



# New Horizons Children's Academy

**PART OF THE THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST**



**Children first – Challenge – Aspire - Achieve**

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY**

**Date of Policy: January 2025**

**Date of Ratification: December 2024**

**Review Date: January 2027**

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy**

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>)
- SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Part 3 Duties on Schools – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
- Schedule 1 regulation 51– Information to be included in the SEND information report
- Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer
- Equality Act 2010
- Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012
- SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Bulling Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Complaints Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

This policy was developed with the governing body, teachers and incorporates actions from feedback provided from parents/carers of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

#### **Definition of SEND**

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 him or her.

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

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. *SEND Code of Practice (2015, p 15)*

### **Definition of disability**

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is'...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' *SEND Code of Practice (2015, p16)*

### 1 The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at the school

At New Horizons Children's Academy, we can make provision for every kind of frequently occurring special educational need without an Education, Health and Care Plan, for instance Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, speech and language needs, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Asperger's syndrome, learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. There are other kinds of special educational needs which do not occur as frequently and with which the school is less familiar, but we can access training and advice so that these kinds of needs can be met.

The school also currently meets the needs of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans with the following kinds of special educational need: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia, Global Developmental Delay, Autism Spectrum Disorder, significant Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties, Speech and Language disorders. Decisions on the admission of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans are made by the Local Authority.

The admission arrangements for pupils without Education, Health and Care Plans do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs.

### 2 Information about the policy for identification and assessment of pupils with SEND

At New Horizons Children's Academy we monitor the progress of pupils three-six times a year (depending on the subject and year group) to review their academic progress. We also use assessments with pupils at various points, e.g. reading fluency test, Phonics Screening Check.

Where progress is not sufficient, even if special educational needs have not been identified, we put in place extra support to enable the pupil to catch up. Examples of extra support are:

- Targeted support in class, extra resources in class (move and sit cushion, writing slope, pencil grip, weighted lap cushion, word mats, fiddle toy, visual timetable, individual work station, now and next board, ear defenders, theraband, laptop, tinted overlay),
- Cognition and Learning interventions (phonics, reading, maths, writing, Nesy, handwriting programmes, precision teaching, pre-teaching),

- Social and Emotional interventions (social skills groups, emotional support, mediation, lunchtime provisions, anger management programmes, social-emotional programmes, Drawing and Talking Therapy, MIND sessions, Hamish and Milo intervention, ELSA sessions, Lego Therapy),
- Physical and Sensory interventions (sensory circuits, BEAM, Fizzy, heavy work, fine motor skills programmes),
- Communication and Interaction interventions (Speech and Language programmes, Lego Therapy).

These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as 'notional SEND funding'.

Some pupils may continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents/carers, we will use a range of assessment tools to determine the cause of the learning difficulty.

At New Horizons Children's Academy we are experienced in using the following assessment tools: Nessy dyslexia screener, GL Assessment's Dyslexia Screener, GL Assessment's Dyscalculia Screener, Speech and Language Link assessments, Visual Stress Screener, BPVSI, ACE and YARC. We also have access to external advisors who are able to use the following assessment tools: Cognitive assessment administered by Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language assessment administered by Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapy assessment administered by Occupational Therapist.

If the pupil is able to make good progress using this additional and different resource (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will identify the pupil as having a special educational need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources, he or she will not be identified with special educational needs. When any change in identification of SEND takes place, parents/carers will be notified.

We will ensure that all teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are aware of the support to be provided and the teaching approaches to be used.

### *3 Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have Education, Health and Care Plans*

#### *3a How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils*

Each review of the SEND Support Agreement will be informed by the views of the pupil, parents/carers, class teacher and the assessment information from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The *SEND Code of Practice (2015, 6.17)* describes inadequate progress as:

- Significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

Effectiveness of provision for children with SEND is assessed throughout the year. Decisions regarding additional provision are based upon a pupil's progress across core subjects as well as progress and engagement in particular interventions.

*3b the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs*

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked three-six times a year (depending on the subject and year group). In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments, depending on their needs. The assessments we use at New Horizons Children's Academy are detailed in section 2. Using these, it will be possible to see if pupils are increasing their level of skills in key areas.

If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made, the SEND Support Agreement will be reviewed and adjusted.

*3c the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs*

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered, *SEND Code of Practice (2015, 6.37)*.

