



# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

## Damers First School

**Adopted By:** Board of Trustees

**Date:** June 2024

**Review Date:** June 2025

### Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Date of Issue:	June 2024
Policy applies to:	<b>All staff employed by the Wessex Multi-Academy Trust.</b>
Policy Version Number:	5
Purpose of the document:	This policy outlines the framework the Trust and its schools will use in meeting their duties, obligations and principal equality values in providing an appropriate high-education for pupils with SEND.
Summary of the main points:	The document provides: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aims and Objectives</li> <li>2. Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>3. Admission Arrangements</li> <li>4. Identifying Special Educational Needs</li> <li>5. Managing SEND in our Schools</li> </ol>
Approved by:	This policy has been approved by the Wessex MAT Board of Trustees
Reviewer:	Karen Weir
Summary of amendments:	No amendments
Next review due:	June 2025

1. This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25(July 2014), and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:
  - 1.1. Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools – (*DfE May 2014*)
  - 1.2. SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 (July 2014)
  - 1.3. Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
2. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) – SCHOOL INFORMATION**
  - 2.1. The Headteacher/Head of school Louise Greenham has overall responsibility for SEND at Damers First School.
  - 2.2. The designated teacher responsible for coordinating SEND provision for children/children/young people is: Tom Bracey, [office@damers.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@damers.dorset.sch.uk) or 01305 264924.
  - 2.3. The person co-ordinating the day to day SEND provision for children/young people in our school is: Tom Bracey.
  - 2.4. They can be contacted at [office@damers.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@damers.dorset.sch.uk) or 01305 264924.
  - 2.5. The Governor with oversight of the arrangements for SEN and disability is: Lesley Goldsack. They can be contacted via the school office on [office@damers.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@damers.dorset.sch.uk) or 01305 264924.
  - 2.6. This policy was developed in conjunction with parents and carers, students, governors, teachers, teaching assistants and the leadership team.
  - 2.7. The terms **“children/young people”** and **“child/young person”** refer to anyone under the age of 18.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

3.1. SEND support is used to enable and empower our pupils so that they develop confidence, growing independence and achieve their very best. We consider this culture of inclusion to be everyone's responsibility and it exists throughout the school. It is driven by the high aspiration we have for all pupils in our school to make a successful start in their education journey, followed by a successful transition into their next educational placement.

#### 3.2. AIMS:

- To create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect of achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all of our pupils can thrive;
- To identify pupils who need extra help and support;
- To enable each pupil to take part and contribute fully to school life;
- To develop each pupils self-esteem and positive view of themselves as both a learner and as a person;
- To provide access to and progression within the curriculum adapted, where required, to individual need;
- To involve pupils in planning to address and monitor their special educational needs and/or disability;
- To work in partnership with parents and carers to support their child's learning and health needs;
- To provide quality training for staff in special educational needs and disability.

#### 3.3. OBJECTIVES:

- To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs;
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014;
- To operate an inclusive, person-centred, whole school approach in the management and provision of support for pupils with special educational needs or disability;
- To employ a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator(SENCo) who will work within the bounds of the SEND Policy;
- To provide support and advice to all staff who work with pupils with SEND.

### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1. The Governing Body will exercise their duty and have regard to the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. This will include ensuring that our

school's arrangements supporting disability and medical conditions, equality, school and SEND information pertinent to the SEND Policy are published on the school website.

- 4.2. The SENDCO is a qualified and experienced teacher. The SENCo is currently completing the National Accredited SENCo Award. There is regular liaison with external services including the County Psychology Service (Educational Psychologist), SEN Specialist Services, Hearing and Vision Support Service, the School Nurse and other colleagues from health, such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy and other services such as Social Care.
- 4.3. The SENDco liaises closely with key staff including the Head of school, Deputies and Assistant Head with responsibility for Looked After Children and Safeguarding, Year Leaders and Subject Leaders providing advice and support on how to help students to reach their potential and adapt provision to meet need. The SENDCo also leads a team of Senior TAs with additional responsibilities focused on behaviour, Speech and Language and SEND and a team of Teaching Assistants who also support and assist pupils with SEND as a key part of their role.

## **5. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1. Our school uses the local authority arrangement for School Admissions. The agreement is mindful of national requirements supporting all children/young people including those who are disabled, in a fair and non-discriminatory way, when securing admission to school.
- 5.2. In addition to this the school makes appropriate reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who are disabled. Where adaptations are required to support physical or medical needs, we liaise with the local authority education services, health services and parents/carers to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to meet individual medical conditions. More information can be found in the Local Offer information held on the local authority's website at [www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer).

## **6. FACILITIES FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS / DISABILITY**

- 6.1. The school has an Accessibility Plan that is monitored, reviewed and reported upon annually to the Governing Body in compliance with legal requirements. We are mindful of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 as amended in September 2012 to provide Auxiliary Aids and Services where appropriate as detailed in 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools – (May 2014)'. We comply with the requirement to support children/young

people with disability as defined by the Act.

