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EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Learning Support and Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Last reviewed: May 2026

Next review: May 2027

Governor oversight: Academic Board

Linked Policies:

- Curriculum Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan (SENDA)
- Equal opportunities Policy (pupils)
- Policy on provision for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs
- EAL Policy

Exeter Cathedral School is committed to securing the best educational outcomes for every child, regardless of any barriers to learning. As a community, we work together to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is continually reviewed to make learning accessible to all our pupils. This policy acknowledges the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years, January 2015, which requires schools to identify and make provision for children who have special educational needs.

Aims:

- To look to make reasonable adjustments to support the academic and holistic wellbeing of all our children.
- To ensure the early identification of need when a child experiences a SEND as soon as possible in order to support academic progress and continued good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- To ensure that every child is protected from harm and neglect and that every effort is made to enable them to learn and develop independently.
- To ensure that all children can access a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated where appropriate and can take as full a part as possible in school activities.
- To regularly review and evaluate each child's progress and to involve parents and children in the decision-making process.

- To enable all children to develop self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- To work with parents so that they gain an understanding of their child's needs and involve parents in all stages of their child's education.
- To work with and in support of outside agencies when the child's needs cannot be met by the School alone.
- To apply a whole school policy to meet each child's individual needs following the guidance in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Equality Act 2010, part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice January 2015.
- To safeguard and support all children through prevention, protection and support.
- To provide an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- To encourage mutual respect and tolerance for others, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability, paying attention to the characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Identification of Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities:

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015 defines a child as having a special educational need (SEND) if they have:

- a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her;
- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age;
- 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.

Children's learning difficulties show themselves in a variety of ways. Some are temporary, others more permanent. They may be mild, requiring minimal support, but others may be serious, requiring more long-term intervention and greater support.

Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

Some children who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, "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 includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. A child can have a disability without having SEND but there is often an overlap. In these cases, a medical plan may be put in place by the School Nurse.

SEND areas of need and support are:

- Communication and interaction - Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), including those with Autistic Spectrum Condition or other social communication and interaction difficulties.
- Cognition and learning - Those who need to learn at a slower pace than their peers and those with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
- Social, emotional and mental health - These may include withdrawn or isolated behaviours or present as challenging and disruptive, others may have ADD or ADHD, attachment disorder or experience mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression.
- Sensory and/or physical needs - These may be age-related and fluctuate over time. These would include visual and hearing impairments as well as broader sensory or physical differences.

If a child has an Education, Health & Care Plan, this will be reviewed appropriately, with reference to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, January 2015.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

The Head of Learning Support oversees and acts as lead in all matters pertaining to educational needs within the school.

Provision

Provision for children who have special educational needs is a matter for the whole school and it is a whole school responsibility. Identification of learning needs is mostly by observation of behaviour, assessment of written work, whole school tracking of achievement outcomes and discussion with teachers and parents together with results of CAT4, PTE and PTM testing. Pupils who have been identified at risk of underachieving are listed in the school's Academic Performance Tracker. Some of these pupils require targeted support, which is provided through Booster sessions. At the beginning of the intervention and the end of each term, pupils in Prep take an NGRT screening test to assess their reading age and measure their progress.

A graduated response to the child's need is provided:

- **Universal**

This provision is in place for all children. Some children with SEND can achieve with universal, high quality teaching and learning in place. Examples of good quality teaching to ensure progress include the use of differentiation, teaching to children's interests, targeted support and questioning in class from the teacher and the considered use of resources.

- **Targeted**

These are children about whom a concern has been raised but do not necessarily have an assessment or report indicating an officially labelled difficulty. They are monitored closely by staff to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties. They will be provided with high quality teaching that is differentiated where appropriate to meet their needs and advice will be given by the Head of Learning Support where necessary, as at Universal level. Their progress will be monitored by class teachers and in some cases, they may have Learning Support group sessions, a time limited intervention focused on specific targets to support children to plug gaps in their learning and make rapid progress. These children may have a Pupil Passport (a curriculum support educational plan, see Appendix A) to detail their needs and recommendations for curriculum support within the classroom context.

At Pre-Prep, where possible a Teaching Assistant may provide additional support.

The Head of Learning Support meets regularly with the Head of Pre-Prep, Heads of Upper and Lower, Heads of Departments, pupils and parents to ensure effective information gathering and sharing.

If a child is continuing to struggle with aspects of their learning, it may be suggested that parents seek advice from an external agency, such as commissioning an Educational Psychology report, Speech and Language assessment or Occupational Therapy assessment. These children will have a Pupil Passport to detail their official needs and recommendations for curriculum support.

