



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY POLICY

October 2025

Review October 2026

Westhoughton High School
Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy
Date: September 2025

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1. Introduction

At Westhoughton High School we **LEARN**:

- Look after each other
- Enjoy our school
- Aim high
- Respect each other
- Never stop learning

Every Child

We have a legal duty, but more importantly a moral imperative, to create a culture of care for every child. This must be underpinned by the values of equality and inclusion for ALL. To achieve this, we need to create a culture where:

- Every child is known, their needs understood, and their independence encouraged.
- Every child learns with staff who have high expectations and believe in their potential.
- Every child receives the right support at the right time, balancing classroom learning with targeted interventions.
- Every child enjoys, thrives, and is prepared for future success.

Inclusion is celebrating differences while removing barriers to learning.

Leadership

- Headteacher: Neil Coe
- Deputy Headteacher (Director of Student Wellbeing and Engagement): Caroline Unsworth
- Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion & Diversity and Mental Health): Jane Torrance
- Associate Assistant Headteacher and SENCo: Donny Partington
- Chair of Governors: Joanne Murphy
- SEND Governor: Michael Inman

This policy should be read alongside:

- 2014 Children and Families Act
 - SEND Code of Practice (0–25 years, 2015)
 - 2022 SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time
 - Equality Information Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Pupil Premium Strategy Statement
 - Teaching and Learning Policy
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2. Definition of SEND

A child has SEND if they:

- Have significantly greater difficulty learning than most peers of the same age, or
 - Have a disability or health condition that substantially affects access to mainstream education (Equality Act 2010).
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3. Vision, Principles, and Areas of Need

Vision

Every child at WHS has the right to thrive without exception. Learners with SEND often face the greatest barriers to learning. Our approach ensures high-quality, adaptive teaching alongside flexible, targeted support. Inclusion is achieved through deliberate action by all staff, collaborative partnerships, and high expectations.

Principles

- Inclusion is everyone's responsibility; SEND is not "different" or "difficult."
- Most needs are met in the classroom through adaptive teaching; interventions are used strategically.
- Support develops independence and prepares learners for adulthood.
- Holistic understanding of each learner's needs is shared and acted upon effectively.
- Strong partnerships with parents, carers, and agencies ensure every voice is heard.
- High expectations ensure all learners access a broad, ambitious curriculum.
- Learning without labels: SEND is not fixed, and classifications should not obscure individuality.

Areas of Need – Learning Without Labels

- SEND classifications can homogenise need and obscure individuality.
- At WHS, every SEND learner has a Learner Passport, which records:
 - Barriers to learning
 - Effective support strategies
 - Personal information to support relationships with staff
- These passports are live, collaborative resources developed with staff, the learner, and parents/carers.

Core Aims

1. Every child is known, their needs understood, and independence encouraged.
 2. Every child learns with staff who have high expectations and believe in their potential.
 3. Every child receives the right support at the right time, balancing classroom learning with interventions.
 4. Every child enjoys, thrives, and is prepared for future success.
 5. Every child's learning is supported through strong, responsive partnerships with parents and carers.
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4. The Role of Classroom Teachers in Supporting SEND Learners

Fundamental Principles

- **Entitlements, not favours:** Reasonable adjustments are a child's right.
- **Assistants assist; teachers teach:** LSAs provide support but do not replace the teacher.
- **High expectations are inclusion:** Learners are held to the same academic and behavioural standards.
- **See the child, not the label:** Support is tailored to the individual, not the SEND category.
- **Behaviour has social origins but needs educational solutions:** Consistency in teaching, relationships, and provision is crucial.

Evidence-Informed Strategies (EEF Five-a-Day)

- Explicit instruction
- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies
- Scaffolding
- Flexible grouping
- Using technology

Teacher Responsibilities

- Plan lessons to support learners with the greatest barriers from the outset.
 - Maintain high expectations and access to the full, ambitious curriculum.
 - Review and adapt support on a graduated basis with parents, carers, and the SENCO.
 - Know each learner's **Learner Passport**.
 - Monitor learners strategically using a bus-route system in the classroom.
 - Engage with the weekly SEND bulletin.
 - Form meaningful relationships and collaborate effectively with support staff.
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5. The Role of In-Class Support: Working with LSAs

Deployment Principles

- Effective LSAs enhance learning and support independence.
- Overreliance creates dependency and undermines preparation for adulthood.

Classroom Teacher

- Uses professional judgment and attainment data to deploy LSAs proactively.
- Collaborates with LSAs to ensure learners access an ambitious curriculum.
- Monitors the impact of LSAs and adjusts deployment to support independence.

LSAs

- Provide subject-specific support and adaptive teaching expertise.
- Know learners' barriers and strategies, fostering independence.

- Support learners in lessons and interventions, fulfilling EHCP obligations without promoting dependency.

