Register up-to-date
- To ensure the transfer of data from class to class and one school to the next.
- To write and set up reviews of EHCP (Educational Health and Care Plan) when necessary.
- To liaise with County via the SEN Provision Lead
- To liaise closely with the Class teachers and Teaching Assistants who work on the programmes set by outside agencies and with the Dandelions SENCO
- To ensure that all SEN information is up to date on the website and placed for everyone to see so ensuring the SEN provision offered at Downlands is used effectively.
- To ensure that the school's Local Offer is updated annually and is available to view on the Downlands School website.

CONSULTATION

This policy was developed in consultation with:

- Pupils with SEN and disabilities
- Parents
- Governors
- All school staff
- Other stakeholders including Specialist Teachers, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Hearing and Vision Services, Mental Health Support services

VISION AND AIMS

Downlands wants all our pupils to feel welcome, valued and included in the school community. We have high aspirations for our pupils with SEN and disabilities and will provide them with high quality learning opportunities to ensure that they achieve their best.

We also want to help our pupils with SEN and disabilities to develop a positive view of themselves so that they can become confident individuals and go on to live fulfilling lives by making a successful transition into adulthood. We endeavour to fully involve our pupils with SEN and disabilities in all decisions that affect them, so that they can help us to identify what works for them and reflect on what does not.

The views of our pupils and their parents are especially important to us and we will take these into account when consulting on, implementing and reviewing this policy.

To achieve the above, we will:

- create an atmosphere of encouragement and acceptance in which all pupils can thrive
- be sensitive to individual pupils' needs and celebrate achievements
- enable each pupil to take part and contribute fully to school life
- provide access to and progression within the curriculum; involve pupils in planning to support their SEN or disability; work in partnership with parents to support children's learning and health needs; provide quality training for staff that enables them to support pupils with SEN and disabilities.

OBJECTIVES

Downlands will do its best to ensure that the right provision is made for each pupil with Special Educational Needs and disabilities. We are committed to discovering and providing the best learning conditions for each pupil.

In implementing this policy, our goals are to:

- identify all pupils who have SEN and disabilities at an early stage

- ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have their needs met and that they make progress
- work in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 - 25 years (Jan 2015)
- provide support and advice to all staff who work with pupils with SEN and disabilities
- operate a whole school approach to meeting SEN and disabilities, in which all members of the school community understand their role
- ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities join in with all the activities of the school alongside their peers
- adopt a 'person centred approach' to supporting pupils with SEN and disabilities, ensuring that pupils and their parents are fully involved in decisions which affect them
- ensure there is an effective partnership working with outside agencies when appropriate.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Downlands uses the Local Authority arrangement for school admissions. This arrangement is mindful of national requirements supporting all children, including those who are disabled, in a fair and non-discriminatory way, when securing admission to school.

IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Our teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, and we have systems in place to ensure that special educational needs are identified as early as possible. We start by:

- providing high teaching
- regularly assessing our pupils' progress and targeting areas of difficulty.
- adjusting work for pupils who need this in the form of an Individual Support Plan which includes Reasonable Adjustments (See Appendix 1)

As necessary, we also:

- Put in appropriate interventions set by the class teacher.
- Evaluate the interventions.
- Use class support in small groups.
- Discuss with all stakeholders and seek advice from the SENCO

If a pupil continues to struggle with the curriculum despite the above support, we will consider whether they have a special educational need.

To do this we will:

- Monitor the child closely in class.
- Assess using formative and non-formative assessments and questionnaires.
- Talk to the SENCO
- Seek outside support from the appropriate agency.

This is a process involving the class teacher, SENCO, parents and the pupil.

If it is decided that a pupil has SEN and requires special educational provision (provision that is additional to and different from that which is available to other pupils at the school) they will be added to the SEN record under the category of SEN Support. Parents will be informed when this happens. The provision given at SEN support will be individual to each child, according to the SEN but it could include:

- a special learning programme
- extra help from a teacher or a teaching assistant
- working in a small group or help to take part in class activities.

We will involve parents in decisions about the support to be provided for their child by meeting and discussing the arrangements on a termly basis. However, some pupils with more severe, complex and long-term SEN may need an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), especially if they have not made progress with SEN Support. If we feel this is the case, we will discuss this with the child's parents. Parents can also contact the class teacher and or SENCO if they feel their child might need an EHCP.

