Connected Futures Partnership

Authoring our story.

Dorothy Gardner Nursery School
Mary Paterson Nursery School
Tachbrook Nursery School
Essendine Primary School
Hallfield Primary School
Oxford Gardens Primary School
Queen's Park Primary School
Queen's Park Family Hub
Bayswater Children's Centre

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

SEPTEMBER 2026

Contribution | Challenge | Inclusivity | Aspiration

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Policy lead	Executive Headteacher / Heads of School / SENCOs and Inclusion Leads
Applies to	CFP maintained primary and nursery schools
Review due	September 2027, or earlier following material statutory or SEND-system reform

1. Purpose and commitment

Connected Futures Partnership Federation (CFP) is committed to an inclusive education in which high expectations, belonging and achievement apply to every child. We recognise that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are the responsibility of the whole school, not solely the SENCO or specialist staff.

Our approach is needs-led and support-first. We aim to identify barriers early, strengthen ordinarily available provision, make reasonable adjustments, use evidence-informed targeted support and draw on specialist expertise where needed. Diagnosis is not required before appropriate support can begin.

- secure high-quality, ambitious education for children with SEND;
- identify needs and barriers as early and accurately as possible;
- ensure pupils participate in the full life of their school wherever reasonably possible;
- work in genuine partnership with children, parents and carers;
- ensure teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their classes;
- deploy resources transparently and responsively according to need; and
- build specialist expertise across CFP, including through our Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs).

2. Statutory framework and 2026 reform context

This policy reflects the legal framework currently in force, including the Children and Families Act 2014, Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. The Code remains the statutory guidance at the date of this policy.

The Government's 2026 schools and SEND reform programme proposes significant future changes, including an updated SEND Code of Practice, National Inclusion Standards and changes to planning and support. These reforms are being phased and consulted upon. CFP will prepare for change and align with strong inclusive practice, but will not treat proposed future arrangements as current statutory requirements until they take legal or statutory effect.

- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, as amended;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- Education Act 1996 and relevant school admissions legislation;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework, where applicable; and
- current DfE attendance, medical conditions, exclusions, alternative provision and related statutory guidance.

3. Definition of SEND

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 them. For compulsory-school-age children, this includes having a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or a disability which prevents or hinders use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision is provision additional to, or different from, that made generally for children or young people of the same age. A child does not need a medical diagnosis in order to receive SEN Support where their identified needs call for special educational provision.

The current SEND Code identifies four broad areas of need: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health difficulties; and sensory and/or physical needs. These are useful starting points rather than labels. Needs may overlap, change over time and interact with disadvantage, attendance, language, health, trauma or other circumstances. Schools will seek to understand the underlying barriers rather than assume that attainment or behaviour alone demonstrates SEND.

4. Inclusive provision: a continuum of support

CFP sees SEND provision as a continuum rather than a series of separate systems. Support begins with an ambitious, accessible curriculum and high-quality teaching for all, strengthened through adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments. Where this is not sufficient, targeted and specialist support is added according to assessed need.

4.1 Ordinarily available inclusive provision

- clear curriculum sequencing and secure foundational knowledge and skills;
- high-quality adaptive teaching informed by assessment;
- accessible communication, environments, routines and resources;
- reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils;
- early language, communication, literacy, numeracy, regulation and independence support;
- positive relationships, predictable routines and a culture of belonging;
- effective use of support staff that promotes learning and independence rather than dependency; and
- regular review of whether classroom provision is removing barriers and improving outcomes.

4.2 SEN Support and the graduated approach

Where a pupil requires special educational provision, the school will use the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review. This is a dynamic cycle: provision is adjusted in response to evidence about what is working, rather than waiting for a fixed period or a diagnosis.

Assess

Build a rounded understanding of strengths, needs, attainment, development, attendance, wellbeing, pupil and family views, previous support and relevant professional advice.

Plan

Agree intended outcomes, adjustments, targeted provision, responsibilities, review arrangements and how impact will be measured. Parents/carers and the pupil should be involved.

Do

The class or subject teacher retains responsibility for the pupil, including where interventions or specialist staff are involved. Staff delivering support should understand its purpose and connection to classroom learning.

Review

Evaluate impact on progress, participation, independence and agreed outcomes; seek pupil and family views; and decide whether to maintain, adapt, intensify or cease provision.

5. Identification and assessment

Early identification is important, but identification must be thoughtful. Slow progress, low attainment, challenging behaviour, English as an additional language, disadvantage or a medical condition do not automatically mean that a child has SEND.

