

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy



Approved by:	David Jenkins	Date: January 2025
Last reviewed on:	December 2024	
Next review due by:	December 2025	

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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure our school fully implements Isle of Man legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our school will:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Communicate with, and involve, pupils with SEND and their parents or carers in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and values

At our school we will provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.

We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied.

3. Legislation and guidance

- Education Act 2001
- DESC Inclusive Education Policy 2024
- The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations 2004
- Education (Information and Reports for parents) Regulations 2004
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009
- The Equality Act 2017
- Safeguarding Act 2018
- Education (Amendment) Bill (Consultation Document 2024)

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our school we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them. Section 18 of the Education Act 2001

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

At Bunscoill Rhumsaa, we always look to the future and would like to note that the Department is proposing to broaden the understanding of the phrase “greater difficulty in learning”, to include causes beyond difficulties with cognition. This will include a shift from ‘Special Educational Needs’ to ‘Additional Educational Needs’, to allow support to be provided for mental health needs, physical health needs or due to social circumstances.

5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This is notably supported through the Visual Impairment Support Service, the Children’s Therapy Team and Hearing Support Service.

The Education Advice and Support Division Offer to Schools 2022/2023 contains a full directory of services available.

5.3 The 5 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 5 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Social Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia• Moderate learning difficulties• Severe learning difficulties <p>Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment</p>
Psychological Wellbeing (Social, Emotional and Mental Health - SEMH)	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder• Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>

AREA OF NEED	
Speech and Language	<p>Speech and Language Difficulties refer to challenges that children may face in understanding, processing, and using spoken language. These difficulties can affect a child's ability to communicate effectively, express their thoughts, interact with others, and access the curriculum. They may vary in severity and can impact different aspects of communication, including:</p> <p>Speech Difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems with articulation, pronunciation, or producing speech sounds clearly, making it difficult for others to understand the child. • Issues with fluency, such as stuttering or hesitations. • Difficulties with voice quality, such as pitch, volume or tone. <p>Language Difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptive Language Difficulties: Challenges in understanding spoken language, instructions, questions or stories. • Expressive Language Difficulties: Struggles with using words, forming sentences or expressing ideas clearly and appropriately. • Difficulty with vocabulary, grammar or sentence structure.
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO

The SENCO at our school is Mrs. Sarah Hitchen.

They will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the headteacher and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially DESC and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the headteacher and school leadership team to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2017 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with DESC in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy

- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.2 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for supporting the school in making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with DESC in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND

6.3 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and school governors to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2017 regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by DESC to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise DESC when a pupil is recorded as Complex Needs (Mainstream)

- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with DESC in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated where appropriate to meet pupil needs
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy
- Communicating with parents to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

6.6 Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress

The school will consider the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

6.7 The pupil

Pupils will, if appropriate, be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be considered in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. Our approach to SEND support

7.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

7.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We consider any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

7.3 The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The pupil's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be considered. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. Plan

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our management information system, Arbor, and will be made accessible to staff in a 'pupil passport'.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

4. Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support considering the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

7.4 Levels of support

School-based SEN provision

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

Provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

7.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

8. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteacher and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

9. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary, the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and Language Therapists (SaLT)
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational and Child Psychologists (ECPs)
- Occupational Therapists (OT), or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or pediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Education Welfare Officers (EWO)
- Social services

10. Admission and accessibility arrangements

10.1 Admission arrangements

a. Inclusivity and Equal Access:

- The school is committed to ensuring that children with SEN have the same rights to admission as all other children, in line with the principles of inclusivity and equal opportunity.
- No child will be refused admission solely based on their SEN or disability, and the school will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs.

b. Early Identification and Communication:

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to share any information about their child's SEN at the earliest opportunity when applying for admission.
- This early disclosure helps the school to understand the child's needs, plan appropriate support and ensure a smooth transition.

c. Collaboration with Parents and Guardians:

- The school recognises the importance of working closely with parents/guardians to understand their child's strengths, challenges and any existing support strategies.

- Parents/guardians will be invited to meet with the school's SEN Coordinator (SENCO) to discuss their child's needs, prior assessments and any additional support that may be required.

d. Gathering Relevant Information:

- The school may request relevant reports or information from parents, previous educational settings, health professionals, or external agencies (e.g., educational psychologists, speech and language therapists) to gain a full understanding of the child's needs.
- This information helps to identify the resources, support, and adjustments that will be needed to help the child thrive in the school environment.

e. Assessing and Planning Support:

- Based on the information provided, the school will conduct an initial assessment to determine the child's individual needs and the level of support required.
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) or SEN Support Plan will be created in collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, and other relevant professionals. This plan will outline the specific strategies, interventions, and resources to be put in place to support the child's learning and development.

f. Transition and Induction Process:

- The school will develop a personalised transition plan to help the child settle into their new learning environment. This may include pre-admission visits, phased integration or opportunities to meet staff members who will be supporting the child.
- Additional support, such as a buddy system or designated teaching assistant, may be arranged to help the child feel more comfortable and confident during the transition period.