EHCPs are issued by the Local Authority following an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. Downlands will work with parents and other services to request an EHCP needs assessment where it will be beneficial.

Further details about the assessment process and EHCP can be found on Dorset's Local Offer.

Sometimes other factors can affect a pupil's progress but are not considered to be a special educational need, for example: attendance and punctuality, ill health, English as an Additional Language, Children Looked After, service children, behaviour and bereavement. These needs will be addressed appropriately using other processes or strategies.

SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES

At Downlands we use an "Assess, Plan, Do, Review" approach to support pupils with SEN and disabilities. This is also known as the graduated response. It helps us to learn more about the pupil and what helps them to make good progress. The four parts of this approach are as follows:

1. Assess - as already outlined above, we assess the pupil's needs; listening to the views of the pupil and their parents, and other professionals as we do so

2. Plan - the teacher and our SENCO will plan the support needed, involving the pupil and their parents. A review date will be agreed

3. Do - our SENCO will help the class teacher to support the pupil. They will think about the pupil's strengths and weaknesses and how best to help them. The teacher will also work with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved

4. Review – everyone, including the pupil and their parents will decide how effective the support has been. We will then adapt the support in light of the pupil's progress.

If needed, during this process, we may ask for advice from specialist support services, such as Educational Psychology, Speech & Language Therapy, Specialist Teaching & Advice, Behaviour Support and Children's Therapy, or from the Mental Health Support Team. We can also seek support from Yewstock and or Beaucroft Special schools through Teaching Alliance Dorset Special Schools (TADSS). They are able to provide both outreach and inreach work that will support the staff and children in maintained schools. Parental permission will always be sought prior to this.

We are also very aware that this process sometimes needs to be accelerated as postings can hamper the ability for schools to get this process under way and completed during the time that your child is at Downlands. This is indeed the case often at most schools. Hopefully with the evidence that previous schools have provided and the assessments that Downlands staff have carried out, we can try to speed up the graduated response. We are very well aware of the problems that frequent changes of school can have on a child's education and for them to receive their entitlement and evidence of the difficulties that they are encountering.

Additionally, pupils with EHCP have an Annual Review held 6 months after the plan is finalised and then annually, held at the school. The pupil, their parents and any relevant professionals are invited to this. Annual Reviews at Downlands are person-centred and focus on the pupil's progress.

They also:

- consider whether the outcomes in the EHCP are still appropriate
- review the special educational provision in place
- review any health or social care provision currently in place
- consider whether the EHCP is still needed.

A report of the meeting is sent to the Local Authority.

Further detail about Annual Reviews can be found on Dorset's Local Offer.

Banding

The banding arrangements that have been put in place by the Local Authority do not now stipulate 1:1 support except for the more severe cases. These are usually children with not just educational but also medical needs that require the child to be monitored very closely for one reason or another.

The current Funding Allocation is available from Dorset Council's Accountancy LMS Team.

COMING OFF THE SEN RECORD

A pupil will be removed from the SEN record if it is decided that they have made sufficient progress and are able to access the curriculum successfully. However, they will continue to be monitored in case any issues arise. Some pupils may dip in and out of SEN Support and parents will be consulted at each stage.

Following the Annual Review of an EHCP, the Local Authority will decide whether to keep the EHC Plan as it is, amend it or cease it, based on the recommendation of the Annual Review meeting. If it is decided to cease an EHCP because the pupil no longer requires the special education provision within it, we will continue to monitor the pupil's progress using the school's tracking systems.

TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Downlands is committed to ensuring that parents have confidence in the arrangements for pupils entering the school, progressing through year groups and when transferring to their next school.

Whether your child transfers mid-term and or at the normal transition time, Downlands endeavours to make this experience as straight forward as possible for all parties.

Arriving

- You need to inform the local authority of your preferred school via [this website](#)
- You need to complete Downlands arrival forms and tell us your first possible date of arrival. Please don't worry if this does not happen as planned.
- Try and give the office staff as much detail about your child's' additional needs and/or ask to speak to the SENCO.
- This then allows us plenty of time to contact your child's present school and enable us to place your child in an appropriate class.

