



# CONIFERS HOUSE SCHOOL

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## Special Educational Needs and Disability and Inclusion Policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	Julie Smith	<b>Date:</b> October 2025
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	October 2025	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	October 2026	

## **1.0 Introduction**

Conifers House School is committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our students whatever their needs or abilities. Not all students with disabilities have special educational needs and not all students with SEND meet the definition of disability but this policy covers all of these students.

We believe that all children should be equally valued in school. We will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe.

We are committed to inclusion. Part of the school's strategic planning for improvement is to develop cultures, policies and practices that include all learners. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties.

This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners:

- girls and boys, men and women
- minority ethnic and faith groups, Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- learners who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- learners who are disabled
- those who are looked after by the local authority.
- others such as those who are sick; those who are young carers; those who are in families under stress; pregnant school girls and teenage mothers
- any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

The named strategic lead for SEND is the Headteacher, who is responsible for ensuring appropriate provision for children and young people with Additional and Complex Needs.

## **2.0 Definition of SEND**

Students 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. This may be ongoing or for a limited time. We regard 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
- c) A child under compulsory age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014)

We have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when carrying out our duties towards all students with SEND and ensure that parents/carers are informed that SEND provision is being made for their child.

Many students with sensory and/or physical disabilities may require adaptations, made as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

## **2.1 Areas of Special Educational Need**

Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014 students identified as having a special educational need (SEN) are considered within one or more of the following categories of need:

### ***Cognition and Learning;***

Young people 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:

- Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)
- Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)
- Severe learning difficulties (SLD)
- Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)

## ***Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties***

Young people 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.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties include:

- ADD, ADHD & Attachment Disorder

### ***Communication and Interaction needs***

Young people 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)
- Autism (including Asperger Syndrome)

### ***Sensory and/or Physical needs***

Some young people require special educational provision because they have a sensory and/or physical disability. 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 - sometimes referred to as Deafblind)
- Physical disability (PD).

### **3.0 Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHCP)**

It is anticipated that students attending Conifers House School will come with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The evidence gathered through the process of review helps to support 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. The school holds annual review meetings on the behalf of LA and completes the appropriate paperwork for this process.

### **3.1 Identification and Assessment of special educational needs**

All students have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP will set targets for the student and will detail:

- the short-term targets set for or by the student
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- success and/or exit criteria

The ILP will be reviewed at least once a term and the outcomes will be recorded. Students will participate fully in the review process. Parents / carers and professionals will also be invited to participate in the target-setting and review process.

The school will liaise with Local Authorities and other agencies to arrange Transition Plans for students and will ensure that these Transition Plans are reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review process. When students move to another school their records will be transferred to the next school within 15 days of the student ceasing to be registered, as required under the Education (Student Information) Regulations 2000

### **4.0 Supporting Students and Families**

We value and accept 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.

Conifers House School supports parents / carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported 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

Conifers House School Complaint Policy and Procedures are available to parents/carers. Each student is allocated a personal mentor. This member of staff will work closely with parents/carers at all stages in his/her education and should be the first port of call in case of any difficulty.

### **5.0 Student Voice**

Students are given opportunities to express their views throughout the assessment and planning process and through Student Council. They will be invited to review meetings and will have an opportunity to give their opinion either directly or via their personal mentor.

### **6.0 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Special Educational Needs**

- The Headteacher, and other SLT members provide regular CPD to school staff in specific aspects of meeting the needs of students with SEND
- Teaching assistants are engaged in an ongoing training to develop their role in the classroom
- Other professionals, 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
- Staff are encouraged to share good practice through staff meetings and curriculum planning.

### **7.0 Access to the Environment (see Conifers House School Accessibility Plan)**

Conifers House School is a single site school. Entrance to the building is through the main lobby, which is level and therefore suitable for wheelchair access. Classrooms are accessed by corridors from which there is also wheelchair access.

We have made sure that there are good lighting and safety arrangements for all visually impaired pupils. Our classrooms provide good acoustic conditions so that the effects of hearing difficulties are minimised (part-carpeting, curtains, quiet areas).

Children requiring equipment due to impairment will be assessed in order to gain the support that they require.

Details of our plans and targets on improving environmental access are contained in the Accessibility Plan.

## **7.1 Arrangements for providing access to learning and the curriculum (see also Conifers House School Accessibility Plan)**

The school will ensure that all children have access to a balanced and broadly based curriculum, and that the National Curriculum's programmes of study are flexible enough to meet every child's needs. (No child will be excluded from any learning activity due to their impairment or learning difficulty, unless it is clearly of benefit to that individual and leads towards inclusion.)

Learning opportunities will be absorbing, rewarding and effectively differentiated and the teaching styles will be diverse.

Staff will work in a way to avoid the isolation of the children they are supporting, and will encourage peer tutoring and collaborative learning.

Schemes of work and policies for each area of the curriculum are in place and are differentiated to include appropriate learning outcomes for all pupils.

Differentiation takes a variety of forms within teacher planning. Learning intentions are always made explicit and then activities may be adapted, or planned separately as appropriate. Alternative methods of responding or recording may also be planned for where this is appropriate.

Children with sensory or mobility impairments or a specific learning difficulty will access the curriculum through specialist resources such as ICT where this is appropriate.

The school will ensure that the hidden curriculum and extra curricular activities are barrier free and do not exclude any pupils.

Details of our plans for increasing access to the curriculum with targets are contained in our Access Plan.

## **7.2 Access to Information**

All children requiring information in formats other than print have this provided (e.g. we have a child who uses Braille).

We adapt printed materials so that children with literacy difficulties can access them, or ensure access by pairing children/peer support/extra adult support.

We provide alternatives to paper and pencil recording where appropriate, or provide access through peer/extra adult scribing.

VGPS uses a range of assessment procedures within lessons (such as taping, role-play and drama, video, drawing) to ensure children with additional needs are able to demonstrate their achievement appropriately.

Details of our plan to improve access to information, with targets, are contained in the school's Access

Plan.

## **8.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **8.1 The Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors follows the guidelines as laid down in the SEND Code of Practice (2014) 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 school alongside students who do not have SEND
- designate a teacher to be responsible for coordinating SEND provision
- inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child

### **8.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school’s work, including provision for children with special educational needs. The Headteacher keeps the Governing

The Headteacher determines the strategic development of the SEND policy and SEND provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of students.

The Headteacher takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordinates the provision for individual children, working closely with staff, parents/carers and external agencies. She /he provide 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, the SENDCo develops effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching.

The principle responsibilities of the Headteacher include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND students and reporting on progress
- Monitoring relevant SEND CPD for all staff
- Overseeing the SEND records of all children and ensuring that they are up to date
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with special educational needs
- Contributing to the in-school training of staff

- Being a point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaising with schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies
- Liaising with other providers to ensure a student and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for students with SEND
- Leading on the development of high quality SEND provision as an integral part of the school improvement plan
- Working with the Headteacher and the Board of Directors to ensure that Conifers House School meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

### **8.3 All Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff:**

- All staff are aware of the Conifers House School SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for students with special educational needs.
- 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.
- 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 liaise with the teacher on planning, on student response and on progress in order to contribute effectively to the graduated response.

### **9.0 Meeting Medical Needs (see Medical Policy)**

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

Conifers House School 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 school complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

### **10.0 SEND Information Report**

Conifers House School ensures that there is information on the school website about SEND.

The information published is updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year are updated as soon as possible.

The Admissions policy has due regard for the guidance in the Codes of Practice which accompany the SEN and Equality Act 2010.

Parents or carers seeking the admission of a student with mobility difficulties are advised to approach the school.