

Smallbrook School

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Policy status	School policy
Approved by	
Headteacher	Lyndsay Grove-Guy
SENCo	Joanne Dawson
Date approved	
Review date	
Review frequency	Annual

This policy should be read alongside the school's Equality Statement, Accessibility Plan, Admissions Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Behaviour Policy.

1. Policy Statement

Smallbrook School is committed to identifying, understanding and meeting the needs of all pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We aim to provide a safe, inclusive and ambitious learning environment in which every pupil is supported to achieve their best possible outcomes academically, socially, emotionally, and in preparation for adult life.

As a specialist school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, autism and complex needs, all pupils at Smallbrook School are recorded on the SEND register and all hold an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Many pupils have experienced disruption in their education before joining the school and may also have communication, sensory, learning or therapeutic needs. Our curriculum, support systems, and pastoral structures are designed to respond to these needs in a consistent, personalised and holistic way.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Equality Statement, Accessibility Plan, Admissions Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Behaviour Policy.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the Education Act 1996, which states that a child or young person has Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A learning difficulty means that the child or young person either has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision means educational provision that is additional to, or different from; the provision generally made for children and young people of the same age.

This policy also reflects the principles and requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

3. School Context

Smallbrook School is an independent special school for pupils aged 7 to 18. The school provides specialist day education for pupils with SEMH needs, autism, complex learning needs, and the impact of early childhood trauma. The school also supports pupils who may have communication difficulties, sensory needs, disrupted educational histories, social care involvement, or additional vulnerabilities.

At Smallbrook School, we value the abilities and achievements of every pupil. We believe that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum that is accessible, meaningful, and adapted to meet individual needs. We are committed to creating an environment in which pupils feel safe, included and respected, and where barriers to learning are identified and addressed.

The school recognises that inclusion is not about treating every pupil in exactly the same way. It is about responding to pupils as individuals and making appropriate adjustments so that each child can learn, participate, and succeed. We are committed to removing prejudice and discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, and helping all pupils develop a sense of belonging within the school community.

4. Aims of SEND Provision

The aims of SEND provision at Smallbrook School are to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum which is adapted appropriately to meet their needs. We seek to ensure that teaching is responsive to pupils' strengths, needs and starting points, while remaining aspirational and suitably challenging.

We aim for all staff to have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils they work with and to use this understanding to plan effectively, build positive relationships, and support progress. We want pupils with SEND to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of school life, including classroom learning, wider enrichment, social development, and preparation for the future.

We are committed to keeping parents and carers fully informed about their child's progress, attainment and provision, and to involving pupils and families, wherever practicable, in decisions about support and next steps. We also aim to prepare pupils for life beyond Smallbrook School by developing knowledge, resilience, independence, communication, employability and cultural understanding, so that they are equipped to succeed in British society and in adult life.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with SEND is a whole-school responsibility.

The Governing Body and Proprietor are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its duties in relation to SEND and that appropriate policies, systems and resources are in place. They monitor the effectiveness of provision through school leadership and review processes.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including SEND provision. The Headteacher works closely with the SENCo, Senior Leadership Team, teachers, therapists and other professionals to ensure that provision is effective, well-coordinated and aligned with pupils' EHCPs and wider needs.

The SENCo and Designated Teacher ensure that the school's SEND policy operates within the guidance of the SEND Code of Practice (2015). The SENCo is supported by a wider educational and therapeutic team, including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, psychotherapists, and a regional clinical team.

The SENCo is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy, maintaining the SEND register, ensuring that records are accurate and up to date, coordinating provision, supporting assessment processes, liaising with teaching and support staff, working closely with parents and carers, contributing to safeguarding liaison where appropriate, and working with outside agencies to secure advice and support for pupils. The SENCo also contributes to staff training and to the ongoing development of SEND practice across the school.

All teachers are responsible for identifying needs, planning effectively, adapting teaching, and monitoring progress. Support staff play a key role in delivering interventions, supporting emotional regulation, encouraging independence, and helping pupils access learning throughout the school day. All education staff are involved in the development and implementation of school policy and are expected to understand the school's procedures for making, monitoring and reviewing SEND provision.

6. Identification and Assessment of Need

All pupils who attend Smallbrook School have identified SEND and hold an EHCP. Their needs are assessed before admission, on entry and on an ongoing basis in line with the school's assessment policy.