Departing

- School books etc are given to the parents in a sealed envelope and are signed for by the parents at the office either on the day of leaving or the day before.
- SEN records are sent securely directly to the new school when the CTF is requested. (CTF is your child's electronic record that includes the UPN, Unique Pupil Number, that every child has that attends an English school)
- In some circumstances special arrangements are made where the old class teacher or the receiving school is visited so information can be handed over in a personal way if deemed necessary.
- The Blandford School (upper school)has a graduated response where children in Year 6 go throughout the year to meetings and events at the school.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Downlands aims to keep all staff up to date with relevant training, in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN and disabilities. Funding is set aside to support continued professional development.

Training needs are identified through analysis of need with the SENCO and senior leadership team ensuring that training opportunities match school priorities. The SENCO will also provide information on specific special educational needs for new staff.

Additional training may also be arranged to support pupils with specific medical needs and will be arranged with relevant medical professionals. Such training is linked to the School Development Plan and the needs of individual staff. Examples are as follows:

- Sensory needs
- Specialist Teacher advice
- Behaviour Management
- Occupational Therapist
- English as an additional language

Teaching Assistants have additional training for key aspects of SEN support for children of all age ranges.

STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION

All data including data stored electronically is subject to Data Protection law and current GDPR regulations. All paper records will be held in line with the school's policy/protocol on security of information.

LINKS TO OTHER INFORMATION

This policy closely links with other policies, plans and information produced by Downlands School and these are outlined below.

Accessibility Plan

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we are implementing an Accessibility Plan which sets out how we will:

- a) increase access to the curriculum for our disabled pupils
- b) improve the physical environment of the school to increase access for our disabled pupils and
- c) make written information more accessible to our disabled pupils by providing information in a range of different ways.

Our Accessibility Plan can be found on the School Website supporting pupils with medical conditions in line with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the associated guidance, *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions* (Dec 2015). Downlands makes suitable arrangements to support all pupils with medical

conditions, so that they have full access to the same opportunities as their peers, including school trips and physical education.

Our 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions' policy can be found: on the School Website.

This policy, along with our annual SEN Information Report (a summary of how this policy has been implemented over the previous year), forms our 'Local Offer' of support for pupils with SEN and disabilities at Downlands School. You can find all this information on our school website.

Information about our school can also be found on our record on the Family Information Directory, part of Dorset Council's website. Further information about the support available to all children and young people in Dorset with SEN and disabilities, and their families can be found on [Dorset's Local Offer](#).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Our SENCo will provide an annual account of the implementation of this policy, detailing how we have identified and supported pupils with SEN and disabilities. This policy will therefore be kept under regular review but it will be fully updated every three years. Pupils with SEN and disabilities, their parents and other stakeholders will be involved in this process at all times, and we always welcome feedback to ensure that we continue to offer the best possible provision at all times.

We will evaluate the success of our policy through:

- our self-evaluation processes
- feedback from our pupils, parents and professionals working with the school
- analysis of lesson planning to take account of differentiation and scaffolding
- progress data, including use the school's tracking system and comparative national data to monitor the level and rate of progress for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- success towards outcomes included on SEN Support and EHCP
- external evaluations or inspections.

COMPLAINTS

It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and early action. If at any point a parent has concerns about how their child's needs are being met, they should contact their child's class teacher. However, if a parent feels that their concern or complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made to speak with the SENCo/ Headteacher.

Further details can be found within our Complaints Policy which is available on our website.

APPENDIX 1 - The Butterfly Hub Statement of Intent

Intent of The Butterfly Hub

The intent of our sensory-based resource base, known as The Butterfly Hub is to provide a highly individualised, engaging, and nurturing learning experience for primary-aged pupils with complex needs and who are working significantly below age-related expectations. We recognise that these children learn most effectively through sensory exploration, routine, and meaningful, concrete experiences that help them make sense of the world around them.

