Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy (SEND)

Policy Author	Laura Dickie, Head of Policy Tonia Lewis, Education and Quality Improvement Lead
Approval Date	Feb 2026
Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
Next Review Date	Feb 2029
Version No.	001
Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval**,** or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.



Abigail Salisbury

Headteacher

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school.
Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at Devon School.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. Devon School is regulated by Ofsted.
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

1. Devon School Profile

Devon School is an independent specialist provision for students aged 10 to 16 with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. We provide a nurturing and supportive environment where students can access learning that is tailored to their individual needs. Our approach focuses not only on academic progress, but also on helping every student develop confidence, self-esteem, resilience and positive relationships. At Devon School, we believe that every young person deserves the opportunity to succeed and to discover their strengths in a safe and compassionate learning community.

At Devon School, our vision is to collaborate with students and families to create a respectful and compassionate school community. We aim to foster a lifelong love of learning, empowering everyone to become the best versions of themselves.

Our school community is guided by five core values that shape everything we do:
- Respect
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Resilience
- Kindness

These values help us create a positive environment where students feel safe, valued and supported to grow.

2. Purpose

This policy applies to Devon School and sets out the organisational standards for the safe, compliant and responsible identification of, and support for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

It provides a universal framework and outlines the expectations that apply to:
- Staff
- Senior leaders
- Learners
- Visitors and contractors (where relevant)

This policy enables Devon School to meet statutory duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, comply with data protection requirements, and maintain high-quality provision.

2. Scope (Universal Application)

This organisational policy applies across all education sites, services and functions. It establishes the universal standards and expectations that must be followed consistently throughout the organisation.

Each site implements these standards in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the nation in which it operates as set out in **Appendix A-C.**

3. Local Adaptation Requirement

Some sections in this policy are adapted locally. These sections are completed by each site to reflect local operational procedures or national equivalents (e.g., safeguarding framework, inspection remit, curriculum/quality framework, data protection contacts).
England-specific statutory references (universal) appear in this policy due to the location of the school in South West England.

All local additions must be:

- Accurate
- Up to date
- Consistent with national legislation and regulator guidance
- Fully aligned with the universal standards in this policy

Where no local adaptation or local equivalent is required, the universal content remains fully applicable.

4. Legal and Regulatory Context (Universal)

Devon School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in **Appendices A–C**, which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England, Wales and Scotland.

5. SEND Policy

Devon School identifies and supports learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at the earliest opportunity so they can access a broad and balanced curriculum across all sites. We take a whole-organisation approach: all members of the staff team recognise needs, adapt teaching and assessments, and plan to remove barriers in advance. Teachers set high expectations for every learner, use appropriate assessments (for example BKSB, NGST, NGRT) to establish baselines and ambitious targets, and plan lessons that anticipate and address potential areas of difficulty. We are an inclusive school: learners who join us are offered appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to enable effective access and progress.

We work in partnership with parents/carers, social workers (where relevant) and learners themselves. Early identification and timely intervention improve long-term outcomes. High-quality teaching is the foundation of effective SEND support, and the quality of teaching and the progress of learners with SEND are core to performance management and professional development.

6. Definition and identification

A learner has SEND where a learning difficulty or disability calls for provision that is additional to or different from that generally available to peers of the same age. Indicators include significantly slower progress from the same baseline, failure to

sustain/improve previous rates of progress, widening attainment gaps, or social/emotional needs that impede learning. Identification may arise through transition information, teacher/tutor observation, progress data, external professional advice, or concerns raised by the learner or parents/carers.

We distinguish language acquisition from SEND. For England and Wales we refer to English as an Additional Language (EAL) so the policy uses EAL consistently. We remain alert to other events (e.g., bereavement or bullying) which affect wellbeing and achievement; these do not automatically constitute SEND but may require support.

Planning considers the four broad areas of need: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Sensory/Physical. To reflect national usage, we write SEMH and recognise that individual profiles vary, may cross areas, and change over time. Specific profiles such as SLCN, Autism/ASC, dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia are supported through targeted, evidence-based approaches.