6.2. At Damers, we might use the following to support children with SEND:

- Complex Communication Needs Base
- Physical environment (lighting, wheelchair access, acoustic tiling in some areas)
- Assistive technology
- Sensory Room
- Sensory Circuit Room
- The use of Communication Friendly visuals, such as the Widget App for displays and signage
- The use of aids, where appropriate, to support access to the classroom, such as workstations, wobble stools or other such items
- Adapted access to the curriculum based on individual pupil needs

## 7. SEN INFORMATION AND LOCAL OFFER

7.1. The school website holds information about SEND and specific information about how children/young people with SEND are supported in the curriculum and around the school.

[SEND at Damers](#)

We comply with the statutory requirement to publish SEND information as specified in paragraphs 6.79 to 6.83 of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25. This information is kept under review and updated regularly in liaison with parents / carers, governors and staff.

7.2. We publish further information about our arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for children/young people with SEND on the local authority's website. This can be found at [www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer) using the search engine to find our school or other Dorset schools. The local offer website holds a directory of facilities and resources available from many services within Dorset.

## 8. IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

8.1. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (*July 2014*) identifies SEND under four broad areas of need (sections 6.28 to 6.35):

- Communication and Interaction.
- Cognition and learning.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

- 8.2. Pupils may have needs in more than one category and we aim to ensure that individual plans match personal learning requirements.
- 8.3. At Damers there is a whole school approach to identifying needs as illustrated in 8.4. Damers First School promotes a graduated approach to assessing, identifying and providing for pupils' special educational needs. This approach follows a model of action and intervention to help children make progress and successfully access the curriculum. It recognises that there is a continuum of SEND and that where necessary increasing specialist expertise should be involved to address any challenges a pupil may be experiencing and adapt provision accordingly.
- 8.4. Our school uses a wide range of tools to assess the SEN support required. At the first stage, there is close liaison between the Damers First School Early Years and SEN teams and staff at local nursery schools which helps early identification of pupils' specific needs when they start at Damers. Many of our pupils with additional needs are identified by their Teacher or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) during the course of their learning journey at Damers via a cause for concern system or regular assessment and professional dialogue between teachers and the SENCo/Assessment Lead. The teaching team are very experienced and adept at the early identification of need. The SENCo can advise or draw support from internal and external colleagues on a range of learning needs including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia, speech and language difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions and moderate learning difficulties. We have a large team of TAs, including staff who are experienced in working with students with ASC, ADHD and other learning challenges.
- 8.5. In addition, all staff strive to listen to the concerns of parents and carers and appreciate that they have a unique insight into their children/young people. The views of parents/carers will be taken into consideration for any decisions respecting their children/young people.
- 8.6. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils are assessed against nationally set criteria to check their progress across all relevant areas of learning. It is through this process - and the Cause for Concern process - that pupils who are not making expected progress are highlighted. Teachers and support staff play a vital role in raising concerns about other barriers to learning, such as behavioural, social and emotional matters (the Cause for Concern process).
- 8.7. A rigorous assessment procedure to track pupil's progress is used. If a pupil fails to make expected progress, the next stage would be to move to the use of school

intervention and/or outside agency involvement for the identification, assessment and recording of a pupil's specific barriers to learning or learning difficulties. We incorporate these procedures into our normal working practice. Following assessment and staff consultation a pupil's special educational needs are identified and the needs are recorded on the SEND Register.

- 8.8. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual learners is the first step in responding to those who have or may have additional learning needs. This is known as a 'graduated response'. We regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. Where it is clear that additional intervention is not resulting in progress, it is possible that a pupil may have special educational needs. These additional learning needs are managed either by using additional support, such as but not limited to, an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Speech and Language (SALT) Plan or by having an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). The majority of pupils with special education needs or disability will have their needs met through a whole school approach and be placed on the SEN Register at the level 'SEN Support' in compliance with the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 (July 2014).
- 8.9. Our teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, including where and how they access support from Teaching Assistants or specialist staff. The SENCo supports class teachers to adapt provision to support pupils and to call upon specialist support or resources when required.
- 8.10. Where it is decided that a child/young person does have SEND, the decision is recorded on the SEN Register and parents/carers are informed by the Class Teacher or SENCo that special educational provision is being made.
- 8.11. The SENCo, with support from the Assessment Lead, will use in-school tracking and comparative national data and expectations to monitor the level and rate of progress for children/young people identified with SEND as well as other methods as appropriate.
- 8.12. Staff monitor the progress of all pupils to identify those at risk of underachievement. We recognise that needs are sometimes affected by other factors which are not educational but nevertheless impact on learning. These are identified as far as possible and addressed appropriately using additional processes and other strategies.
- 8.13. Examples of other influences upon progress may include:
  - Attendance and punctuality
  - Health and welfare



- English as an Additional Language
- Families on a low income
- Looked After Children
- Service children
- Disability where there is no impact on progress and attainment.
- Behaviour where there is no underlying SEND
- Bereavement and family issues.