Our curriculum is designed to:

- **Bring a balance** between the age related learning that a pupil can experience within the mainstream classroom and a more individualised environment that The Butterfly Hub can provide with inclusive practice being at the fore of all planning and intervention.
- **Use sensory experiences as a foundation for learning** helping pupils to regulate, attend, and engage through structured and purposeful multisensory activities.
- **Develop communication and interaction skills** using approaches such as intensive interaction, visual supports, and augmentative communication systems to promote understanding, expression, and connection.
- **Support emotional regulation and wellbeing** providing predictable routines, low-arousal environments and opportunities for sensory integration to reduce anxiety and build resilience.
- **Foster independence and self-help skills** enabling pupils to develop confidence in daily routines and functional life skills.
- **Promote engagement, curiosity, and motivation** ensuring learning is meaningful, enjoyable, and tailored to each pupil's strengths, interests, and sensory profile.
- **Encourage social understanding and relationships** through structured play, shared attention activities, and positive interaction opportunities.
- **Lay the foundations for future learning**, building the prerequisite cognitive, sensory, and communication skills needed to access more formal curriculum areas as appropriate.

Ultimately, the intent of our resource base is to enable every pupil to feel safe, understood, and valued; to communicate and connect with others; and to experience success and joy through sensory-rich, meaningful learning opportunities that reflect their individuality and potential.

APPENDIX 2

Downlands Community Primary School <i>We Care, We Share, We Believe, We Achieve</i>		INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT RECORD <i>see APDR and Blue SEN Log for Plan</i>		<i>To be printed and kept in class folder for access by all adults working with that child. To be passed to next CT.</i>	
Child's Name:		Date started:	Date updated:	Date updated:	Date updated:
Level on CoP: <i>SEN E</i> <i>SEN K</i>			Area of need: <i>ADHD Diagnosis</i>		
Outside Agency Involvement/Support:	Important points to know (including diagnosis, relevant background experiences etc)				
Difficulties experienced:		Successful support/child preference		What the child can do well/ independently	

Additional Support – Outline of Interventions. Ensure APDR is completed half termly	For REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS for this child see over.
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REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS for _____ Tick adjustments applied for this child. Add individual adjustments and comments with reference to APDR			
Cognition and Learning	Language and Communication	Sensory and Physical	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
Clear written and verbal directions	Timer	Flexible seating options	Limit distractions for all senses.
Chunk learning and tasks - stepped	Visual supports (including now and next board/ timetable)	Highlight word lines in books	Conflict resolution training
Single instructions	Colour coding/ overlays/ coloured paper	Highlight lines/spacing/positioning in books	Predictable routines
Teach active listening skills	Social stories	Movement breaks	Build confidence
Provide models/examples	Highlight word lines in books	Weighted blanket	Reward good choices
Mnemonics and memory techniques	Address by name	Use of computer	Safe calm space
Address by name	Routines checklists	Wobble cushion/Therabands	Pre-warn of transitions
Talking tin/recorded instructions/videos	Secret message - I need help...	Provide handouts/photos of task	Play therapy
Reduced length of task	Use widget text to support vocabulary	Texture variations in uniform	Structured playtime activities
Brain breaks	Vocab walls	Consider providing fidgets/chew toys	Strong boundaries
Use of computer - dictation tool/typing	Teach non-verbal cues	Pencil grips	Nurture /ELSA/Adult support at trigger points
Personalised interest topics	Pre-teach new vocabulary	Movement breaks/heavy labour tasks	Responsibility

Dyslexia friendly font.	Use simplistic language	Prompted to eat/drink	State facts as opposed to praise
Peer collaboration	Pause when speaking	Consider great use of or reduction of multi-sensory approach	Pair with positive role model
Play memory sequencing/attention games	Animated speech and facial expressions and hand signs (Makaton)	Thera putty	Limit choices
Allow thinking time	Multi-sensory approach	Build fine motor skills	Line position
Differentiate the instruction not the task	Face the child when speaking	Build gross motor skills	Relational practice
Visual aids and manipulatives	Buddy to scribe	Sloped writing board	TAC meeting
Regular review	Don't force reading in front of peers	Don't shout	Earn not sanction
Real life connections/ Personalise the learning	Use magnetic letters/numbers	Avoid pacing when teaching	Depersonalise consequences
Small group support	Wear a microphone (HI)	Time outside	Address behaviour, not person
Consider whole word reading if phonetic approach isn't working	Language rich classroom	Breathing exercises	Personalised projects
Date/Lo print outs			
Reduces quantity of output expectation			
Writing frames/cloze activities			

Play based learning			
Problem-solving activities			
Overlearning			
The chance to be over-successful on lower cognitive demand tasks			
Audio (books) alongside text.			