Pupils' needs may fall within one or more of the four broad areas identified in the SEND Code of Practice: Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health, and Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

The school uses a wide range of information to identify need and plan provisions. This includes information from local authorities, previous schools, parents and carers, educational psychologist advice, teacher observations, screening and diagnostic tests, National Curriculum results where appropriate, and reports from therapists and other professionals.

As part of the admissions and induction process, a range of educational, social, medical and safeguarding information is shared with school staff. On admission, pupils complete a baseline assessment once they have settled into the school routine and developed trusting relationships with staff. This helps establish current attainment, cognitive profile, and key areas of need. Where required, further targeted assessment is completed with specialist or therapeutic input.

Assessment at Smallbrook School is continuous. Teachers, the SENCo and internal professionals take part in an ongoing cycle of assessment, planning and review which identifies both strengths and areas for development. A rigorous tracking system is in place to identify pupils who are not making expected progress, so that provision can be reviewed promptly.

7. The Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Although all pupils at Smallbrook School have an EHCP, the school continues to use the graduated approach set out in the SEND Code of Practice to ensure that provision remains responsive and effective.

During the Assess stage, staff gather and review information about a pupil's needs, strengths, barriers to learning, and current attainment. This may include assessment data, baseline information, observations, therapeutic input and the views of parents, carers, and the pupil.

During the Plan stage, staff identify the outcomes being worked towards and agree with the provision, strategies and interventions required. These are reflected in the pupil's EHCP, IEP, subject targets and, where appropriate, behaviour or support plans.

During the Do stage, teachers remain responsible for the pupil's progress, even where interventions are delivered by support staff or therapists. Teaching is adapted, support is implemented, and staff monitor the pupil's response to the provision.

During the Review stage, progress is evaluated through assessment, staff discussion, pupil progress reviews and feedback from parents, carers and professionals. Provision is then adjusted where necessary so that support remains closely matched to need.

This graduated approach ensures that support is not static, and that pupils continue to receive appropriate and personalised provision.

8. Admissions

Smallbrook School is established to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEMH needs, autism, complex needs, and the impact of early childhood trauma. The school believes that admissions arrangements should not discriminate against pupils with SEND and has due regard to the practice advocated in the SEND Code of Practice.

All places are agreed through local authority processes, and pupils attend the school because their EHCP identifies the setting suitable to meet needs. Parents and carers may express a preference for Smallbrook School through consultation with local authority for SEND teams and placing officers. Prospective parents are able to visit the school and meet the Headteacher as part of the admissions process.

The school works closely with local authorities, families and professional teams during transition into the school. Transition packages are planned according to individual needs and may include initial visits, phased attendance, and enhanced information sharing to support a successful start.

9. Curriculum Access and Quality of Education

All pupils at Smallbrook School have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum. We use the term curriculum in its widest sense to include all planned learning experiences, whether these take place formally in lessons or informally throughout the school day. The curriculum is designed to promote academic progress, personal growth, emotional development, and preparation for adulthood.

Although independent school regulations do not require full National Curriculum coverage, Smallbrook School is committed, wherever possible, to covering the National Curriculum and its programmes of study. This is balanced with the specific outcomes and priorities identified in pupils' EHCPs, which may place greater emphasis on particular subjects, communication, behaviour, independence, or life skills.

The overall aim of the curriculum is to enable pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens. We support this through breadth and balance, appropriate challenge, continuity and progression, and strong links between academic learning and personal development.

Teachers, support staff and instructors work together to structure learning experiences that have the most positive effect on attainment, progress, and personal development. Learning objectives are made clear, and activities are adapted as necessary. Alternative ways of recording or responding are used when appropriate. Peer working and collaborative learning are encouraged, and staff work to avoid isolation or unnecessary dependence.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 begin to make choices through a vocational programme, and this continues into Key Stages 4 and 5 to allow greater personalisation of timetables and pathways. Vocational learning, life skills, and preparation for work are important parts of the curriculum offer.

10. Access to the Curriculum and SEND Provision

Provision at Smallbrook School includes setting suitable learning targets, responding to diverse learning needs, and overcoming barriers to learning. Support is tailored to the individual and may include adapted tasks, differentiated teaching, support with emotional regulation, small-group or one-to-one teaching, use of teaching assistants, access to specialist resources, therapy input and positive behaviour strategies.