At New Horizons Children's Academy the quality of teaching was judged to be Good at our most recent Ofsted inspection in July 2022.

*3d how the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs*

At New Horizons Children's Academy we adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result

of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in Education, Health and Care Plans.

As part of our requirement to keep the appropriateness of our curriculum and learning environment under review, the Governors regularly assess the suitability of current provisions, including the use of accessibility ramps and lifts to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The school also regularly reviews its curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all its learners, making adjustments where necessary. Staff have access to appropriate resources and expertise and the school regularly provides high quality CPD from external specialists. The CPD programme reflects the needs of the schools current pupils and is reviewed termly.

*3e additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs*

Funding for SEND is received from various sources.

- A portion of the school budget is delegated to SEND. We also receive finance from the Local Authority to specifically support children with SEND, this is called 'notional SEND funding'
- Additional resources are allocated to SEND from the school's own budget.
- Teaching Assistants are presently employed for a range of support techniques, ranging from individual support, group work and class support.
- For children with high levels of SEND, who require support and provision which exceed Element 2 funding (£6000), the school can also request Top-up Funding from the Local Authority.

*3f how the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs*

At New Horizons Children's Academy, we provide equal opportunities for all our pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities. All children with SEND are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life. We aim for all our pupils to be happy, confident and willing participants within their individual classes and throughout their time in school. Where appropriate and necessary, the school will endeavour to provide additional support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity.

*3g support that is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs*

At New Horizons Children's Academy we actively promote social and emotional development. In order to secure positive experiences and develop emotional resilience and social skills, we support pupils directly through teaching (for instance PSHE lessons, circle time sessions, social skills groups, emotional support sessions, anger management groups, mediation sessions, lunchtime provisions) and indirectly with conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.

For some pupils, who require a specific support in this area, we can also provide the following: Behaviour Support Plans, ELSA sessions, external referral to CAHMS and/or SSG, Drawing and Talking Therapy, pastoral support with a member of staff or Hamish and Milo interventions.

#### 4 The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator

The SENCO at New Horizons Children's Academy is Miss Johnson who is a qualified teacher and has been accredited with the National Award for SEN Co-ordination.

Miss Johnson is available to contact via the school office.

#### 5 Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured

All teachers and teaching assistants have had the following awareness training over the past two years:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences – Understanding Trauma
- Arts Award
- ASD
- Behaviour
- Bucket time - SALT
- Challenge and Escalation
- Child Sex Exploitation
- Closing the Gap
- Computing
- Critical Thinking
- Diabetes
- DSL
- ELSA
- Empiri Box
- EVC training
- EYFS Moderation
- First Aid
- FRIENDS Resilience
- Future Leaders
- GDPR
- Hamish and Milo Wellbeing
- Intensive Interaction
- KS2 Writing
- KS2 Writing Assessment
- Leading for Impact
- Little Wandle Letters and Sounds
- Low Stakes Quizzes
- Maths
- Medway Domestic Abuse
- NQT Mentoring
- NQT Support
- Paediatric First Aid
- Phonics
- Planning
- Positive Handling
- Preparing for Parent/Carer Consultations
- Prevent
- Pulse
- Radicalisation and Extremism
- Reading
- Recognising Risks – Keeping Children Safe Online
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Safer Recruitment
- School Council E-Safety Ambassador
- Sensory regulation

- Sexually at Risk of Exploitation Toolkit
- Signs of Safety
- Speech and Language
- Subject Leadership
- Team Teach
- Think Ahead
- Thinking Academically
- Thinking Artistically/Artsmark
- Thinking Globally
- Time Management
- Trauma Informed Practice
- SEND
- The Zones of Regulation

Where a training need is identified beyond this we will find a provider who is able to deliver it. Training providers we can approach are: Fortis Trust Outreach Service, Marlborough Outreach Team, Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Synergy Psychology. Where needed, we will also contact other providers to deliver more specialist training. The cost of training is covered by the notional SEND funding.

*6 Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured*

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the notional SEND funding.

*7 The arrangements for consulting parents/carers of children with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education*

All parents/carers of pupils at New Horizons Children's Academy are invited to discuss the progress of their children two times a year and receive a written report twice per year. In addition we are happy to arrange meetings outside of these times.