7. Admissions

As a specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), all pupils admitted to our school have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that identifies their specific needs and the provision required to meet them.

All admissions to our school are made through the local authority (LA) EHCP process When we receive a consultation, we will carefully review the child or young person's EHCP, including Section B (special educational needs), Section F (provision) and any accompanying reports. The admissions process will determine whether we have the appropriate resources, expertise and facilities to provide the support specified in the EHCP. Baseline assessments appropriate to phase (for example, English, maths, behaviour and emotional literacy) are undertaken on entry.

Devon School participates fully in the annual review process for each pupil's EHCP where progress towards outcomes are reviewed and new outcomes/provision requirements are set where applicable.

8. Roles and responsibilities

- **The Headteacher** ensures strategic oversight, compliance and appropriate resourcing. The Headteacher at Devon School is Abbi Salisbury.
- **The SENDCo** provides strategic and operational leadership for SEND, coordinates the graduated response, maintains accurate records and registers (including EAL where relevant), advises staff, liaises with external specialists, leads training, and quality-assures impact. The SENDCo at Devon School is Claire Benjafield.
- **Teachers** are responsible for the progress and development of learners they teach, integrate targeted support into classroom practice, and collaborate with support staff and specialists. Subject leads oversee the delivery of targeted intervention to ensure all pupils have a personalised plan based on identified areas of need.

For support roles we use Teaching Assistants (TA) to deliver in-class support and time-limited interventions aligned to agreed outcomes; daily debriefs and weekly planning ensure support links to the taught curriculum.

9. Graduated response (Assess–Plan–Do–Review)

We follow an evidence-based cycle.

Assess. Teachers and the SENDCo build a rounded understanding of need using assessment information, progress data, observation, screening tools (e.g., GL/BKSB where used), learner views, parent/carer input and specialist advice where required. We consider reasonable adjustments (Equality Act) and, for EAL learners, the interaction between language acquisition and potential SEND.

Plan. Needs, outcomes, strategies, interventions and review dates are co-produced with the learner and parents/carers, recorded on our information system and shared with relevant staff. Provision is selected on the basis of the best available evidence and staff competence.

Do. Teachers retain accountability for progress, integrate targeted interventions with classroom learning and coordinate with support staff and specialists. The SENDCo supports problem-solving, fidelity and further assessment where needed.

Review. Impact is evaluated with the learner and parents/carers; provision is refined or escalated as appropriate. Where a learner has a plan we meet statutory timelines. For EHC plans this is at least annually.

SEND intervention
Assess, plan, do review flow chart.
Initial assessments carried out with student.
NGST
NGRT
BKSB