Pupil profiles, EHCPs, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), behaviour plans, positive support plans and individual risk assessments are used to inform provision. Tasks are adapted according to need, and staff use trauma-informed approaches to support pupils' engagement and regulation. The school also promotes access to the social life of the school and ensures that support extends beyond academic learning.

Pupils with sensory or mobility needs or specific learning difficulties may access the curriculum through specialist resources, including ICT where appropriate. The school aims to ensure that curriculum activities and wider school opportunities are barrier-free and do not exclude any pupils.

Where a pupil is not making adequate progress despite differentiated classroom support, targeted interventions may be introduced. These may address literacy, numeracy, communication, emotional development, behaviour, sensory needs, or physical access. Some interventions may take place in groups where pupils share similar needs, while individual targets remain personalised. Responsibility for planning remains with the class teacher in consultation with the SENCo.

11. Staff Training and Professional Development

The school has an ongoing programme of training and professional development to ensure that staff are well equipped to meet pupils' needs. Staff receive training through induction, INSET, twilight sessions, in-house specialist delivery, and external providers.

Training is informed by the needs of the pupils in school and may include therapeutic parenting, trauma-informed practice, autism, sensory needs, safeguarding, ADHD, attachment difficulties, and other relevant areas. The SENCo regularly attends SEND-focused courses and also participates in wider school training to remain aware of current practice and developments across the curriculum.

Support staff are encouraged to extend their professional development, and training opportunities are identified where appropriate. The school also holds daily staff debrief meetings to discuss pupil needs, strategies and best practice. Professionals such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and educational psychologists may attend and contribute to this discussion. All staff receive regular refresher training.

12. Liaison and Communication Within School

Clear communication between staff is essential to effective SEND provision. The SENCo shares relevant information with the education team, Senior Leadership Team, subject leaders, subject teachers, and the designated safeguarding lead or member of staff responsible for child protection, as appropriate.

This ensures that all staff working with a pupil understand their needs, their targets, any identified risks and the provision required to support them effectively.

13. Partnership with Parents and Carers

Smallbrook School believes that partnership with parents and carers is central to successful SEND provision. We seek to promote a culture of cooperation between home, school, local authorities, and other agencies so that pupils receive consistent and effective support.

Parents and carers are encouraged to play an active and valued role in their child's education. The school aims to ensure that they understand their child's entitlement within the SEND framework, have

opportunities to express their views, and can access information, advice and support throughout assessment, planning and review.

Communication with parents and carers takes place through daily or weekly email and phone contact, face-to-face meetings, educational progress meetings, annual reviews, termly reports and school updates. Parents and carers are invited to review progress towards targets and to contribute to planning and review processes. Where appropriate, practical suggestions and resources are shared to help support learning at home.

The school welcomes contact from parents and carers and encourages them to raise concerns or questions through the school office or their child's tutor teacher in the first instance.

14. Pupil Participation

Pupils are encouraged, wherever practicable, to be involved in decisions affecting their education and future provisions. Staff take account of the wishes and views of the young person at an appropriate level and support them to understand their targets, progress, and next steps.

Pupil voice is also promoted through the School Council and through regular opportunities to share concerns, successes and ideas with trusted staff. This helps pupils develop self-awareness, independence, and a stronger sense of ownership over their learning and development.

15. Monitoring Progress and Reviewing Support

The school uses ongoing teacher assessment to monitor both academic achievement and personal development. This information is used to tailor learning, review support, and identify the next steps.

All pupils have an EHCP, and the objectives within the plan are broken down into smaller, measurable targets through IEPs and subject-based targets. These are reviewed regularly, usually termly, and all staff teaching the pupil contribute to supporting progress towards them. Subject targets may be linked to National Curriculum progress, vocational pathways or GCSE outcomes, depending on the learner's stage and programme.

Progress is monitored through classroom observation, evidence of work, behaviour records, assessment data, discussion with pupils, discussion with parents and carers, and discussion with outside agencies. Standardised assessments may also be used where appropriate. The school tracks progress carefully and introduce or adapts to intervention when progress is not sufficient.