If despite high quality teaching and standard provision, improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents/carers to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having SEND. Parents will then be invited to the co-production of SEND Support Agreement where targets, provision, child and parents' wishes will be outlined. Parents/carers and children will be invited to review the child's progress three times per year during SENSEA review meetings.

In addition to this, parents/carers of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil.

*8 The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education*

When a pupil has been identified with special educational needs, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning.



Parents/carers are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

*9 The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school*

The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at New Horizons Children's Academy are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents/carers to discuss their concerns with the following to resolve the issue before making a formal complaint to the Chair of the Governing Body:

- Class Teacher
- Phase Leader
- SENCo
- Assistant Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Headteacher

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the Governing Body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

In very specific circumstances, usually for children who have an EHCP, there is a statutory right for parents/carers to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

*10 How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils*

The governing body have engaged with the following bodies:

- Access to Medway's School Support Group when needed for advice for specific pupils
- A Service Level Agreement with the Educational Psychology Service
- Access to the local authority's Speech and Language Therapy service for pupils who meet NHS criteria
- Access to Medway Children's Social Services when needed
- Access to Medway Community Healthcare when needed
- Access to Medway Young Persons' Wellbeing Service when needed

11 The contact details of support services for the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and children and young people with SEND up to age 25 (Code of Practice 2015, 6.39)

There are external support services available for parents/carers of children with SEND. The contact details for these services are set out below:

- Children and Family Hubs in Medway – website:  
<http://medway.gov.uk/familyhubs>
- Medway Family Information Service (FIS) – phone: 01634 332195, website:  
[https://admissions.medway.gov.uk/Synergy/fisd\\_welcome.aspx](https://admissions.medway.gov.uk/Synergy/fisd_welcome.aspx)
- Medway SEND Information, Advice and Support Service – phone: 01634 566303 website: <https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/send/medway-sendias/>
- Medway Community Healthcare – Child Health Service – website:  
<https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-services/child-health-service>
- Kent Autistic Trust, website <http://www.kentautistictrust.org>
- The Challenging Behaviour Foundation – phone: 0300 666 0126, website:  
<http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/>
- Young Minds – parents/carers helpline – phone: 0808 802 5544, website:  
<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

12 The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At New Horizons Children's Academy we work closely with the educational settings attended by pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as seamless as possible. We understand what a stressful time moving schools can be therefore many strategies are in place to enable the pupil's transition to be as smooth as possible. These include:

- Phone conversations between the previous or receiving schools prior to the pupil joining/leaving. These phone conversations are shared with Class Teachers to ensure that they are aware of the needs of any new pupil.
- Where a pupil may have more specialised needs, a separate meeting can be set up with Miss Johnson, the previous school's SENCO and the parents/carers.
- Miss Johnson will always meet parents/carers prior to their child joining the school or after they have started if this is requested.
- All pupils attend at least one transition session where they spend some time with their new class and teacher.
- Additional visits are also arranged for pupils who need extra time in their new school.
- A member of the senior leadership team always shows new families around the school or has a phone call with new families, if this is preferred or necessary due to Covid restrictions.

#### Children joining the Foundation Stage (FS)

- There is a meeting for new parents/carers in the Summer Term (Term 6) for all children who will be joining the Foundation Stage in September.
- Transition events for children take place in the Summer Term.
- Children are visited at their current setting by a member of the Foundation Stage team before joining.
- Home visits are arranged before the children start in the Nursery Class.

#### Children joining at other times

- Children who join New Horizons Children's Academy at a later date are given a tour of the school by a member of the senior leadership team and the provision offered is explained.
- Previous schools are contacted to discuss any concerns and information is shared.

#### Transition to a new class each academic year

- Transition to a new class within New Horizons Children's Academy is facilitated by several sessions to meet new class teachers and get used to a new class environment.
- Pupils who may find this more difficult are given additional support where needed.
- Transition booklets are created for identified children that they can take home at the end of the academic year and share with their parents/carers.

#### Children leaving New Horizons Children's Academy to join other schools

- Where notice is given, the SENCo can liaise with the new school to pass on information.
- All paperwork is sent to the new school as soon as possible.

We also contribute information to a pupils' onward destination by providing information to the next setting.

#### 13 Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200139/social\\_care\\_and\\_health/466/medway\\_s\\_local\\_offer/1](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200139/social_care_and_health/466/medway_s_local_offer/1) and parents/carers without internet access can make an appointment with the SENCo for support to gain the information they require.