

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES POLICY

Mission Statement

Empowering everyone to be the best that they can be.

1. **Excellence** – We will provide students with opportunities in which to excel, to empower them to make free choices as a foundation for the best possible future; with outcomes in line with or better than their peers nationally.
2. **Equality** – We will provide high quality teaching and learning, delivering a broad, knowledge rich curriculum, where high aspirations are the norm and success is celebrated, to all students regardless of their background, ethnicity, religion, gender, educational need.
3. **Truth** – We will pursue truth open-mindedly, seeking to help students to enquire, question and challenge, helping them to be well-rounded, resilient, confident, independent learners with a love for learning.
4. **Respect** – We will create a safe community that has at its core an understanding of deep respect for self, for others and for the environment; strong relationships are key.

Executive Head teacher:	Jen Veal
SENDCo:	Ian Squires
Lead Governor:	Dominic Course – Chair of HABI
Policy Date:	February 2024
This policy will be formally reviewed annually.	

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- The DfE SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, January 2015.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations.

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INTRODUCTION

This Policy is in line with our Teaching and Learning Policy and Equality of Opportunity Policy and aims to support high quality provision for all of our children.

The responsibility for the management of this Policy falls to the Executive Head teacher and Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion), the day to day operation of the Policy is the responsibility of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo). The Governing Body, Executive Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) will work together closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively. The effective implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Hub Advisory Board (HAB).

High quality teaching is that which is differentiated to meet the needs of the majority of students. Some students will need something **additional to** and **different from** what is provided for the majority of students. This is special educational provision and we will use our best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it. South Dartmoor Community College will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any student who has special educational needs or disabilities. We will ensure that all staff in the schools are able to identify and provide for those students who have special educational needs or disabilities to enable students with SEND to have equal opportunity to access the curriculum and a full range of activities within the schools.

South Dartmoor Community College will also work to ensure that all SEND students reach their full potential, are fully included within the schools' communities and are able to make successful transfers between educational establishments. This policy aims to support all members of staff in providing positive whole school approaches towards the learning, progress and achievement of SEND students. With this as an underlying principle, we believe that:

All teachers are teachers of Special Educational Needs. Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all students in their class even where students access support from Teaching Assistants or specialist staff.

Teaching and supporting students with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response. Meeting the needs of students with SEND requires partnership working between all those involved, Local Authority (LA), schools, parents/carers, students, Children's Services and all other agencies.

OUR PRINCIPLES

School Admissions

No student will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the Equality Act 2010 we will not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. We will use our best endeavours to provide effective educational provision.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims

To provide the structure for a student-centered process that engages student, family, school and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality needs led provision that is consistent across the Schools. This is to ensure all of our students are able to access the same opportunities for learning and social development achieving maximum progress, fulfilling their potential and promoting their wellbeing.

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Objectives

The SEND Policy of South Dartmoor Community College reflects the principles of the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice (2015). The aims of this special educational needs policy are to:

- Ensure the Equality Act 2010 duties for students with disabilities are met.
- To enable students with special educational needs to have their needs met.
- To take into account the views of the students with Special Educational Needs. To encourage good communication and genuine partnerships with parents/carers of children with special educational needs.
- To facilitate full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.
- In conjunction with the Medical Policy make arrangements to support students with medical conditions and to have regard to statutory guidance supporting students at school with medical conditions.
- Have regard to the Code of Practice (2015) for the identification, assessment, support and review of special educational needs implementing a graduated approach to meeting the needs of students using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process.
- Develop a culture whereby students value high quality teaching for all learners, with teachers using a range of effective differentiation methods.
- Employ a collaborative approach with learners with a SEN or disability, their families, staff within school, other external agencies including those from Health and Social Care.
- Set appropriate individual learning outcomes based on prior achievement, attainment, high aspirations and the views of the learner and family.
- Share expertise and good practice across the school and local learning community.
- Make efficient and effective use of school resources.
- Have regard to government legislation and guidance as well as guidance detailed by Devon County Council.

IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Definition of SEN

Students, as defined by the Department for Education (DfE) have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him/her namely provision which is **additional to** or **different from** that normally available in a differentiated curriculum.

South Dartmoor Community College regards students as having a Special Educational Need if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders him/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.

Students 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.

South Dartmoor Community College will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 when carrying out its duties towards all students with SEND and ensure that parents/carers are informed by the schools that SEND provision is being made for their child.

There may be times in a student's school career when they are identified as having a Special Educational Needs. These students will be provided with intervention and/or support that is 'additional to or different from' the normal differentiated curriculum. This may be on an on-going basis or for a limited time. Many students with sensory and/or physical disabilities may require adaptations, made as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

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AREAS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

Under the SEND Code of Practice 2015 students identified as having a special educational need (SEN) will be considered within one or more of the following categories of need:

Cognition and Learning

Children with learning needs may learn at a slower pace than other children and may have difficulty developing Literacy or Numeracy skills or understanding new concepts. Learning needs may be in addition to or as a result of other special educational needs.

Cognition and Learning needs include:

- Moderate Learning Difficulties.
- Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia).

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. It is important to note that students displaying social and/or emotional difficulties, including behaviours which make it difficult for them to conform to teachers' expectations, may be reflecting a range of stresses including underlying learning or communication difficulties, problems at home or previous experiences of trauma, or mental health difficulties. Not all of these are appropriate to be explored through the SEND route but instead, where it is thought that housing, family or domestic circumstances etc may be contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach may instead be adopted. In these cases children and their families may be supported through the Early Help route as appropriate.

Communication and Interaction needs

Children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or because they do not understand or use social rules of communication.

Communication and Interaction needs include:

- Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).
- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Sensory and/or Physical needs

Some children require special educational provision because they have a disability and this prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time.

Sensory and/or physical needs include:

- Visual impairment (VI).
- Hearing impairment (HI – including Deaf and hearing impairment).
- Multi-sensory impairment (MSI).
- Physical disability (PD).

The above are examples of need are not exhaustive and represent certain key areas of need.

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A GRADUATED RESPONSE TO SEND

Early Concerns

The progress made by all students is regularly monitored and reviewed. Initially, concerns registered by teachers, parents/carers or other agencies are addressed by appropriate differentiation within the classroom and a record is kept of strategies used.

How we identify and support students with send

All students' attainment and achievements are monitored by their teachers who are required to provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities differentiated for individual students. Where a student is making inadequate progress or falls behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the class teacher.

Where students continue to make inadequate progress despite support and high-quality teaching, the class teacher will work with the schools' Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) to agree appropriate support.

In some cases it may be necessary to seek assessment by or advice from an external professional such as a Specialist Teacher or Educational Psychologist. This will always involve discussion and agreement with the student's parents/carers.

When considering whether a student has a special educational need any of the following may be evident:

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a student's identified area of weakness.
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing Literacy or Mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas.
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by appropriate behaviour management strategies.
- Has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment.
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of an appropriate differentiated curriculum.
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the student's own learning or that of the class groups, despite having an individualised behaviour support programme.
- Has SEND or physical needs that require additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service.
- Has a communication and/or an interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and cause a substantial barrier to learning.

Assess, Plan, Do and Review

All students' provision, including those with SEND, are regularly monitored through the Assessment tracker process. The cycle of assess, plan, do review ensures that students with SEND have their individual provision monitored regularly and at least termly.

Exit Criteria

When a student has made sufficient progress in their area of need that they no longer require any provision that is different from or additional to that which is normally available as part of high quality and differentiated teaching they will no longer be seen as requiring SEN Support. At this point, through

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discussion and agreement with parents/carers the student will be removed from the Schools SEND register.

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHC)

Where, despite the schools having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs and/or disabilities of the student, the child has not made expected progress, the school or parents/carers should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. The evidence gathered through the review process will help the Local Authority (LA) in determining when this statutory assessment of needs is required.