Evidence of the effectiveness of SEND provision may include improved progress towards curriculum objectives, better emotional regulation, improved behaviour, stronger participation in school life, increased independence and successful progress towards EHCP outcomes.

16. Annual Review of EHCPs

All EHCPs are reviewed at least annually. The annual review focuses on what the pupil has achieved, any difficulties that remain, and the provision required for the next stage.

The review aims to assess progress towards the objectives in the EHCP, review special educational provision, provide an overview of current attainment and progress across the curriculum, consider whether the EHCP remains appropriate and set new targets for the coming year.

The Headteacher and/or SENCo initiates the annual review process upon receipt of the local authority schedule. Duties may be delegated to a qualified teacher where appropriate. In preparation for the review, the SENCo gathers written advice from parents and carers, individuals specified by the authority, and any other person considered appropriate. Advice received is circulated at least two weeks before the meeting, allowing time for comments from all invited parties, including those unable to attend.

Annual review meetings are chaired by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Following the meeting, the Headteacher or SENCo submits a report to the local authority before the end of the term or within 10 school days of the meeting earlier. The report summarises the key issues discussed, the recommendations made, and the educational targets and actions agreed.

17. Safeguarding and SEND

Smallbrook School recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns because they may experience barriers to communication, have difficulties understanding risk, or be more dependent on adults for support.

Safeguarding is a priority across all aspects of school life. The SENCo works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and wider safeguarding team to ensure that any concerns relating to pupils with SEND are identified promptly and responded appropriately. Relevant information is shared with staff on a need-to-know basis so that pupils' needs and vulnerabilities are understood.

Through the curriculum, pastoral support, and therapeutic work, pupils are taught about personal safety, healthy relationships, online safety, boundaries, and how to ask for help. All staff follow the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Policy and receive regular safeguarding training.

18. Wider Support for Wellbeing

Smallbrook School is committed to supporting the overall wellbeing of each pupil. Education and therapy work together holistically to meet individual needs and promote personal development.

The school works regularly with a range of external agencies, including speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy, educational psychology, CAMHS, social care and health services. These professionals support assessment, intervention, strategy development, and staff training.

The Senior Leadership Team, including the Headteacher, SENCo and Head of Safeguarding and Pastoral Care, meet regularly to discuss pastoral issues across the school, with representation from the therapy team. Personal and social development sits at the heart of the therapeutic community. Through PSHE, Citizenship, life skills education and daily pastoral support, pupils are helped to establish positive relationships, understand British values, make safe choices and develop the knowledge and skills needed for healthy, independent lives.

19. Specialist Services and Expertise

All educational staff at Smallbrook School undertake specialist training and have access to a full programme of professional development. In addition to teachers, the school employs instructors, support staff, pastoral workers, family support workers, therapists and administrative and facilities staff.

The school also works with a wider network of services including social workers, CAMHS professionals, children's social work, the education welfare service, and educational psychologists. This broad professional network supports the school in meeting complex and overlapping needs effectively.

20. Inclusion in Enrichment, Trips and Outdoor Learning

Smallbrook School is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND are included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips, off-site education, work placements and outdoor learning.

Off-site visits are designed to enhance curricular and recreational opportunities while also developing independence, communication, self-management, and self-esteem. All visits and activities are risk assessed and planned to take account of individual needs.

The school believes strongly in the value of learning outside the classroom. Outdoor learning, including Forest School approaches where appropriate, offers pupils opportunities to build confidence, resilience, teamwork, independence and respect for the environment. These experiences form an important part of the whole-school curriculum and support both personal development and learning.

21. Accessibility

Smallbrook School is a single-site school. The main building is arranged over two levels, with stairs from the ground floor to the first floor. Entry to the building is through the main lobby, and there is a separate entrance for pupil access to the Key Stage 2 learning area; these are suitable for wheelchair access. A number of classrooms and learning areas on the ground floor can be modified for wheelchair access, and outdoor learning and recreational areas are also accessible.

The school has clearly identified toilets for pupils and adults, appropriate lighting and safety arrangements such as marked steps. Reserved parking is available for pre-booked and disabled visitors. The school incorporates accessibility improvements into its repairs and maintenance programme and provides equipment recommended by professionals for pupils with identified impairments or access needs.