Deployment Guidelines

- LSAs are assigned where specified in an EHCP or when there is a clear rationale.
- LSAs are not tied to one child for the entire lesson, except where legally required.
- LSAs do not replace teachers in managing behaviour or removing learners from lessons.

Collaboration

- LSAs and teachers implement SEND strategies effectively, using curriculum documentation to guide support.
- Leaders of Learning ensure LSAs understand long- and medium-term curriculum goals.
- Teachers maintain ongoing professional dialogue with LSAs to maximise impact.

See EEF: “[Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants.](#)”

- Subject expert/specialist
- Curriculum thinker
- Confident in adapting the delivery of the curriculum using powerful but familiar high quality teaching strategies
- Knowledgeable about every child in their classes
- Skilled in working collaboratively with LSA's to ensure that every child receives a curriculum with ambition for all



- Enhance a child's ability to access the curriculum by supporting and contributing to the adaptation of the delivery of the lesson
- Know the curriculum and component knowledge of lessons to best support every child
- Consciously foster independence
- Are skilled at identifying learners needs in the classroom and to offer expert advice

6. SEND Referral Process

Graduated Approach (Bolton SEND Handbook Waves)

Wave 1: Quality First Teaching (QFT)

- Adaptive teaching/scaffolding
- Use of **Learner Passports** and bus-route checks
- Reasonable adjustments
- LoL support and SEND drop-ins

Wave 2: SEND Support

- Learner added to the SEND register
- Learner Passport created and shared
- Additional-to or different-from support, including group interventions, mentoring, or pastoral support
- Attainment/progress reviewed termly

- Parent/carer communication

Wave 3: Targeted, Bespoke Support

- Individualised interventions for learners still below expected progress
- Internal AP or external services (e.g., Woodbridge Outreach)
- Focus on bespoke strategies tailored to the learner

Graduated Approach – Assess, Plan, Do, Review

- **Assess:** Analysis of needs, including teacher observation, attainment data, parental and learner views, and external advice.
- **Plan:** Share outcomes and strategies via **Arbor** and Learner Passports.
- **Do:** Teachers retain responsibility; interventions linked to classroom learning; LSAs support delivery.
- **Review:** Progress evaluated with feedback from learners, parents, and specialists.

WHS Waves	Actions to be taken:	SEND Handbook Waves
1	- Adaptive teaching/scaffolding. - QFT Strategies Quality First Teaching. - Use of Learner Passports. - Accessing bulletin. - Bus route. - Reasonable adjustments.	Wave 1
1	- LOL to offer/signpost advice for Quality First teaching strategies. - LOL to ensure QFT is in place. - SEND Drop in.	Wave 1
	- If there are concerns around progress, teacher to complete learner concern form. SEND leaders decide whether student needs to progress to Wave 2 (low attainment/progress + concerns). If not progressing, add to monitoring.	
2	- Assess – Analysis of data and targeted observation of the c/yp. - Plan – Complete Learner Passport, share strategies with staff. - Student added to SEND register. - Attainment/progress is reviewed termly. - Communication is sent to parent/carer. - Support on a page document updated. - Additional to/different from is put in place.	Wave 2
Pastoral	- Consider if an EHA needs opening to get a holistic picture of need and referral to outside agencies. - Discuss further mental health referrals needed, i.e. CAMHS and pastoral intervention.	
	If the c/yp is still not making expected progress despite early interventions.	
3	- Targeted intervention put in place. - Consider use of Internal AP and/or external services (Woodbridge). - EHCP Pathway for student's not making progress/refusing to engage despite significant interventions. - Focus on data gathering and ISP provision map. - EHCNA application	Wave 3
4	- EHCP application successful. - Guidance on Mediation/Tribunal if not.	

7. Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- EHCP is a legal document specifying the support a learner requires.
- Triggered when Wave 3 support is insufficient.
- Evidence includes two terms of SEND support and £6,000 additional expenditure.
- All EHCP learners have a **Learner Passport**.
- Statutory assessment takes 20 weeks.
- Annual reviews involve the child, parents, The Hub, and multi-agency input.
- Feedback informs target setting for the following academic year.
- WHS aims to build parental trust in proactive EHCP applications while respecting parental rights to request an assessment.

Governance and Accountability

- Governors ensure staff awareness of children with SEND.
- EHCP provisions are implemented effectively.
- Learner progress is monitored and reviewed.
- Strong home/school communication is maintained.
- Full curriculum access is ensured for all learners.

Resource Allocation

- Additional resources are provided by the LA and deployed through the delegated budget.
- The SENDCO allocates resources in line with the EHCP and individual learner needs.
- Accountability is maintained through provision mapping and the annual review process.

Continuous Improvement

- WHS recognises its EHCP percentage has historically been below the national average.
- A structured EHCP pathway checklist is used to ensure eligible learners are considered for assessment consistently and equitably to increase this.