8.14 The Complex Communications Needs (CCN) Base is a small classroom of 10 pupils where staff support pupils with complex communication needs to access the curriculum and where possible, their mainstream classrooms. These places are allocated via a formal panel method by the Local Authority. Many of these students have ASC, difficulty with social skills and high levels of anxiety. Some also have additional needs such as dyslexia and ADHD. Providing a CCN Base place enables us to support these pupils with complex needs in a targeted way, with additional input from SALT and OT. Providing a CCN Base also enables the school to further develop its SEND provision and practise across the entire school.

## **9. MANAGING SEND CHILDREN IN OUR SCHOOL**

- 9.1. Where a pupil is identified as having SEND and or a disability, our school adopts a process of "Assess, Plan, Do, Review". This method is detailed in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (July 2014) sections 6.45 to 6.56. The principle is firmly embedded in working closely with parents/carers and pupils to agree, action and monitor individual progress over time so that special educational needs for all pupils are addressed appropriately, effectively and with good outcomes.
- 9.2. In addition to the normal reporting arrangements, parents and carers are informed about the progress if they are following additional programmes or interventions. For pupils with EHC Plans, Person Centred Planning and Review meetings take place annually so that families and pupils are involved in deciding next steps and parents and carers are advised on how to help support learning outside of the school.
- 9.3. Contact is achieved through a graduated offer. The first port of call for parents and carers is the pupils Class Teacher or Year Leader. If required, the SENCo will then liaise with parents and carers via email, telephone or meetings to ensure regular and appropriate contact is maintained. and regular parents' evenings.
- 9.4. In addition, parents and carers training sessions, SEND support sessions and/or learning events including our "Stay and..." sessions take place each half-term and are well advertised on the school website or by personal invitation.

- 9.5. Where a pupil is on the SEN Register, the Class Teacher will be primarily responsible for parent and carer contact unless a plan for increased contact has been put in place with the SENCo. The SENCo will audit and assess each pupil on the SEN Register with Class Teachers each term as part of Pupil Progress Reviews. If a pupil fails to make progress the SEN team are asked to identify further strategies, put additional adaptations and support in place or seek further external support, such as Specialist Teacher assessment or Speech and Language assessment.
- 9.6. If the SENCO identifies that the school is unable to fully meet the needs of a pupil through our own provision arrangements, external advice is gained through our colleagues in education, health or social care. A joint framework for working or Common Assessment Framework process will be used and this will always be in collaboration with parents and carers and the pupils' wishes and views will be actively sought. **[SEE sections 6.36 to 6.56 and 6.58 to 6.78 of SEND CoP]**

## **10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY**

- 10.1. Provision for pupils is monitored and evaluated through gathering views of individual pupils, parent/carers feedback, views of staff and by using school data to ascertain effectiveness and value for money. An effort is made to measure qualitative outcomes as well as academic progress (such as how prepared a pupil feels to move onto the next stage of education, or how motivated they are in school).
- 10.2. The SENCo will audit and assess each pupil on the SEN Register with Class Teachers each term as part of Pupil Progress Reviews. If a pupil fails to make progress the SEN team are asked to identify further strategies, put additional adaptations and support in place or seek further external support, such as Specialist Teacher assessment or Speech and Language assessment.
- 10.3. Sometimes a pupil fails to make expected progress in spite of our best endeavours and where this is the case the SENCo, in collaboration with the pupil and family, other staff and/or external services, will look at the case in detail to gain an understanding of what the barrier to learning is so that additional or further adapted provision can be put in place.
- 10.4. An element of SEN provision is also audited by the SEND team each week at Damers in order to continuously review our provision, ensure consistency and quality of provision and to seek to implement improvements in our work and share examples of

best practice across the school.

## **11. COMING OFF THE SEND RECORD**

- 11.1. A pupil will be removed from the SEND Record if it is deemed that they have made sufficient progress over a period of time and are able to access the curriculum successfully. It is possible that some pupils may require support for particular aspects of their learning which may be due to their underlying learning issues. All pupils will be monitored and their progress tracked so that staff will be alerted to potential learning issues. For some pupils it is possible that they will dip in and out of additional support throughout their school experience; parents and carers will be consulted at each stage if support is provided or when it will cease.
- 11.2. Some pupils with particular needs, usually which are long-lasting, may develop skills and strategies which help to minimise the impact of their difficulty to a level at which the need can be met through quality first teaching. An example of this might be a child/young person with dyslexia, who has had support to work around barriers in order to be a confident and independent learner and as a result, is making good progress. In this case, additional support may no longer be necessary, even though the pupil requires Examination Access Arrangements and a decision on their place on the SEND Record will be made by Senior school staff in partnership with parents and carers.
- 11.3. EHC Plans are reviewed annually. A pupil with an EHC Plan will follow the statutory guidance for ceasing an EHC Plan as set out in the Code of Practice. The cessation of an EHC Plan is determined by the local authority where a pupil no longer requires the special education provision as specified in the EHC Plan. However, his or her progress will continue to be monitored by using the school's tracking systems.

## **12. STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION**

- 12.1. All data including data stored electronically is subject to Data Protection law.
- 12.2. All paper records will be held in line with the Trust's policy/protocol on security of information. All people working with a particular child/young person will have access to any records or reports but the originals will be kept securely and confidentiality will be maintained.

## **13. SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

13.1. Our school will work within the statutory guidance, Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions – (DfE April 2014). We will comply with the duties specified under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that provisions relating to disability must be treated favourably and that our school is expected to make reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate children/young people who are disabled or have medical conditions. (See the school's policy on "Supporting children at school with medical conditions".)

#### **14. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

14.1. Our school is committed to ensuring transition is highly effective for our children/young people with SEN.

14.2. Prior to starting school, there is close liaison between school SEND and Early Years teams and our feeder preschools and nurseries. The SENDCo and Early Years Leader attends transition reviews at pre-schools and nurseries where pupils will have extra visits to Damers and also have the opportunity to take place in a range of additional visits and activities in the build up to joining our school (such as a welcome picnic). There are additional parents' meetings and individual meetings with the SEN team where appropriate or requested.

14.3. We have a clear transition plan for pupils with SEND for each school year change which includes additional sessions with ELSA trained staff, social stories and increased contact time with new staff. Further detailed transition arrangements are developed for those pupils identified by staff or by parents and carers as most in need of additional support.

14.4. For pupils, Damers First School finishes at the end of Year Four. Year Leaders, Class Teachers and the school SENCo work very closely with local Middle School to ensure a smooth transition, which includes but is not limited to: social stories, provision of additional ELSA support for particular groups of pupils, timely information sharing, SEND information sharing meetings and enhanced transition sessions.

14.5. During their time with us, pupils with EHC Plans are supported to think about their long-term goals and they will have Annual Reviews with their parents/carers. These help school staff and people at home to think about the 'whole person' and what we need to do to help them get to the next stage in their lives. This process is usually an empowering experience as it gives a degree of control that can sometimes be missing in the life of a pupil with additional needs.

## **15. TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

- 15.1. Training needs are identified through a process of analysis of the needs of both staff and pupils as and when required.
- 15.2. The SENCo and Senior TAs meet each term in order to audit training needs and plan the delivery of training to enable TAs to provide high quality support to pupils with SEND. The SENCo also works closely with the Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning to plan training for teachers and wider staff on SEND matters.
- 15.3. The SENCo will provide information on specific needs for new staff and teachers who are training or who have newly joined Damers.
- 15.4. The SENCo also maintains up-to-date knowledge by training with other schools in Dorset through the Inclusion Briefing Network, through the Dorchester Area Schools Pyramid (DASP) and via membership of the National Association of Special Education Needs Co-Ordinators.
- 15.5. Additional training is also arranged when required to support specific medical or learning needs and will be arranged in conjunction with medical or other external professionals.

## **16. SEND INFORMATION**

- 16.1. Our school presents SEND information in three ways:
  - by information placed on the school website which can be found on the main school website;
  - by following the link to the local authority's Local Offer website;
  - through information contained in this policy which is also published on the school website.
- 16.2. All information can be provided in hard copy and in other formats upon request.

## **17. ACCESSIBILITY**

- 17.1. Our school publishes its Accessibility Plan on the school website. Further information about our school's accessibility can be found on the local authority's Local Offer website; this can be found at [www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer).

## **18. COMPLAINTS**

18.1. It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and early action. However, if a parent / carer feels that their concern or complaint regarding the care or welfare of their child/young person has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made by them to speak and explain the issues to the SENCO.

18.2. Wessex Multi-Academy Trust, of which our school is a member, publishes its Complaints Policy on the school website.

## **19. REVIEWING THE SEND POLICY**

19.1. This policy will be reviewed and updated annually. Our school appreciates parents and carers views on all aspects of this policy and will ask for volunteers to help with the review process (please contact the SENCo if you are a parent or carer, or any other stakeholder and wish to make suggestions or comments at any time).

## **20. LINKS TO OTHER RELATED POLICIES**

- Supporting children at school with medical conditions
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality / equality information and objectives
- Child Protection
- Anti-bullying
- Data protection

**Amendments**

May 19 – First template policy produced  
May 20 – Final draft approved