



UNICORN SCHOOL

SEND POLICY

This policy applies to all children at Unicorn School, including those in the EYFS.

RESPONSIBILITY

Staff Member:

SENDCo (including EYFS)

Last Reviews:

January 2026

Approved by Governors:

March 2026

Next Review:

January 2029

Please also refer to: Inclusion Statement, Accessibility Plan, Able Gifted &/or Talented Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and DISABILITIES SEND POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and children with special educational needs (SEN) at Unicorn School. It is written with due regard to:

- The SEND Code of Practice 2015: 0-25 years (DfE and Department of Health, January 2015)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, 2018)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- EYFS Framework (2025)

Unicorn School aims to provide an educational setting in which the different educational needs of each child are understood and met by every member of staff. The school also aims to ensure that all children have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

DEFINITIONS

Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

In accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 years (DfE & DoH, 2015), a child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Four areas of need can be identified:

1. Cognition and learning needs, including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
2. Communication and interaction needs, including
 - Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
 - Autism spectrum condition (ASC)
3. Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)
4. Sensory and/or physical needs, including visual or hearing impairment.

EAL (English as an Additional Language)

Please see Policy, English as an Additional Language.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty because the language or form of language at home is different from the language in which they will be taught. Nevertheless, when Unicorn School accepts a pupil whose first language is not English, provision will be made to enable them to access the curriculum based on their individual needs, if required. Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may also have SEND, and careful assessment will be undertaken to ensure that any additional needs are accurately identified and supported.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To identify and assess children with special educational needs at the earliest opportunity, ensuring that children make progress through high-quality teaching, appropriate differentiation, and, where necessary, additional support.
- To recognise and acknowledge the difficulties that children with SEND encounter and to address these difficulties in a positive and encouraging way.
- To recognise that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks including peer isolation, bullying and mental health needs.
- To adopt the graduated approach, as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 years (DfE & DoH, 2015), and follow the four stages: Assess, Plan, Do, Review.
- To initiate and maintain effective communication between the school, parents of children with SEND and the children themselves, to develop a collaborative partnership of support and enable joint planning between all parties. Communication may also extend to outside agencies should that be necessary.
- To encourage all staff to share in the responsibility involved in the successful planning and provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- To ensure that children with SEND engage in the activities of the setting alongside children who do not have SEND.
- To focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.

- To maintain records of children under our care as required under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and to make these records available to parents.
- To ensure that clear, accessible information on how the setting supports children with SEND is available to parents.
- To ensure that good practice is followed so that admissions, discipline and other procedures (for example arrangements for school trips and examinations) take into account pupils' learning difficulties or disabilities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head is responsible for:

- ensuring provision for children with SEND as described in the SEND Policy
- keeping the Governing Body informed of developments in SEND provision.
- ensuring there is training and support for teachers to meet the learning needs for children with SEND

The Head of Learning Support (SENDCo) is responsible for:

- liaising with the Head regarding training and support for staff
- contributing to appropriate in-service training and ongoing professional development of staff, including weekly SEND-focused training sessions for Teaching Assistants.
- delivering, coordinating, and overseeing one-to-one support lessons for pupils with SEND, where appropriate
- deploying, directing, and monitoring the work of staff providing one-to-one or small-group support, ensuring that interventions are appropriate, time-limited where necessary, and regularly reviewed for impact.
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy.
- supporting the staff in the interpretation of the SEND policy, its development and evaluation.
- ensuring that Provision Maps and Individual and/or Group Education Plans are in place, implemented, and reviewed.
- keeping records on pupils with SEND and maintaining files containing current Provision Maps and cumulative information such as specialist reports, previous Provision Maps and reviews.
- creating and keeping SEN profiles up to date and ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of reasonable adjustments each child needs.
- liaising with parents, teachers and pupils in selecting learning targets to suit the needs of the individual pupil.
- recommending to parents, where appropriate, further formal assessment of the child, for example through the SENDCo arranging referral for a full diagnostic assessment by an external professional such as an Educational Psychologist.

- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with external agencies including educational psychologists, independent tutors and medical bodies.
- Reading through external reports and assessment and distributing to the relevant staff in school.
- purchasing and organising resources for SEND.

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- the learning and progress of all pupils in their class, including those with SEND.
- familiarising themselves with the individual learning needs of pupils with SEND by liaising with the previous class teacher and reviewing information recorded on Sonar, including notes provided by the SENDCo.
- using the proper procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEND.
- informing the SENDCo and parents of any pupils they identify as having an area of need which may require additional learning support.
- completing a 'Note of Concern' form and passing it on to the SENDCo.
- discussing with parents, and when appropriate the pupil, the targets and strategies outlined in the pupil's Provision Map or Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- monitoring the progress of pupils with SEND
- adapting teaching methods, where reasonable and practical, to help pupils with SEND reach their full potential.
- attending relevant INSET training related to SEND.

Learning Support Teachers and Teaching Assistants are responsible for:

- supporting children individually or in small groups, under the direction of the class teacher and/or SENDCo
- contributing to records, assessment procedures and the monitoring of pupil progress
- participating in relevant meetings and reviews relating to pupils with SEND
- assisting class teachers in the planning and delivery of learning activities and SEND provision
- implementing targeted interventions as outlined in Provision Maps and Individual and/or Group Education Plans

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION

Unicorn School adopts a graduated response when addressing any pupil's learning difficulty. This is a four-step process of action: ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW.

ASSESS

Initial Concerns

Within the EYFS, early identification and support are delivered through:

- Key person monitoring
- Early intervention strategies

Formative assessments are used by class and subject teachers to monitor the progress of individual pupils. These may include formal tests as well as ongoing informal observations. For further details of assessment please see the *Assessment and Recording* policy.

If a child's progress is causing concern, the class teacher will:

- raise the initial concern with the pupil's parents and talk to the pupil if appropriate.
- review the teaching strategies currently employed and consider ways in which they might be developed and differentiated.
- meet with the SENDCo to discuss the learning and emotional needs of the child and the implementation of additional in-class support by the class teacher.
- continue to monitor and review the pupil's progress.

The SENDCo will:

- carry out an observation/initial assessment of the child to inform discussion about ways forward to help the child access the curriculum.
- support and advise the class teacher about in-class support and differentiation strategies.
- Where appropriate, direct the teaching assistant to carry out targeted interventions, such as small-group work or 1:1 precision teaching.

Many initial concerns are dealt with effectively by the support strategies implemented in the classroom. However, if a child does not make significant progress despite this support, it may be decided that there should be additional input from a specialist teacher.

The class teacher will complete a 'Note of Concern' form and pass onto the SENDCo, who will liaise with the child's parents regarding the arrangement of a learning support teacher to provide their child with one-to-one teaching sessions. At this stage, the child may be placed on the SEN Support register.

PLAN

SEND provision is planned with the aim of:

- Promoting independence
- Improving access to learning
- Supporting measurable progress

Targets are outcome-focused rather than provision-led.

The SENDCo will work collaboratively with the class teacher and the parents to devise a Provision Map for the child with personalised targets. .

The child's Provision Map will show:

- the short-term targets set for, or by, the pupil
- the type of provision to be put in place (phonics, spelling, reading, maths, handwriting)
- success criteria
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- outcomes
- classroom-based differentiation strategies and approaches

Group Education Plan

When pupils in the same class have a common target involving common strategies, a Group Education Plan (GEP) may be drawn up rather than a Provision Map for each child.

Individual Education Plan

In cases where children need more specific and regular support and reasonable adjustments, they will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with targets and support outlined. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are included in this.

DO

High-quality adaptive teaching remains the first level of support for all pupils with SEND. Withdrawal support supplements but does not replace inclusive classroom practice.

The class or subject teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for differentiating the curriculum, where appropriate.

Teachers are expected to:

- Adjust teaching strategies

- Scaffold learning
- Use flexible grouping
- Modify resources and pace

If deemed necessary, specific support may be put in place outside of the classroom. Pupils may be taught by the SENDCo or a Learning Support teacher or in TA lead interventions. They may also receive support both in and out of the classroom from visiting professionals such as SaLT or OT.