- Teachers raise emerging concerns through the school's agreed inclusion process and continue to adapt teaching.
- The SENCO/Inclusion Lead supports analysis of evidence, including pupil and parent/carer views.
- Schools consider whether factors such as attendance, safeguarding, health, language acquisition, curriculum gaps or changes in circumstances may be contributing.
- Where appropriate, targeted assessment or specialist advice is sought.
- Support is not delayed solely because assessment, diagnosis or external referral is pending.
- Parents/carers are informed and involved when SEN Support is being considered and when a pupil is identified as having SEN.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Governing Board

- maintain strategic oversight of SEND and inclusion across CFP;
- ensure the legal duties towards pupils with SEND and disabled pupils are understood and met;
- appoint a governor with SEND/inclusion oversight and receive appropriate assurance on provision, outcomes, resourcing and statutory compliance;
- challenge leaders on the quality and impact of inclusive provision, including SRPs; and
- ensure required SEND information is published and kept under review.

6.2 Executive Headteacher and Heads of School

- establish an ambitious culture of inclusion and ensure this policy is implemented;
- ensure the SENCO has sufficient authority, time, support and access to leadership;
- ensure staffing, professional development and resources are aligned to need;
- oversee quality of education, safeguarding, attendance and outcomes for pupils with SEND;
- ensure statutory EHCP duties and reasonable adjustments are fulfilled; and
- work with the local authority and partner services where provision or placement requires wider action.

6.3 SENCO / Inclusion Lead

- coordinate SEND provision and the graduated approach;
- advise colleagues on identification, assessment, adaptive teaching, interventions and reasonable adjustments;
- maintain appropriate records and oversee the SEN register;
- work with pupils, parents/carers, leaders and external professionals;
- coordinate statutory processes and annual reviews for pupils with EHCPs;
- support transitions and referrals;
- contribute to staff development and whole-school improvement; and
- monitor patterns, provision and impact rather than simply the volume of interventions.

6.4 Teachers

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class, including pupils who access support from teaching assistants, specialist teachers or external professionals.

- know pupils' needs, outcomes and relevant plans;
- provide high-quality adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments;
- implement agreed provision and evaluate its impact;
- work closely with support staff while retaining responsibility for teaching and assessment;
- contribute to assess–plan–do–review cycles and EHCP reviews; and
- communicate constructively with pupils, families and the SENCO/Inclusion Lead.

6.5 Support staff and specialist staff

Support staff and specialist staff make an important contribution but should not replace the teacher's relationship with, or responsibility for, the pupil. Deployment should promote access, learning, communication, participation and independence.

7. Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs)

CFP includes Specialist Resourced Provisions as part of its wider continuum of inclusive provision. SRPs provide enhanced specialist support for pupils whose needs require provision additional to, or different from, that ordinarily available within mainstream classes.

SRPs are integral parts of their school communities rather than separate schools within schools. Pupils should have meaningful opportunities to learn, participate, build relationships and belong within the wider school according to their individual needs, strengths, safety and agreed provision.

- provision is planned around individual needs and outcomes, including provision specified in an EHCP where applicable;
- appropriately skilled staff deliver specialist teaching and support, drawing on therapeutic and external professional expertise where appropriate;
- evidence-informed approaches are used and impact is reviewed regularly;
- connections with mainstream curriculum, enrichment and school life are planned purposefully rather than assumed;
- pupils and parents/carers are partners in planning and review;
- the school works closely with commissioning local authorities and relevant professionals; and
- SRPs are subject to the same expectations for safeguarding, quality of education, inclusion, attendance and continuous improvement as all other CFP provision.

Admission or placement in an SRP is not simply a school-level SEN Support decision. Placement and commissioning arrangements operate through the relevant statutory and local authority processes and the admissions arrangements applicable to the particular provision. CFP's separate SRP admissions guidance should be read alongside this policy. Attendance at an SRP does not in itself create an automatic entitlement to a later CFP mainstream or specialist place unless the relevant admissions or statutory placement process provides for this.

8. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Where, despite relevant and purposeful action through SEN Support, a pupil requires provision that may exceed what can reasonably be secured through the school's available resources and arrangements, the school and/or parent may consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

- CFP will cooperate fully with EHC needs assessments and provide clear evidence of needs, provision, impact and pupil/family views.
- Where an EHCP names a CFP school, leaders will use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision specified in the plan and will work with the local authority where concerns arise about deliverability or changing need.
- EHCPs will be reviewed at least annually in accordance with statutory requirements, with earlier review sought where circumstances materially change.
- Phase-transfer planning and consultation will begin early enough to support informed decisions and effective transition.

9. Partnership with pupils and parents/carers

Co-production is central to effective SEND practice. CFP will listen to children and families, explain decisions clearly and recognise parents/carers as holders of important knowledge about their child.