Where a student has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the Local Authority must review the plan every twelve months as a minimum. South Dartmoor Community College will hold annual review meetings on behalf of Devon Local Authority and complete the appropriate paperwork for this process. Parents/carers and external professionals (as appropriate) will be invited to attend the Annual Review meeting. The views of the students and of parents/carers will always be sought and, wherever appropriate used to shape the provision being made for the students so as to achieve agreed, high-quality outcomes.

Access Arrangements

Are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior Joint Body for Qualifications (JCQ) awarding body approval. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

At South Dartmoor Community College students with long term need are highlighted and where appropriate assessed for potential access arrangements from Year 9 onwards. The following links provided below explains the framework provided by the Joint Council for Qualification in order to access Examination Access Arrangements' (EAA)

[Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

Regular monitoring of the quality of provision for all students including those with SEND follows the schools' assessment and monitoring calendar. The cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review ensures that pupils with SEND have their individual provision reviewed regularly.

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Supporting Students and Families

We value the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with parents/carers, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified properly and met as early as possible.

At South Dartmoor Community College we endeavour to support parents/carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported, listened to, and taken seriously should they raise a concern about their child.
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their child's education.
- Understand procedures and documentation.
- Make their views known about how their child is educated.
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making process about special educational provision.
- Reinforce their child's learning in the home.

Parents/carers are encouraged to seek help and advice from Independent Information Advice and Support services, including Devon Information Advice and Support Service (DIAS). These are able to provide impartial and independent advice, support and information on special educational needs and disabilities.

Parents/carers are also encouraged to visit the Devon County Council Local Offer website www.devon.gov.uk/send. This website provides valuable information about different agencies, services and resources for children, young people with SEND and their families in addition to school resources and information.

Children in Care

When a child is in care, the carers are accorded the same rights and responsibilities as parents. The schools have both an appointed Designated Teacher for CIC; currently this is Lara Hutchinson, and a Governor for Looked after Children.

Student Voice

We hold the views of students highly and recognise the importance of gaining genuine student views in promoting the best student outcomes. Students are able to share their views in a number of different ways (appropriate to age and ability).

These views are welcome at any time but are specifically sought as part of their Annual Review, as part of their Pupil Progress Meetings and at the end of a Targeted Intervention. We ask all students to contribute to the setting of their own targets.

Partnership with External Agencies

South Dartmoor Community College is supported by a wide range of different agencies and teams. The Schools' SEND Information report details which agencies the school has worked with in the last twelve months. This report can be found on the schools' website and is updated annually.

Transition

A change of school, class and staff can be an exciting, yet anxious time for all students. We recognise that this can be very challenging for some students with SEND. We endeavour to make sure these

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periods of change are carefully managed in a sensitive way to provide continuity of high-quality provision and reassurance to pupils and families.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Allocation of resources

- Each year we map our provision to show how we allocate human resources to each year group; this is reviewed regularly and can change during the academic year, responding to the changing needs within our classes.
- This support may take the form of differentiated work in class, support from a Teaching Assistant (TA) in focused intervention in groups, or for individuals.
- Specialist equipment, books or other resources that may help the student are purchased as required.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Special Educational Needs

- All staff at the schools engage in regular CPD when Quality First Teaching is addressed.
- The SENDCo provides regular CPD to other staff in school in specific aspects of meeting the needs of students with SEN. A programme covering a variety of SEN is offered and staff can sign up to the sessions which best meet their CPD needs.
- Teaching Assistants are engaged in on-going training whereby the role of the Teaching Assistant is developed.
- External trainers are brought in periodically to address more specialist training needs such as dealing with specific medical conditions or to train staff in the use of specific interventions.
- Peer support and guidance is available daily for all staff in school and some of the best training development occurs through professional dialogue with colleagues looking at meeting the specific needs of a student.