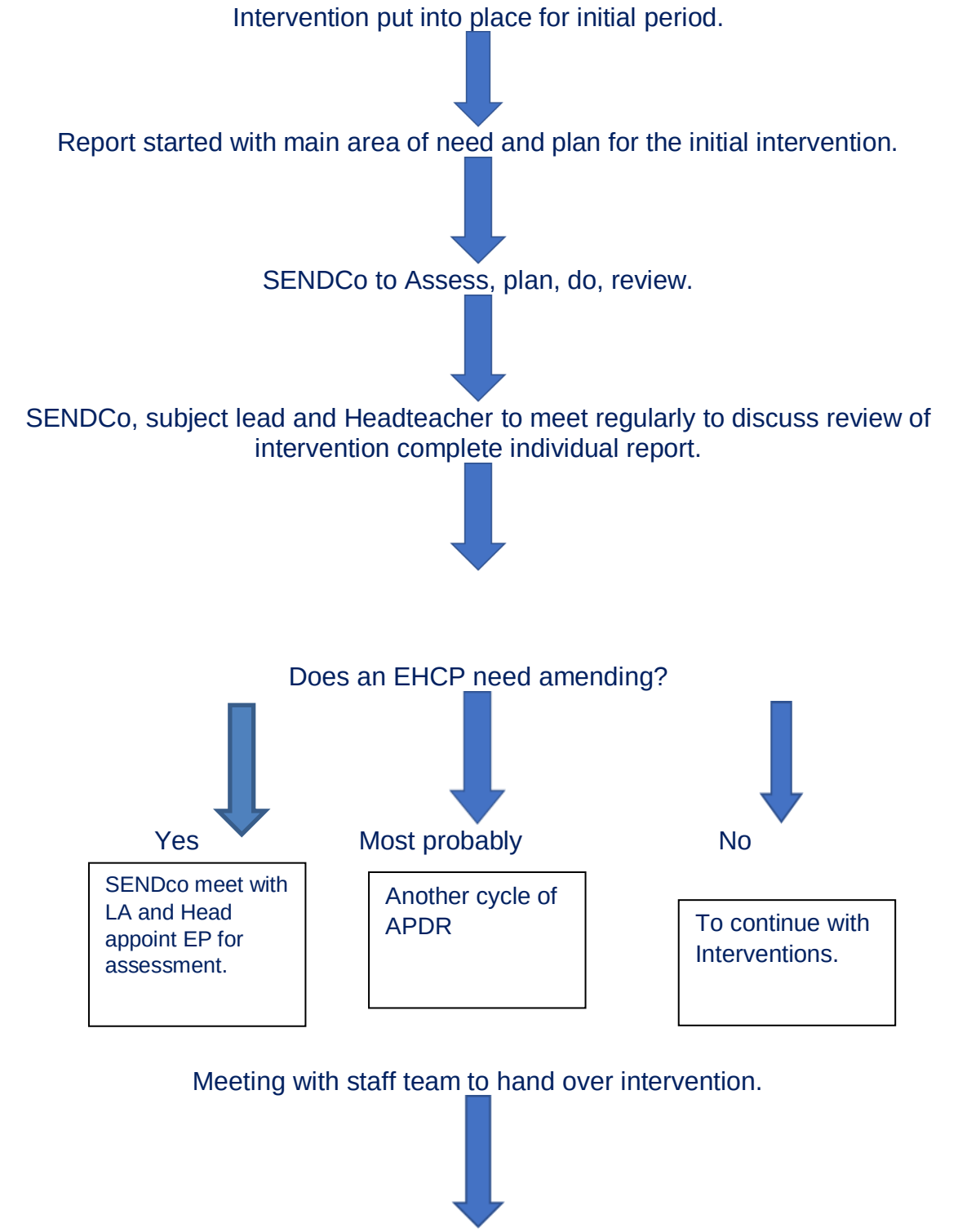
If the student has a lower SAS than 85.



SENDCO to carry out observation in class on main area of need.



Discussion with SLT and subject leads to discuss possible intervention needs



10. Statutory plans and external specialists

We work with the local authority on EHC plan processes and deliver all specified provision, making reasonable adjustments. Where progress remains limited despite well-matched support, we involve appropriate specialists (for example educational psychology, SaLT, OT, medical or therapeutic services), record decisions and actions,

and share them with parents/carers and relevant staff. Information on services and access routes is provided via the Local Offer:

Devon's SEND Local Offer - help and support for children with SEND

SEND Local Offer - Plymouth Online Directory

11. Curriculum access, timetabling and provision mapping

All learners are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers set high expectations, adapt teaching and assessment, and use small-steps approaches through individual plans where helpful. Classroom inclusion is the default; withdrawal is used only when it is demonstrably the most effective, time-limited route to agreed outcomes, and loss of core learning is avoided wherever possible. In some circumstances, adjustments may be considered where this is in the learner's best interests and aligned to agreed outcomes.