- **Enhanced**

This provision is where the school cannot meet the child's needs alone with the delegated budget and resources in place. As assessment may be requested by the School and the local authority will decide if an EHCP should be issued. Funding may be allocated in line with the outcomes set out in the EHCP which the school will then decide how best to use to ensure the child's needs can be met.

It is highly likely that without this level of external support, the school would be unable to meet the child's needs effectively.

The SEND Process:

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the identification of children who have Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities. The process encourages the participation of children and their families, integrates the work of education, health and care providers if necessary and follows a cyclical, graduated approach.

- **Step 1 – Assessment**

Where a child's achievement or progress is cause for concern throughout the school, teachers will share their concern with the Head of Learning Support or the Head of Pre-Prep or Senior Deputy Head. Parents will be informed. The Head of Learning Support may observe the child in class or meet with staff and then offer support strategies both to class teachers and the child. The teacher will devise intervention in addition to or different from that provided by the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The child's progress will be carefully monitored. Following permission from parents, information is gathered from all staff concerned and recorded. The Head of Learning Support uses the information to decide the next steps and consults with parents. A recommendation of an internal or external assessment may be made.

- **Step 2 – Plan**

The outcome of any individual assessment is discussed with the child's tutor, class teacher and parents. A plan of action is made with all concerned. Plans will consider the views of the child. Where appropriate, the curriculum and learning environment will be further adapted by the teaching staff to reduce barriers to learning and enable them to access the curriculum more easily. Some children enter the school with specialist reports and provision will be made to support their needs.

- **Step 3 – Intervention**

Initially, intervention may be class based and focus on further targeted support from the class teacher, use of resources and/ or differentiation specific to the child. There may be other times when a time limited intervention with the Learning Support team is put in place. Withdrawal from a class does not interfere with the child's access to the whole curriculum. Parents are made aware of the intervention and consult with the learning support directly. The Learning Support Team work alongside class teachers to ensure practice is consistent between the classroom and the intervention sessions.

A Pupil Passport is written showing the child's strengths and weakness and appropriate classroom support strategies. These documents are stored on the School's shared areas for staff to access. Information and updates about children are regularly shared at staff meetings and training is held during INSET. The Head of Learning Support and teachers will also communicate key, relevant information about pupils via TEAMS and email.

When a child's needs are considerable and there is little progress following interventions and support from professional agencies the decision may be taken to request an Educational Health and Care Plan. This process will involve presenting to the local county council detailed records of our provision and its impact for their consideration. Parents and carers will be fully involved in the process.

- Step 4 – Review

Throughout the year, the child is assessed informally to monitor their learning and the effectiveness of intervention. This information is recorded in the teacher's lesson notes, meetings and the child's Pupil Passport. Pupil Passports are reviewed throughout the year with teaching staff and parents. Where a child has an EHC plan, this will be reviewed during the annual review meeting by the school, with invitations extended to the local authority and the relevant professionals as well as, most importantly, parents, once a year as part of the annual review process. The Head of Learning Support collates all evidence and recommendations to send to the LA who have the final responsibility of amending the EHC P.

A formal assessment takes place in the Trinity Term in the form of a Progress in English and Maths test. Children in Years 2, 5 and 7 sit CAT4 and results are recorded on the Pupil Passport and school database.

Supporting Pupils and Families:

Exeter Cathedral School firmly believes in developing a strong partnership with pupils and parents and that this will enable children and young people with SEND to develop their potential. The school recognises that parents have a unique overview of the child's needs and this makes them valued partners in the process of deciding provision. Plans are always discussed with parents and reviewed formally twice a year.

When a child transfers into or out of Exeter Cathedral School, every effort is made to share information and support a child's transition.

Provision for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):

Children who speak English as a second language and use their native language at home receive additional support in all subjects and one-on-one sessions if needed. Information is disseminated to staff and when needed regular meetings with parents are held to discuss support and intervention strategies. Please see the School's EAL policy for further details.

Staff Training:

All staff are encouraged to attend courses that help them acquire the skills needed to work with those children who have special educational needs. The Head of Learning Support provides training as needed to develop awareness of responsibilities and understanding of neurodiverse children. Practical ideas are suggested, and reminders are given about key information. Resources are available via the shared area for all staff.

ICT:

The school has several children who are permitted to use a laptop to support their learning in response to recommendations in an assessment. Pupils need to have a reasonable typing speed to make it a useful tool for them and this is taken into consideration before approval. Devices need to be provided by parents and parents must agree to 'Bring Your Own Device' user agreement.

Complaints:

All complaints are taken seriously and dealt with in line with the School's Complaints Policy.