# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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| **ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:** | **ALL** Schools require this policy with **no changes** allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools, **except** where a school contact is required as identified in the content of the policy. LGBs will **note** adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary. |
| **Other related ODBST policies and procedures:** | Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy<br>Alternative Provision Policy<br>Behaviour Policy<br>Anti-Bullying Policy<br>Use of Restrictive Intervention Policy<br>Curriculum Policy<br>Admissions Policy<br>Equality and Diversity Policy<br>RSHE Policy |
| **Committee responsible:** | SEC |
| **Approved by:** | SEC |
| **Date Approved:** | September 2026 |
| **Review Date:** | September 2028 |

The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) expects its member schools through its Local Governing Bodies (LGB) to provide compelling learning environments at the heart of all its learning communities. We want all of our pupils to be the best that they can and that our SEND pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life from the outset. Elmtree is an inclusive school where we care and support each other and celebrate our diverse community. Each school's curriculum will meet the needs of our SEND pupils through carefully structured sequence of knowledge, skills and progression so that learning is incremental, building on prior learning and enabling all pupils to know more and to remember more.

Every ODBST school has a clear SEND curriculum map in place so that learning is explicit and there is shared understanding for all stakeholders, alongside a clear consistency of approach. We offer a spiritual and moral basis for the development of each pupil's potential and a sure foundation for

personal and social values based on the individual. Each school curriculum will provide a distinctive language for understanding life in all its fullness and interpreting human experience.

Our aim is to meet the needs of children and young people in our schools preparing them for the next phase in their education as part of becoming valuable and productive members of society and prepare them for their future life in the 21st century. Providing an education which

> *. .. stretches the mind, strengthens the body, enriches the imagination, nourishes the spirit, encourages the will to do good and opens the heart to others.* The Way Ahead 2001

**1. Definition of Special Educational Need (SEND)**

ODBST schools adhere to the definition of Special Education Needs from the Code of Practice 2014 which states that:

- A child or young person has a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child has Special Education Needs if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally for others of the same age in mainstream school.

A disability, as stated in the 2010 Equality Act, means:

- A physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) identifies four broad areas of need**:**

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/or Physical

**2. Additional provision**

Educational provision, which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in maintained schools (other than special schools) in the area (1993 Education Act, section 156).

Children must not be regarded as having learning difficulties solely because their home language, or form of the home language, is different from that in which they are taught.

Our schools will have due regard for the Code of Practice 2014 when carrying out their duties towards all pupils with additional needs and ensure that parents/carers are notified when additional provision is being made for their child.

**3. Inclusion statement**

Trustees expect the leaders and governors in all of its schools to endeavour to make every effort to achieve maximum inclusion of all pupils whilst meeting pupils' individual needs.

This policy recognises the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our SEND policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive and with reasonable adaptations in place. The Local Governing Bodies and Board of Trustees will ensure that appropriate provision will be made for all pupils with SEND and each school website carefully structures what this will look like.

**4. Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

- To reach high levels of achievement for all
- To be inclusive schools
- To ensure the identification of all pupils requiring SEND provision as early as possible in their school career
- To meet individual needs through a wide range of provision
- To attain high levels of satisfaction and participation from pupils, parent and carers
- To share a common vision and understanding with all stakeholders
- To give transparent resourcing to SEND
- To provide curriculum access for all
- To work towards inclusion in partnership with other agencies and schools
- To achieve a level of staff expertise to meet pupil need
- Monitor our effectiveness in achieving the above aims
- To support pupils with SEND in preparing for adulthood including employment, independence, community participation and good health, both physically and mentally.

We recognise that many pupils will have special needs at some time during their school life. In implementing this policy, we believe pupils will be helped to address some of their barriers to learning and to overcome their difficulties.

**5. Admission Arrangements**

In accordance with the Code of Practice 2014, our school admissions policies require children and young people with SEND to be treated fairly. No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the SEND and Disability Act we will not discriminate against disabled children and young people and we will take all reasonable steps to provide effective educational provision in line with the Academy Trust's admissions arrangements.