We maintain a termly provision map that captures targeted interventions and reasonable adjustments across sites, and we monitor effectiveness so provision remains purposeful. Learners' targets are **SMARTER**—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated and Reviewed—co-produced with learners and parents/carers, integrated with assessment/recording systems, and shared with relevant staff. We avoid common pitfalls (imprecise wording, unclear ownership, lack of learner voice, weak linkage to assessment) and build on strengths (secure knowledge of the learner, strengths/interests, realistic timeframes, resourcing, and parent/carer involvement).

12. Data, records and information sharing

We maintain accurate, current records of needs, provision, outcomes and impact, and can evidence progress and effectiveness during inspection (Ofsted). We share information with parents/carers in accessible formats (for example plan trackers aligned to EHC plan objectives) and retain robust evidence of support over time. All data processing complies with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

13. More able learners and SEMH/SEBN

Exceptionally able learners are supported through differentiation, enrichment, stretch and, where appropriate, specialist programmes. SEMH needs are supported through effective pastoral systems, targeted interventions and multi-agency collaboration, alongside reasonable adjustments to sustain engagement and wellbeing.

14. Partnership with parents/carers and learner voice

Parents/carers are partners in decision-making. We meet regularly—ordinarily at least three times per year or in line with plan cycles—to set outcomes, review progress and agree responsibilities. Meetings are led by a teacher who knows the learner well (for example class teacher or keyworker), supported by the SENDCo. Learners contribute their views directly or through structured preparation. Records of decisions, actions

and support are kept and shared with staff and parents/carers, and our management information system is updated accordingly.

15. Complaints, appeals and governance

Concerns should be raised with the teacher or the SENDCo in the first instance. Formal complaints follow the Complaints Policy. Statutory appeal routes apply for plans (Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal). Leaders review identification patterns, progress data and provision quality (including comparisons to national trends) to strengthen practice. The Headteacher reviews this policy at least annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

16. Equality, accessibility and continuous improvement

We comply with the Equality Act 2010, make reasonable adjustments (including auxiliary aids and services), and maintain an Accessibility Plan and Single Equality Policy. We plan proactively to remove barriers so learners with SEND can participate fully, achieve their best and make a successful transition to adulthood—whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix A — England

England's SEND framework is grounded in statutory duties, government regulation and Ofsted inspection expectations.

1. Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3 — SEND)

What this means:

- This Act is the legal foundation for SEND in England, establishing the duties around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), local authority responsibilities, and rights for children and young adults up to age 25.

What this requires:

- Sites must identify SEN, arrange appropriate provision, participate in multi-agency working, and adhere to statutory timelines and processes for EHC assessments and plans.
- **Link:** Children and Families Act 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents

2. SEND Regulations 2014 (Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014)

What this means:

- These regulations outline the statutory processes for EHC needs assessments, EHC plans, consultation duties, reviews, transfers, and the provision of advice and information.

What this requires:

- Clear, timely SEND procedures; compliance with EHC assessment and review duties; and coordinated information gathering across education, health and care.
- **Link:** Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/contents

3. Equality Act 2010 (Education Duties)

What this means:

- Sites must eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations for disabled learners. SEND provision supports these duties by ensuring reasonable adjustments, inclusion and accessibility.

What this requires:

- Inclusive, accessible SEND practice; anticipatory adjustments; and curriculum adaptations for diverse needs, including in FE.
- **Active link:** Equality Act 2010 — Education Guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools

4. Ofsted — Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

What this means:

- Ofsted evaluates curriculum quality, inclusion, personal development, behaviour and safeguarding. SEND provision directly affects the Quality of Education and Personal Development judgements.

What this requires:

- A coherent SEND-inclusive curriculum; evidence of adaptations; effective support for learners with SEND; and strong safeguarding culture.
- **Active link:** Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-use-from-november-2025

5. Safeguarding — Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

What this means:

National safeguarding expectations require education settings to support learners' understanding of safety, risk and help-seeking, with SEND learners recognised as potentially more vulnerable.

What this requires:

- SEND-inclusive safeguarding education; risk awareness; digital resilience; clear information on reporting, boundaries and protective behaviours.
- **Active link:** Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2