Individualised targets will be created for the child. The child will use these targets for self-assessment, both at the beginning and end of the intervention, and will be encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning. Where possible, the child will be offered opportunities to put forward their own suggestions for future targets and will be made aware of how they can work towards improving their skills.

REVIEW

The child's Provision Map / IEP is reviewed at least twice yearly, or more frequently where required. Regular monitoring and review will focus on the extent to which planned outcomes have been achieved. Targets are replaced as and when they are found to be secure.

If the pupil is not achieving their targets and/or not making expected progress, the SENDCo may carry out a broader range of assessments to identify more specific areas of strength and weakness.

If teachers and parents feel that further advice or assessment would be helpful, the school may recommend that the parents seek an assessment of the child from/given by one or more of the following professionals:

- Educational Psychologist
- Teacher Assessor
- Clinical Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Optometrist
- Audiologist
- Paediatrician
- GP
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP)

Most pupils' needs are met by the strategies put in place by school monitoring or being on the school SEND register. A very small number of pupils may have difficulties of a

more serious or long-term nature. In such cases, the school will contact the Local Authority with a view to requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment for a child.

If the Local Authority agrees to carry out the assessment and subsequently issues a plan, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will outline the desired outcomes (formulated by the child, family and professionals around the child) and the budget required to support progress towards those outcomes.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the school will:

- Work collaboratively with the Local Authority
- Deliver the provision specified within the EHCP

There will be an Annual Review of the EHCP with all those involved in supporting the child.

PROVISION AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Unicorn School is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in accessing education.

The school makes reasonable adjustments to policies, practice and provision in order to support pupils with disabilities.

These adjustments include:

- provision of ad hoc small extra support groups throughout the school for those children identified as in need
- provision of ICT resources including laptops and accessibility features on iPads for identified children
- communication with outside professionals for individual children
- use of space within Unicorn for outside professionals such as Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists to work with children during school time
- provision of equipment ranging from writing slopes to fidget toys for identified children
- investigation of, and provision of, software and related resources to support a variety of learning needs, such as working-memory weaknesses or occupational-therapy-related difficulties
- adjustments to support children who may be failing to make expected progress
- Additional time and resources around transition points will be given to children with SEND where appropriate. This may be in moving to a new year group or moving on from Unicorn to their next school.

The school does not charge for reasonable adjustments required to enable access to the curriculum.

However, where individual learning support lessons within school are either made available as enrichment or are delivered to those children not identified as having SEND then a charge will be levied.

As recommended in the **EYFS Statutory Framework (2025)**:

“Reasonable adjustments must be made to the assessment process for children with special educational needs and disabilities as appropriate. Providers should consider whether they may need to seek specialist assistance to support this.”

EXAMINATION CONCESSIONS

In order to qualify for extra time in an examination, the school will adhere to exam board regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). As part of school practice, pupils with extra time will complete this work in a different coloured pen to reflect their need for it.

If a report from an Educational Psychologist, Teacher Assessor or other professional, such as an Occupational Therapist, recommends the use of a laptop in class, pupils should aim to type faster than they write, and touch-typing classes are suggested to support this. If a laptop is part of a pupil's normal way of working in lessons, then it may be used in examinations.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

At Unicorn School every effort is made to work closely with parents at every stage. We value the role they play in the identification and support of SEN pupils.

- Initially a parent will be notified by the class teacher if there are any concerns about his/her child.
- If a child is receiving additional support from a specialist teacher, the parents will be offered an individual appointment with the SENDCo. The SENDCo is available at Parent Interview evenings or other appointment times can be arranged.
- A parent can request an additional meeting if he/she wishes.
- Any meetings, whether teacher or parent initiated, if appropriate, are shared with relevant members of staff and senior leadership team.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Unicorn School is committed to ensuring that sensitive and confidential information is handled appropriately and shared only with relevant parties on a need-to-know basis, and with parental consent where required, in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the school's Data Protection Policy.

COMPLAINTS

Please refer to the Complaints Procedure.