If a child has a severe learning difficulty (identified at Complex Learning Needs within the Department's procedures) to such an extent as needing education mainly in a special provision centre and the school serving the catchment area in which the child lives does not have a special provision centre facility, the Department's policy is that the child should attend the primary school with a special provision facility which is located geographically closest to the parents' place of permanent residence. This is in line with [Policy and Guidance on Admission to Primary Schools](#).

10.2 Accessibility arrangements

a. Physical Accessibility:

- **Buildings and Facilities:** Ensure that the school's physical environment is accessible to all pupils, including those with mobility challenges. This includes ramps, lifts, accessible toilets, wide doorways, and handrails where necessary.
- **Classroom Layout:** Adapt the classroom layout to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids, ensuring clear pathways for easy movement.

- **Seating Arrangements:** Provide flexible seating options, including chairs with armrests, adjustable tables, or standing desks, to cater to individual needs.
- **Signage:** Use clear, large print, and tactile signage (including braille where appropriate) to help children with visual impairments navigate the school environment.

b. Curriculum Accessibility:

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Adapt teaching methods, materials, and resources to suit different learning styles and abilities, ensuring that all pupils can access the curriculum.
- **Assistive Technology:** Provide access to assistive technology, such as speech-to-text software, screen readers, hearing aids, and communication devices, to support children with SEND.
- **Adapted Learning Materials:** Offer large-print books, audio materials, braille resources, or simplified texts to ensure that pupils with visual, hearing, or cognitive impairments can access learning materials.
- **Use of Visual Aids:** Utilise visual aids, diagrams, and interactive resources to support understanding, especially for pupils with communication difficulties, autism spectrum disorders, or learning disabilities.

c. Communication Accessibility:

- **Alternative Communication Methods:** Provide communication aids, such as sign language, Makaton, communication boards, or picture exchange systems (PECS), for children with speech, language, or communication needs.
- **Information in Accessible Formats:** Ensure that all information sent to parents and pupils is available in accessible formats, such as large print, audio, braille, or translated materials, as needed.
- **Staff Training:** Train staff to use alternative communication methods and assistive technology, ensuring they can effectively support pupils with diverse communication needs.

d. Sensory Accessibility:

- **Sensory-Friendly Environments:** Create sensory-friendly spaces, such as calm or quiet areas, where children with sensory processing difficulties can retreat when overwhelmed.
- **Access to Sensory Resources:** Provide sensory aids, such as fidget toys, noise-cancelling headphones, or weighted blankets, to help children regulate sensory input and maintain focus.

e. Emotional and Social Accessibility:

- **Peer Support Systems:** Implement buddy or peer mentoring systems to help children with SEND integrate socially and feel included in school activities.
- **Support for Emotional Well-being:** Provide access to pastoral support, counselling, or mentoring services to help children with SEND cope with emotional challenges and build self-esteem.

- **Inclusive Extracurricular Activities:** Ensure that extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, and school trips, are accessible and inclusive, making any necessary adjustments to allow full participation.

f. Accessibility in Assessment and Testing:

- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Make reasonable adjustments to assessments, such as providing additional time, rest breaks, or alternative formats (e.g., oral exams or large print papers), to ensure that children with SEND can demonstrate their abilities.
- **Use of Assistive Devices:** Allow the use of assistive technology, scribes, or readers during assessments for children who need them.

g. Ongoing Monitoring and Review:

- **Accessibility Plans:** Develop and maintain a school Accessibility Plan that outlines the measures taken to improve accessibility for pupils with SEND and review it regularly to ensure it meets current needs.
- **Feedback and Evaluation:** Seek feedback from pupils, parents, and staff to identify barriers to accessibility and implement necessary improvements.

h. Training and Awareness:

- **Staff Training:** Provide regular training for all staff members on SEND awareness, inclusive practices, and the use of assistive technology to ensure they can support the diverse needs of pupils effectively.
- **Raising Awareness:** Promote awareness and understanding of SEND among the school community, including pupils and parents, to foster an inclusive and supportive environment.

These accessibility arrangements are designed to create a school environment where all children, regardless of their needs or abilities, have equal opportunities to access education, participate in school life, and achieve their full potential.

11. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher. If necessary, a follow-up with a meeting can be scheduled with the SENCO or Head of School. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the SENCO in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy - [Rhumsaa Policies](#)

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint to DESC. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

[DESC Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

12. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

12.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

12.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the SENCO every year. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be shared with and reviewed by the school governors.

13. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEN information report
- DESC AEN offer
- Policy and Guidance on Admission to Primary Schools (Rev. 2019)
- [Accessibility Strategy 2024-2027](#)
- Rhumsaa Behaviour Strategy
- [Equality Act 2017](#)
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy