

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

September 2026

Tenbury C E Primary Academy
2026/27 Academic Year

Policy lead	SENDCO – Mrs Rachel Gittens
SEND Governor	Annette Bryant
Approved by	Governing Body / Trust – to be completed
Date updated	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Applies to	Tenbury C E Primary Academy



1. Our vision

Tenbury C E Primary Academy is a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing family with Christian Values at our core. We are dedicated to promoting friendship, compassion and respect so that everyone can flourish.

We aim, through a whole-school approach, to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation. We are committed to inclusion, equitable access to a broad and balanced curriculum and high expectations for every pupil. We recognise that inclusion is the responsibility of the whole school and that high-quality inclusive and adaptive teaching is the starting point for meeting the needs of all pupils.

Our approach is needs-led rather than diagnosis-led. We seek to identify emerging needs early, work in partnership with pupils and families, make reasonable adjustments and provide increasingly personalised support where this is required.

2. Purpose and aims

This policy sets out how the academy identifies, assesses and makes provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and how leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, pupils, parents/carers and external professionals contribute to inclusive practice.

- Ensure that pupils with SEND have access to a broad, balanced, ambitious and inclusive curriculum.
- Identify needs and barriers as early and accurately as possible, recognising that SEND is not synonymous with low attainment.
- Provide high-quality inclusive and adaptive teaching for all pupils before, and alongside, additional or specialist provision.
- Use the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review (APDR) when a pupil requires SEN Support.
- Set ambitious, meaningful outcomes and evaluate the impact of provision on progress, participation, independence and wellbeing.
- Involve pupils and parents/carers meaningfully in decisions about support and review.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and anticipate barriers to access and participation.
- Develop the knowledge and confidence of all staff through planned professional development.
- Work collaboratively with education, health, care and other specialist services.
- Use SEND resources strategically and transparently to improve inclusive provision and pupil outcomes.

3. Legislation, statutory guidance and national context

This policy is grounded in the statutory framework currently in force in England. It should be read alongside:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (as amended).
- The Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Statutory guidance relating to supporting pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Current Department for Education guidance relevant to SEND, inclusion, safeguarding, attendance and exclusions/suspensions.

The Government is implementing a longer-term programme of SEND reform. During 2026/27, current statutory duties and processes remain in place. The academy will therefore continue to operate SEN Support, the APDR cycle and existing EHC plan processes while responding appropriately to confirmed national and local developments.

From 2026/27, the national direction includes additional investment in mainstream inclusion through the Inclusive Mainstream Fund and the phased introduction of Experts at Hand. These developments strengthen early intervention, inclusive practice and access to specialist advice; they do not remove or replace the academy's existing statutory duties.

4. Definition of SEND

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. Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age.

A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

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

A pupil must not be identified as having SEND solely because the language or form of language used at home is different from the language in which they are taught.

Low attainment or slower progress does not automatically mean that a pupil has SEND. Equally, a pupil may have SEND while attaining at or above age-related expectations. Identification considers the pupil's pattern of strengths, needs, barriers and response to appropriate teaching and support.

5. The four broad areas of need

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need. These help schools plan provision but do not describe the whole child. Needs can overlap and can change over time.

Broad area	Examples of need
Communication and interaction	Speech, language and communication needs; differences in social communication and interaction, including needs associated with autism.
Cognition and learning	Moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia or developmental coordination difficulties.

Social, emotional and mental health	Difficulties that may affect emotional regulation, relationships, attention, engagement or mental health. Behaviour is considered as communication and a possible indicator of unmet need rather than a category of SEND in itself.
Sensory and/or physical	Vision, hearing, multisensory or physical needs which may require adjustments, equipment, specialist teaching or environmental adaptations.

6. Whole-child and contextual factors

When considering a pupil's needs, the academy considers the whole child and the context in which learning takes place. Factors such as disability, health and welfare, attendance, family circumstances, adverse experiences, English as an additional language, disadvantage and being looked after or previously looked after may affect learning or participation. These factors do not, by themselves, constitute SEND.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the academy follows its safeguarding and child protection procedures. SEND must never be used to explain away a safeguarding concern.

7. Inclusive universal provision and adaptive teaching

High-quality inclusive teaching is the first response to pupils who have, or may have, SEND. Adaptive teaching is a whole-school approach for all pupils and is not an intervention reserved for pupils on the SEND register.

Teachers anticipate likely barriers and adapt teaching while maintaining ambitious curriculum goals. Depending on need, this may include:

- clear explanations, explicit instruction and careful modelling;
- scaffolding that is purposeful and reduced as independence grows;
- adapted task presentation without unnecessary reduction in curriculum ambition;
- pre-teaching and structured opportunities for rehearsal, retrieval and overlearning;
- visual, concrete, practical or multisensory resources;
- adaptations to communication, vocabulary, questioning and processing time;
- flexible grouping and targeted adult support;
- assistive technology or specialist equipment where appropriate;
- adjustments to the physical, sensory or social environment;
- alternative ways for pupils to access learning or demonstrate understanding where these are reasonable and appropriate.

The effectiveness of adaptations is evaluated through assessment and observation rather than assumed. Support should promote participation, independence and learning and should avoid unnecessary dependence on adult support.

8. Our graduated provision model

The academy uses a graduated model rather than the former Wave 1, 2 and 3 terminology.

Level	Purpose	Examples
Universal provision	Inclusive provision available to all pupils.	High-quality adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments, accessible routines/resources, ordinarily available classroom strategies.
Targeted provision	Additional, time-limited or sustained support where universal provision alone is not sufficient.	Small-group or individual teaching, evidence-informed intervention, targeted practice, additional assessment and structured support.
Specialist provision	Individualised support informed by specialist assessment/advice and/or statutory provision.	Specialist teacher/therapist advice, bespoke programmes, specialist equipment, enhanced adult support, EHC plan provision where applicable.

Movement between levels is based on need and impact, not on a fixed ladder or requirement to complete a set number of interventions. A pupil may require different levels of provision in different areas.

9. Early identification of need

Teachers continually assess pupils' learning, development and participation. Concerns may arise through attainment and progress information, observation, pupil voice, parent/carers concerns, developmental information, attendance patterns, screening or standardised assessment, or advice from other professionals.

Where a concern arises, the class teacher will first review the quality and accessibility of teaching, check for barriers and implement appropriate adaptations. The teacher will discuss concerns with the SENDCO where needed and involve the pupil and parent/carers.

The academy will seek to distinguish SEND from other reasons for slower progress or difficulty. Where appropriate, assessment may explore hearing/vision, speech and language, attendance, emotional wellbeing, English language acquisition, curriculum access or other contextual factors.

A diagnosis is not required for a pupil to receive appropriate school-based support. Likewise, a medical diagnosis does not automatically mean that a pupil requires SEN Support; the key question is whether special educational provision is required.

10. SEN Support and the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle

Where, despite appropriate inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision, a pupil requires special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for pupils of the same age, the academy will consider SEN Support.

Assess

The class teacher and SENDCO will develop a clear analysis of the pupil's strengths and needs, drawing on teacher assessment, prior progress, pupil and parent/carer views and, where relevant, advice from external professionals. Assessment is proportionate to need and reviewed when new information becomes available.

Plan

The teacher, SENDCO, pupil and parent/carer will agree the outcomes sought, provision and adjustments to be put in place, who will deliver them, how frequently they will occur, and how impact will be evaluated. Plans should be specific, achievable, ambitious and understandable to the pupil and family.

Do

The class teacher remains responsible for the pupil's learning and progress on a daily basis, including when interventions or specialist support are delivered by another adult. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants and specialists so that additional provision connects to classroom learning and promotes independence.

Review

SEN Support is reviewed at least termly, and sooner where need or risk requires it. Reviews consider progress towards agreed outcomes, the effectiveness of teaching, adjustments and interventions, pupil/parent views, and next steps. Provision is refined through repeated APDR cycles.

Where a pupil has made sustained progress and no longer requires special educational provision that is additional to or different from that normally available, removal from the SEND register may be considered in consultation with the pupil and parents/carers. Appropriate universal provision and monitoring will continue.

11. Recording provision and monitoring impact

Provision for pupils receiving SEN Support is recorded through the academy's agreed SEND recording and tracking systems. Records should show the pupil's identified needs, intended outcomes, provision, review information and impact.

The academy evaluates provision using a range of evidence, including curriculum progress, achievement of individual outcomes, independence, engagement and participation, attendance where relevant, pupil and parent/carer voice, and the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments and interventions.

Interventions are not judged by whether they were delivered alone; leaders consider whether they improved outcomes for the pupil.

12. Education, Health and Care needs assessments and EHC plans

Where a pupil has significant and complex needs and, despite relevant and purposeful action through SEN Support, the academy believes that the pupil may require provision beyond that which can reasonably be provided from the resources normally available, the academy may request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment from the local authority.

Parents/carers and young people also have statutory rights to request an EHC needs assessment. The academy will provide relevant evidence to the local authority, which may include:

- evidence of the pupil's strengths, needs and progress;
- records of APDR cycles and provision already made;
- individual support/provision records and review outcomes;
- attainment and assessment information;
- attendance and relevant health information;
- reports or advice from education, health, social care or other professionals;
- pupil and parent/carer views;
- evidence of reasonable adjustments and the impact of support already provided.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the academy will use its best endeavours to secure the special educational provision specified in the plan and will contribute to statutory annual review arrangements. Existing statutory EHC plan duties remain in force during 2026/27.

13. Working with pupils and parents/carers

The academy recognises parents/carers as key partners and pupils as active participants in decisions about their education. Communication should be accessible, respectful and proportionate.

- Concerns will be discussed with families early rather than waiting for a formal review point.
- Pupils will be supported to express their views in ways appropriate to their age, development and communication needs.
- Parents/carers and pupils will contribute to SEN Support planning and APDR reviews, not only statutory EHC plan reviews.
- Information about strengths, aspirations and what helps the pupil learn will inform provision.
- Where there is disagreement, the academy will seek to resolve concerns collaboratively and explain available routes for further support or complaint.

14. Reasonable adjustments, disability and accessibility

Under the Equality Act 2010, the academy must not discriminate against disabled pupils and has a duty to make reasonable adjustments. The academy aims to anticipate barriers wherever possible rather than waiting for disadvantages to occur.

Reasonable adjustments may relate to teaching, assessment, communication, routines, the curriculum, the physical environment, equipment, trips, clubs and wider school life. Decisions are made in light of the individual pupil's needs and the relevant legal duties.

The academy maintains an Accessibility Plan. All pupils, including those with SEND, should be enabled to participate in educational visits, extracurricular activities and the wider life of the school wherever reasonably possible.

15. Admissions

Admission arrangements follow the academy's published admissions arrangements and relevant statutory requirements. Pupils must not be treated less favourably in admission because of SEND or disability.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, admission and placement arrangements will follow the statutory EHC plan process. The academy will work with families, previous settings, the local authority and relevant specialists to support effective transition.

16. Transition

Transition is planned according to individual need. This may include entry to Nursery/Reception, movement between classes or key stages, transfer from another school, and transition to secondary education.

- timely information sharing, with appropriate regard to data protection;
- additional visits or visual transition materials;
- meetings involving the pupil, family and relevant staff;
- liaison with previous/receiving settings and specialists;
- planning for continuity of provision, equipment, communication and reasonable adjustments.

17. External and multi-agency working

The academy works with appropriate education, health, care and voluntary-sector professionals where this will support assessment, provision or outcomes. Depending on local arrangements and pupil need, this may include educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, specialist teaching services, community paediatrics, mental health services, social care and other agencies.

From September 2026, local areas are beginning phased delivery of the national Experts at Hand offer. The academy will engage with the local offer as it develops, using specialist advice to support earlier identification, evidence-based intervention and staff capacity. Access to support is needed and does not necessarily depend on a diagnosis.

18. Early years

The academy recognises the importance of early identification and intervention in the early years. Staff work with parents/carers, health professionals, the local authority and relevant early years services to identify emerging needs, plan inclusive provision and support transition.

Early years practice will reflect the same principles of high expectations, adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments, pupil/family voice and graduated support. Local service names and funding routes may change; current local authority guidance will therefore be followed.

19. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body / SEND Governor

- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND and disability provision and the academy's compliance with statutory duties.
- Support and challenge leaders regarding outcomes, inclusion, use of resources and staff development.
- Work with the Headteacher and SENDCO on the strategic development of SEND provision.
- Meet with the SENDCO regularly and report relevant information to the governing body while maintaining confidentiality.
- Ensure SEND is considered within wider curriculum, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding and school improvement work.

The Headteacher

- Has overall responsibility for provision and progress for pupils with SEND and/or disabilities.
- Works with the SENDCO and SEND Governor to determine strategic direction.
- Ensures appropriate deployment of staffing, resources and funding.
- Promotes a culture in which SEND and inclusion are a whole-school responsibility.
- Ensure staff have access to appropriate professional development and that inclusive practice is monitored.

The SENDCO

The academy SENDCO is Mrs Rachel Gittens. The SENDCO provides professional leadership for SEND and works with senior leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, families, the local authority and external professionals.

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of this SEND policy and coordinate provision for pupils with SEND.
- Advise colleagues on the graduated approach, adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments and effective deployment of support.
- Maintain appropriate SEND records and the SEND register.
- Coordinate and quality-assure SEN Support planning and review.
- Liaise with parents/carers and support pupil participation.
- Liaise with external professionals, other settings and the local authority.
- Support requests for EHC needs assessment and EHC plan annual reviews.
- Monitor the effectiveness and equity of SEND provision across the curriculum.
- Contribute to staff professional development and identify whole-school training priorities.
- Advise leaders on SEND resources and funding.
- Maintain appropriate professional development and meet applicable statutory SENDCO qualification requirements.

Since September 2024, the National Professional Qualification for SENCOs (NPQ for SENCOs) has been the mandatory qualification route for new-to-role SENCOs, subject to the statutory requirements and transitional arrangements in force. The academy will ensure that the person appointed as SENDCO meets the applicable qualification requirements.

Class teachers

Every teacher is a teacher of pupils with SEND. The class teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including where a pupil accesses support from a teaching assistant or specialist.

- Deliver ambitious, high-quality inclusive and adaptive teaching.
- Know pupils' strengths, needs, agreed outcomes, reasonable adjustments and provision.
- Identify and respond to emerging barriers early.
- Implement and review the APDR cycle with support from the SENDCO.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, teaching assistants and specialists.
- Plan for teaching assistants rather than delegating responsibility for pupils with SEND.
- Assess whether adaptations and interventions are improving learning, participation and independence.

Teaching assistants and other support staff

- Work under the direction of teachers and contribute observations to assessment and review.
- Implement agreed strategies and interventions accurately.
- Promote pupils' independence and avoid creating unnecessary adult dependence.
- Support inclusion within the classroom and wider school life.
- Participate in relevant training and communicate effectively with teachers and the SENDCO.

Pupils

Pupils are supported to understand and contribute to decisions about their learning. Their views should inform APDR reviews, reasonable adjustments, transition planning and EHC plan reviews where applicable.

20. Staff training and professional development

SEND and inclusion are ongoing whole-school professional development priorities. Training is planned in response to the needs of the pupil population, staff confidence, school improvement priorities, statutory requirements and evidence from monitoring.

Professional development may include adaptive teaching, communication and interaction, literacy difficulties, autism, attention and executive function, sensory needs, emotional regulation, assistive technology, reasonable adjustments and effective use of teaching assistants.

During 2026/27, the academy will engage with relevant national and local SEND workforce development opportunities as they become available, including support linked to the wider SEND reform programme and Experts at Hand.

21. Funding and resources

The academy uses its core funding, notional SEN budget and other relevant funding to secure inclusive provision and special educational provision. Resources are deployed according to pupil need, statutory duties, evidence of impact and whole-school priorities.

For 2026/27, the Inclusive Mainstream Fund provides additional national investment intended to strengthen mainstream settings' capacity to identify and support SEND earlier and more flexibly. The academy will use any allocation in accordance with the applicable grant conditions and accountability requirements.

Receipt of a particular funding stream does not alter the academy's existing duties to use its best endeavours to secure appropriate special educational provision or to make reasonable adjustments.

22. SEND, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding

The academy recognises that behaviour, attendance difficulties or dysregulation may be indicators of unmet need, but they are not automatically evidence of SEND. Staff will seek to understand underlying barriers while maintaining appropriate expectations, safeguarding procedures and support.

Where a pupil with SEND is at risk of suspension, persistent absence, reduced access to education or other significant difficulty, leaders will consider whether reasonable adjustments, provision, external advice or an earlier review of support are required.

23. Complaints

Parents/carers are encouraged to raise concerns first with the class teacher and/or SENDCO so that issues can be addressed promptly. Where concerns remain, they should be raised with the Headteacher and then through the academy's published complaints procedure.

Complaints relating specifically to EHC plan decisions or local authority statutory processes may have separate disagreement, resolution, mediation or appeal routes. Families will be signposted to the relevant local authority information and independent SEND advice services where appropriate.

24. Evaluating the effectiveness of this policy and SEND provision

The academy will evaluate SEND provision through a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence. This may include:

- pupil progress and achievement, including progress towards individual outcomes;
- quality of inclusive and adaptive teaching;
- impact of interventions and specialist provision;
- pupil independence, engagement and participation;
- attendance and access to the full curriculum where relevant;
- pupil and parent/carers views;

- quality and timeliness of APDR reviews;
- effectiveness of reasonable adjustments;
- transition outcomes;
- staff knowledge and confidence;
- monitoring by the SENDCO, senior leaders and governors;
- appropriate use and impact of SEND funding and resources.

Evaluation will inform the academy's SEND action planning, professional development and wider school improvement priorities.

25. Monitoring and review of the policy

The SENDCO and Headteacher will review this policy at least annually, or earlier where there is a significant change to legislation, statutory guidance or local arrangements. Governors will oversee the review and approval process.

Because national SEND reform is being phased over several years, the academy will distinguish between confirmed statutory requirements and proposals or developing programmes. The policy will be amended when new legal duties take effect rather than treating consultation proposals as current law.

26. Key policy information

SENDCO	Mrs Rachel Gittens
SEND Governor	Annette Bryant
Policy updated	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Core graduated approach	Assess – Plan – Do – Review
Provision model	Universal – Targeted – Specialist