*The admission of children into any directly funded ARP will be in conjunction with the local authority and in accordance with the specific criteria for the ARP.*

**6. Management of SEND within ODBST Schools**

6.1 Local Governing Bodies and our school leaders have delegated responsibility for the day to day implementation of the SEND policy in accordance with the ODBST scheme of delegation. The management of SEND is supported by the Senior Leadership Team. Trustees will ensure that schools are supported by the school effectiveness team in delivering to children identified with SEND and will monitor the effectiveness of SEND in our schools through the School Effectiveness Committee.

Named ODBST Trustee for SEND is Toby Long.

The name of the SENDCo at Elmtree is Mrs Dowling, and can be contacted: office@elm.odbst.org

The name of the nominated governor for SEND at Elmtree is Mrs S. Woodcock, and can be contacted: office@elm.dosbt.org

6.2 All staff have a responsibility for pupils with SEND. All teachers are teachers of special educational needs. Staff are aware of their responsibilities towards pupils with SEND, whether or not pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). A positive and sensitive attitude is shown towards those pupils. Staff responsibilities are identified in individual job descriptions.

6.3 Educational support staff play a major role in the support of pupils with SEND. The rationale for the deployment of educational support staff is down to individual schools to determine based upon the needs of pupils with SEND and alongside the considerations of other barriers to learning and needs within the school.

6.4 In line with the recommendations in the SEND Code of Practice 2014[1] and its 2020 update, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) is responsible for:

- overseeing the day to day operation of this policy in partnership with the senior leadership team;
- co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs in partnership with the Headteacher and the LGB;
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has special educational needs;
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support;
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively;
- overseeing the records on all children with SEND;
- liaising with parents of children with SEND in conjunction with class teachers and other SEND staff;
- contributing/leading to the in-service training of staff;

[1] Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

- liaising with external agencies including the local authority s support and educational psychology services, early years providers, other schools, health and social services and voluntary bodies;
- being the key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services of education to ensure a pupil and their parent/carers are informed about opinions and a smooth transition is planned;
- working with School Leaders and Local Governing Bodies (LGB) to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

**7. Identification and Assessment**

7.1 We recognise the importance of early identification and intervention for children with SEND in EYFS. Where schools have nursery provision or admit children from 2+yrs, staff will:

- work in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework;
- use the 2yr progress check as part of any early identification;
- apply the graduated response as early as possible;
- work in close partnership with parents/carers to understand the child's needs;
- liaise with external professionals such as health visitors, speech and language therapists and early years providers;
- ensure that effective transition arrangements are in place as children move into Reception.

Provision in the early years focuses on early language development, social interaction and the foundations for learning, ensuring that children are supported to access a broad and balanced curriculum from the outset.

7.2 ODBST schools follow the 2014 SEND Code of Practice graduated approach with regard to the identification, assessment and review of pupils with special educational needs. Most pupils will be taught within mainstream classrooms and receive an appropriately sequenced curriculum where learning is adapted to enable all pupils, as far as is reasonably practicable, to access the core learning. Assessment of all learning is detailed in our schools and teacher are trained to pick up early any misconceptions and to address these swiftly.

7.3 Where pupils experience more difficulties with learning than might be expected, more detailed assessments are carried out in schools and the identification of special education needs is considered in conjunction with parents/carers, class teachers and if, appropriate, other professionals. Parents/carers are always consulted before any decisions are made.

7.4 Where thresholds are met, schools may look to alternative provision to support need and/or apply for additional support through a local authority Needs Assessment.

**8. Curriculum Access and Provision**

8.1 In order to meet the learning needs of all pupils, teachers adapt work to enable all pupils to better access the core learning. Adaptations are identified in individual school SEND mapping documents which guide teachers in the successful planning for SEND pupils and enable parents/carers to better understand how the school is supporting all SEND children with learning.

All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum with distinctive teaching approaches, which are planned to effectively meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil's achievement.

Schools will ensure that pupils with SEND are supported to develop independence, resilience and life skills appropriate to their age and stage of development, including access to meaningful careers education from an appropriate age.

8.2 Some pupils will need support which sits outside of what can be reasonable and practicably be given during a lesson. The support available from each individual school is detailed in their local SEND offer. This might be 1:1 support for a specific need, including managing health and care need or may be in the form of small group intervention. Additional support is detailed on individual support plans and is shared at least termly with parents/carers.

8.3 ODBST schools with post-16 provision will ensure that students with SEND continue to receive appropriate support in line with their identified needs and any EHCP.

Provision at this stage will focus on preparing students for adulthood including:

- further education, employment or training;
- independent living;
- community participation;
- maintaining good physical and mental health.

Students will have access to:

- high quality teaching that is appropriately adapted;
- tailored careers education, advice and guidance;
- opportunities to develop independence and life skills;
- transition planning which includes close partnership working with families, external providers and receiving partners where appropriate.

8.4 Exam access arrangements are implemented in line with Buckinghamshire secondary selection processes, through key stage 2 SATS access arrangements and through JCQ regulations for exams in key stage 4 and 5. A qualified assessor will be used where required and parents informed in writing of approved arrangements.

8.5 Very occasionally, a pupil may need provision in the form of alternative provision. This is usually arranged by the school, in conjunction with the local authority, and with recognised providers. The use of alternative provision is made when the school is unable to meet the short term requirements of the pupil's additional needs either from within the school resources or from those already provided externally by the local authority. Regular review of any alternative provision will be undertaken by the school to ensure that the pupils needs are being identified and managed appropriately.

In the event that alternative provision is accessed, the necessary safeguarding checks will be undertaken by the school and monitoring of learning will be undertaken robustly.

**9. Managing Behaviour for pupils with SEND**

Our ODBST Behaviour policy sets out clearly how our pupils with SEND are supported within this policy. We know that, for some SEND pupils, they are not always able to follow core behaviour guidelines without additional adjustments and/or support and we know too that frustrations and challenging behaviours can arise when needs are not fully met. It is expected that all schools will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that needs are met as far as is reasonably practicable.

Our schools will not assume that because a pupil has SEND, it must have affected their behaviour on a particular occasion; this is a question of judgement for each school based on the facts of the situation.

Our schools will consider whether a pupil's SEND has contributed to the misbehaviour and if so, whether it is appropriate and lawful to sanction the pupil. In considering this, each school will refer to the Equality Act 2010 and ODBST guidance.

**10. Code of Practice Graduated Response**

ODBST schools adopt the levels of intervention as described in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

The Code of Practice 2014 advocates a graduated response to meeting pupils' needs. When they are identified as having SEND, the school will usually intervene through Early Years Support/ School Suppo5. Transition Arrangements [ADD]

ODBST schools recognise that effective transition planning is essential to ensure continuity of support for pupils with SEND. Transition planning forms part of the graduated response and is integrated into the overall SEND provision for each pupil.

**11. Transition Arrangements**

- ODBST schools recognise that effective transition arrangements are essential in supporting pupils with SEND to achieve success and maintain continuity in their learning.

This includes transitions:

- into early years provision, including admission from 2yr+ where applicable;
- from early years into Reception;
  between year groups and key stages;
- from primary into secondary;
- into post-16 education, training or employment.

- The SENDCo, in partnership with class teachers, parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies, will ensure that relevant information is shared in a timely manner to support a smooth transition.
- Additional arrangements may be implemented where necessary, including enhanced visits, transition meetings, and tailored support to address individual needs.

- Receiving settings will be provided with clear and comprehensive information regarding a pupil's needs, provision and outcomes.
- For pupils with SEND, transition planning will form part of the graduated approach and will aim to reduce anxiety, promote independence and ensure that reasonable and appropriate provision is in place from the outset.

**12. Request for Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)**

School's will request an assessment for an Educational Health Care Plan from the LA when, despite an individualised programme of sustained intervention within Early Years Support /School Support, the pupil remains a significant cause for concern. An assessment for an EHCP might also be requested by a parent or outside agency.

An EHCP will normally be provided where, after an Educational Health Care Needs Assessment, the LA considers the pupil requires provision beyond what the school can offer. However, the school recognises that a request for an Educational Health Care Needs Assessment does not inevitably lead to an Educational Health Care Plan.

**13. High Needs Block Funding (HNBF)**

In exceptional circumstances a school may request an application for high needs block funding (HNBF) which can enable needs to be met in the short term, perhaps to overcome an interim need or to support the pupil whilst a formal assessment is being undertaken. The decision to issue HNBF remains with the local authority.

**13. Recording Additional Provision and Interventions**

All pupils who are identified as having a SEND will have an individual support plan which identifies what the core barriers to learning are and how the school will seek to overcome these. Pupils will have short term targets which are reviewed regularly with pupils and parents/carers. All plans will be shared with parents/carers and early review of these plans can be requested by any party.

Pupils who are in receipt of an EHCP will have an annual review at least once every 12 months. A school, the local authority or a parent/carer may call an interim review of an EHCP if any party is expressing concerns about provision or outcomes. The SENDCo or Assistant SENDCo will usually be present at an annual review.

**15. Involvement of Pupils**

We recognise that all pupils have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice (SEND Code of Practice 2014). Where appropriate pupils are involved in monitoring and reviewing their progress.

**16. Links with Other Services**

The Trustees expect effective working links to be maintained with local services which advantage pupils' achievement and are needed to ensure the school provides effectively for pupils' learning. Schools co-ordinate the links with external services and are expected to manage the level of services at school level.

**17. Attendance for SEND pupils**

It is important that our SEND pupils are able to come to school every day without prejudice. Our schools will work hard to understand any barriers to attendance for individual SEND pupils and will seek to make reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

These may include but are not limited to:

- considering adaptions to uniform requirements that heighten sensory difficulties;
- considering alternative entrances and exits for pupils who find the general bustle of these times overwhelming;
- considering alternative entrance and exit arrangements for pupils with physical needs where appropriate;
- ensuring that routines are understood by those pupils with SEND, that changes to routines are explained and that all routines are supportive of pupils with SEND;
- managing transport arrangements for SEND pupils and what happens if they are not operating;
- ensuring that break times and lunchtimes meet the needs of SEND pupils and the potential anxieties around these are not a barrier to attendance.

Where a pupil is school refusing, additional support will be put in place, which may include part time tables to reduce anxiety and enable the pupil to develop greater confidence in returning to school.

**17. Safeguarding**

17.1 We take the safeguarding of our SEND pupils seriously and we understand that pupils with SEND are more vulnerable to abuse. The school SEND team will work closely with the school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to track and monitor safeguarding incidences that school is made aware of. We also understand that it can be harder for SEND pupils to communicate that things aren't right and so we provide structured and accessible opportunities for pupils with SEND to communicate concerns, including access to trusted adults, regular check-ins with pastoral, Safeguarding team, SEND staff, person-centred discussions, and appropriate communication supports. Staff are trained to recognise behaviour as communication and to respond promptly and appropriately in line with safeguarding and pastoral procedures, in order to facilitate pupils with SEND to tell us when things are not right.

17.2 All pupils who are absent over time will be monitored carefully, as per our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, but particular attention will be taken over those pupils who have SEND. For SEND pupils who are absent over time and have an EHCP, the local authority will be informed.

**18. Training**

In order to maintain and develop the quality of our provision, the Trust expects staff to undertake appropriate training. All teachers and education support staff are regularly trained in the most commonly presenting needs in classrooms and are expected to make adaptations for these pupils in learning. Sometimes key staff will undergo more specific training pertinent to an individual need or developing needs within a school. Recent courses undertaken are reported to Governors in the Headteacher's termly report.

**19. Resources**

The provision for SEND is funded by allocating additional funding to specific aspects of the budget including staffing, resourcing and CPD. Such funding is not regarded as part of the school's GAG and so is not subject to the annual academy charge. Funds are deployed locally to implement the SEND policy.

The new Inclusion Mainstream Fund will be pooled by the ODBST and resources shared to support all schools. There is a central statement on the spending and impact of this fund.

**20. Complaints**

If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils with SEND these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Headteacher using the Trust's complaints policy. Clear procedures are set out in the Trust Complaints Policy.

**21. Dissemination and Review**

This policy, once approved by Trustees, will be reviewed tri- annually.