8. Rationalising Intervention

“Schools and colleges must use their best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less.”
(2015 Code of Practice)

Rationale for Intervention

- Some learners face barriers that cannot be fully addressed in the classroom.
- Interventions may be specified in an EHCP or targeted support.
- Appropriate interventions:
 - Increase access to the mainstream curriculum
 - Have measurable outcomes
 - Are delivered by trained experts

- Are time-sensitive with clear goals
- Ensure classroom absence does not hinder overall progress

Wave 2 vs Wave 3 Interventions

- **Wave 2:** Additional-to or different-from support (group interventions, mentoring, pastoral support)
- **Wave 3:** Targeted, bespoke support (one-to-one interventions, internal AP, external services such as Woodbridge Outreach)

Reviewing Impact

- Intervention staff document and report outcomes to the SENDCO.
 - SENDCO evaluates effectiveness termly.
 - Quality assurance includes reviewing entry and exit data and gathering learner voice.
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9. Challenging Behaviour and SEND

Guiding Principles

- WHS maintains high expectations for every child.
- Behaviour policy is applied equitably.
- Support for learners with SEND considers that behaviour may indicate unmet needs.
- Having a SEND label does not automatically indicate poor behaviour.

Considerations for Staff

- Are literacy or learning needs creating barriers?
- Has learning been scaffolded for success?
- Are reasonable adjustments in place (routines, seating, stimuli)?
- Has positive communication with parents/carers occurred?
- Does the child have a supportive staff relationship?

Monitoring

- Behaviour incidents (positive and negative) are logged in Arbor.
 - Detailed records enable proactive support from The Hub.
 - The SENDCO meets with SSLs and SPLs every 3 weeks in Strategic Year Team Meetings for guidance.
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10. Developing a Culture of True Inclusion

“Inclusion is celebrating differences while removing barriers to learning.”

- School as a microcosm of society; staff model inclusive, respectful behaviour.
- Shared language and behaviours model non-reductive, non-ableist interactions.
- Discriminatory language and behaviours are challenged with coherent sanctions.
- Learners are educated on Protected Characteristics.

- A consistent vision of True Inclusion is adopted across staff and learners.
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11. Links with Primary Schools and Further Education

Transition and Learner Passports

- Learner Passports prepared for all Year 7 starters to provide holistic SEND information.
- Stronger primary links ensure accurate understanding of SEND needs, reducing parental frustration and supporting a positive start.

Primary School Liaison

- The Hub visits primary schools to observe, gather information, and collate Learner Passports.
- SENDCO or SEND Support Lead attends final EHCP reviews to support smooth transition.

Enhanced Transition Support

- Children with EHCPs invited to enhanced transition activities in the final half term.
- Selected learners participate in Woodbridge Outreach enhanced transition.
- Summer School provided to selected learners for smoother Year 7 adjustment.

Post-16 Links

- Close relationships with colleges, sixth forms, and Post-16 providers.
 - The Hub works with relevant tutors regarding 14–16 programmes and Post-16 provision.
 - Support provided for SEND parents during open evenings and Post-16 information sessions.
 - The Hub staff accompany SEND learners on college visits to ensure appropriate support.
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12. Evaluation by the Governing Body

- Governors informed of The Hub's work and policy implementation via the CSI Governing Body.
 - Governors ensure full engagement in SEND policy development, monitoring, and evaluation.
 - SEND Governor meets with the SENDCO every term.
 - SEND provision integrated into the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
 - Quality of SEND provision continually monitored, evaluated, and enhanced.
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13. Quality Assurance of SEND Provision in the Spirit of True Inclusion

- SEND provision is embedded in whole-school QA processes.
- Qualitative evidence: learner voice, book looks, staff voice, classroom observations.
- Quantitative evidence: attendance, exclusions, behaviour data, academic outcomes.
- Continuous monitoring ensures alignment with True Inclusion and refinement of provision.
- Parents/carers supported via the Bolton Information and Advisory Service for SEND.
[Link to Bolton Information and Advisory Service]
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14. Complaints Procedure

Complaints regarding support provided by The Hub follow the school's standard complaints procedure.

15. References and Useful Reading

- Aubin, Gary. *The Lone SENDCO: Questions and Answers for the Busy SENDCO*. Woodbridge, UK: John Catt Educational, 2022.
- Peer, Lindsay & Gavin Reed. *Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Inclusive Practice*. London, UK: Sage Publishing, 2021.
- Wespieser, Karen (Ed). *Special Educational Needs: An Evidence-Informed Guide for Teachers*. Woodbridge, UK: John Catt Educational, 2021.

Reference Documents Available Online:

- 2015 SEND Code of Practice
- Bolton Local Offer
- EEF Guidance Reports (e.g., *Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants*, *SEND in Mainstream Schools*)
- The Big Ask - The Big Answer (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)
- SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time
- Special Needs Jungle