Further information is set out in the school's Accessibility Plan.

22. Resources and Learning Environment

The school recognises that a purposeful, structured and well-resourced learning environment is essential to promoting high standards, good working practices and positive behaviour. Classrooms and workshops are expected to be orderly, safe, and accessible. Displays, stimulus materials and resources are used to raise expectations and support learning while also taking into account young people's sensory needs.

The school believes that pupils are entitled to safe and effective use of ICT throughout all key stages. ICT is taught directly and used across subjects, with a strong emphasis on safe internet use. ICT resources are

planned and deployed to meet the needs of pupils within the context of a therapeutic community, and staff are supported to develop their own expertise through ongoing training.

Where additional resources are required to support a pupil's access to learning, advice is sought from therapists, consultants, and educational psychologists.

23. Deciding the Type and Amount of Support

The level and type of support a pupil receives is informed by their EHCP and agreed through discussion between the school and the local authority. The school plans provision to meet the objectives set out in each pupil's EHCP and reviews support regularly in light of progress.

Where differentiated classroom provision is not enough, or where the nature of need indicates that additional help is required, targeted interventions may be introduced. These decisions are informed by baseline assessment, ongoing monitoring, and professional judgement. Additional support may be needed to develop literacy or numeracy, improve communication, support emotional or behavioural development, or address sensory or physical needs.

Support may be delivered individually or in groups, depending on the need. Group provision is used where needs are similar, but all pupils retain individual targets. IEPs are reviewed termly, and more frequently where required. The class tutor leads the review process in consultation with the SENCo, and parents and carers are informed and involved throughout.

24. Transition and Preparation for Adulthood

The school works closely with local authorities, families and other professionals to ensure that pupils are well supported when joining Smallbrook School and when moving on to college, training, employment or the next stage of education.

Transition into the school is carefully planned and may include an initial visit, phased attendance, and bespoke arrangements tailored to the individual pupil. Transition planning for the future is a key feature of annual reviews.

Pupils meet with an independent careers adviser from Year 9 to discuss ideas about college, training and employment. Careers education and guidance are delivered through dedicated lessons, PSHE, next steps/life skills and wider curriculum opportunities. Vocational pathways include areas such as construction, mechanics, hair and beauty, music, land-based studies, catering skills, and Duke of Edinburgh. Enterprise and charitable activities also support employability and independence.

Where appropriate, pupils can access work experience and further education placements. The school works closely with local colleges and other providers to ensure that post-16 transition is as smooth as possible. The aim is for all pupils to leave Smallbrook School with a suitable destination matched to their abilities, needs and aspirations.

25. SEND Information Report and Local Offer

Smallbrook School contributes to the local authority's SEND Local Offer by providing clear information about the provision available for pupils with SEND and the ways in which needs are identified, assessed, supported and reviewed.

As a specialist school, all pupils attending Smallbrook School have an EHCP and are placed because the setting has been identified as appropriate to meet their needs. The school works closely with parents, carers, local authorities and external agencies to ensure that support across education, health and care is coordinated effectively.

Information about the school's SEND provision is available through the school's SEND Information Report, this policy and related school documents. Parents and carers may contact the school office for further guidance or clarification about the support available.

26. Monitoring and Evaluating the SEND Policy

The success of this policy will be reflected in the extent to which pupils' needs are identified early, planned for effectively and supported through appropriate provision. Effective implementation will be seen in the quality of teaching, the regular review of EHCP targets, the use of additional intervention where necessary, strong partnership with parents and carers, and the use of multi-disciplinary support where appropriate.

The policy is evaluated through monitoring progress in learning, behaviour and personal development, alongside feedback from staff, pupils, parents, and external professionals. Evidence may include assessment information, review documentation, staff observations, pupil work, behaviour records and successful outcomes from annual reviews and local authority liaison.

27. Complaints

Parents and carers who have concerns about SEND provision are encouraged to contact their child's tutor teacher in the first instance. They may also request a meeting with the SENCo or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Formal complaints should be made in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

28. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, or school practice.

Approval and Signatures

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body / Proprietor of Smallbrook School.

Headteacher	_____ Date: _____
Chair of Governors / Proprietor	_____ Date: _____
SENCo	_____ Date: _____
Next review due	_____