Funding

Funding for SEND in mainstream schools is mainly delegated to the Schools' budget. It is the expectation that the schools provide support to their students with SEND from their SEND budget. Where a student requires an exceptionally high level of support that incurs a greater expense, the school can make a request for Additional Resource through an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) application.

Parents/carers who would like to enquire further about an Education Health Care Plan should speak in the first instance to the SENDCo.

Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for students with special educational needs is a matter for the schools as a whole. In addition to the Governing Body, Executive Head teacher, Assistant Headteacher; Inclusion and SENDCo, all members of staff have important responsibilities.

Governing Body

The Governing Body adheres to the statutory requirements as laid down in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) to ensure that the schools:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need. This means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's special educational needs.
- Ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the schools alongside students who do not have SEND.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision, SENDCo.
- Inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child.

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- Prepare a SEND information report and their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the schools for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

The Executive Head teacher

The Executive Head teacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the schools' work, including provision for children with special educational needs. The Executive Head teacher will keep the Governing Body fully informed on special educational needs issues. The Executive Head teacher will work closely with the Assistant Head teacher; Inclusion, SENDCo and the governor with responsibility for SEND.

SENDCo

In collaboration with the Executive Head teacher, Assistant Head teacher Inclusion and Governing Body, the SENDCo determines the strategic development of the SEND Policy and provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of students with SEND and ensuring the best possible outcomes for them.

The SENDCo takes day to day responsibility for the operation of the SEND Policy and coordinates the provision for individual children, working closely with staff, parents/carers and external agencies. The SENDCo provides relevant professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with special educational needs.

Through analysis and assessment of children's needs and by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of students' achievements and setting targets, SENDCo develops effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching.

The SENDCo liaises and collaborates with class teachers so that learning for all children is given equal priority.

All Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

- All staff are aware of the schools' SEND Policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for students with special educational needs.
- Class teachers are fully involved in providing high quality teaching, differentiated for individual students. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, their understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.
- Class teachers are responsible for setting suitable learning challenges and facilitating effective special educational provision in response to students' diverse needs in order to remove potential barriers to learning. This process should include working with the SENDCo to carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs, drawing on the teacher's assessment and experience of the student, as well as previous progress and attainment.
- Teaching Assistants will liaise with the class teacher and SENDCo on planning, on student response and on progress in order to contribute effectively to the graduated response, (assess, plan, do, review).

Meeting Medical Needs

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to make arrangements to support students with medical conditions. Individual Health Care Plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such students.

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Where children and young people also have SEND, their provision should be planned and delivered in a coordinated way. The **Early Help Assessment** and **Right for Children** are systems used to support multi-agency working. These systems support collaboration with health and social care, as well as special educational provision through the Team Around the Family (TAF).

South Dartmoor Community College recognises that students at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the schools will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. **Please see the Schools' Supporting Students with Medical Needs Policy for further details.**

Children in Hospital

The SENDCo, in collaboration with the Heads of Year and the Pastoral team will ensure that students with health needs have proper access to education and will liaise with other agencies and professionals, as well as parents/carers, to ensure good communication and effective sharing of information. This will enable optimum opportunities for educational progress and achievement.

SEND Information Report

The schools will ensure that the SEND information is accessible on the schools' website. Governors have a legal duty to ensure the schools publish information on their websites about the implementation of the policy for students with SEND. The information published will be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible.

MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Accessibility

The schools are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and Accessibility Legislation. The schools work hard to develop their accessibility and the accessibility plan for the College detailing how this is being developed can be accessed from the schools' Website.

Storing and Managing Information

Student SEND records will be kept in accordance to the DfE guidance contained in "Statutory Policies for schools" (March 2022)

[Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools)

Responding to Complaints

In the first instance, parent/carer complaints about the provision or organisation of SEND are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the schools' Complaints Policy. If there continues to be disagreement with regard to SEND provision the Local Authority should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons with a view to avoiding or resolving disagreements between the parents/carers and the schools. This includes access to mediation before tribunal. Parents/ Carers have the right to appeal to a SEND tribunal at any stage.