- pupils are supported to express their views in ways accessible to them;
- parents/carers are involved in identification, planning, review and significant changes to provision;
- information is made accessible through interpretation, translation or reasonable adjustment where needed;
- schools explain what support is being provided, why, and how impact will be reviewed; and
- disagreement is addressed respectfully and early wherever possible.

10. External professionals and multi-agency working

Schools may seek advice or support from educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, health, mental health, sensory services, outreach, social care, SEND support services and other appropriate professionals. The precise services available vary by borough and over time, so this policy does not hard-code individual teams or providers.

External advice should inform, not replace, school responsibility. Recommendations will be considered alongside the pupil's wider context, statutory duties, available evidence and the school's assessment of impact.

11. Resources and deployment

Resources will be deployed according to assessed need, statutory duties and impact. Funding arrangements do not determine whether a child has SEN and support should not be withheld solely because a diagnosis or EHCP is absent.

- prioritise strong universal and ordinarily available provision;
- use targeted interventions where they add value beyond high-quality classroom teaching;
- ensure support staff deployment promotes independence and curriculum access;
- consider assistive technology, specialist equipment and environmental adaptation where appropriate;
- review whether provision is improving outcomes rather than assuming that more adult hours automatically means better support; and
- maintain appropriate oversight of commissioned and SRP resources.

12. Equality, accessibility and reasonable adjustments

SEND and disability are related but not identical concepts. A pupil may be disabled under the Equality Act 2010 without having SEN, and vice versa. CFP will anticipate and make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and will not require a formal diagnosis before considering whether an adjustment is needed.

Accessibility planning, curriculum access, physical access, communication, information, uniform, behaviour approaches, trips and wider school participation will all be considered through an equality and inclusion lens.

13. Safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and medical needs

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities. Staff will not assume that communication differences, distressed behaviour, attendance difficulties or changes in presentation are simply features of SEND. Safeguarding concerns will be considered and acted upon in accordance with CFP procedures.

Behaviour is considered in context. Schools will seek to understand unmet need and make reasonable adjustments where required, while maintaining clear expectations and safety. SEND does not remove safeguarding, behaviour or attendance responsibilities, but these responsibilities must be applied lawfully and inclusively.

Where a pupil also has medical needs, the SEND Policy should be read alongside the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Allergy Safety Policy, Asthma Policy and Intimate Care Policy as relevant.

14. Transition

Transition is a process, not a single handover. CFP will plan proportionately for movement between classes, phases, schools, SRPs and specialist settings.

- share relevant information securely and promptly;
- involve the pupil and family in planning;
- arrange visits, visual supports, transition materials or additional familiarisation where helpful;
- liaise with receiving and previous settings and relevant professionals;
- ensure EHCP phase-transfer processes are supported; and
- review provision after transition and respond quickly where needs have changed.

15. Record keeping and information sharing

SEND records will be accurate, proportionate, secure and accessible to staff who need the information to support the pupil. Information will be handled in accordance with data protection requirements and safeguarding duties. Records should show the school's reasoning, provision, review and impact rather than becoming an administrative end in themselves.

16. Complaints and disagreement resolution

Concerns should normally be raised first with the class teacher, SENCO/Inclusion Lead or Head of School so that they can be addressed promptly. Formal school complaints are considered under the CFP Complaints Policy. Statutory rights relating to EHC needs assessments, EHCPs, placement and the SEND Tribunal remain separate and are not replaced by the school complaints process.

17. Monitoring, evaluation and governance assurance

CFP will evaluate SEND provision through a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence. Success is not measured solely by the size of the SEN register or by intervention numbers.

- progress, attainment and curriculum access;
- attendance, participation, belonging and exclusions/suspensions;
- progress towards individual and EHCP outcomes;
- pupil and parent/carer voice;
- quality of teaching, reasonable adjustments and targeted provision;
- independence and successful transition;
- quality and impact of SRP provision;
- timeliness and quality of statutory processes; and
- equality of access to wider school life.

18. Publication and related information

Each school will publish the information required by law, including its SEND Information Report and accessibility information, and will ensure that these reflect its current local provision. This Federation policy provides the common CFP framework; school-level SEND Information Reports provide the setting-specific detail.

Related CFP policies and guidance

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Restrictive Interventions, Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy
- Attendance procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- EYFS SRP Admissions Guidance and other CFP SRP admissions guidance as adopted

19. Review and reform readiness

This policy will be reviewed annually and earlier where legislation, statutory guidance or CFP provision changes materially. During the 2026–27 academic year, leaders and governors will continue to monitor national SEND reform. Proposed future mechanisms will be incorporated only when their legal or statutory status, commencement and implementation requirements are clear.