

THE MOUNT SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY

2026–2027

Version	2.0
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This policy retains The Mount's established whole-school, graduated SEND approach, One Page Profiles, SEN Support, external-agency working and Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle, while updating terminology and strengthening operational expectations.

1. Introduction

At The Mount School, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to secure the best possible progress, participation and wellbeing for all pupils, whatever their needs or abilities. Every teacher is a teacher of every child, including pupils with SEND.

The School aims to identify needs early, remove barriers to learning and participation, provide high-quality teaching and reasonable adjustments, and work constructively with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

The Mount is an independent school. The Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice do not apply to every independent school in precisely the same way as to maintained schools and academies. The School nevertheless uses the Code's graduated approach and principles as its principal framework for good SEND practice, while meeting the legal duties that apply to it under the Equality Act 2010 and other applicable legislation.

This policy should be read with the Accessibility Plan, Equality/Equal Opportunities Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Admissions Policy, Attendance Policy, Behaviour Policy, Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy, Medical Needs/Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Intimate Care procedures and EYFS policies.

2. SEND leadership and contact

SEND arrangements are coordinated by the SENDCO:

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The Headteacher and Director/Proprietor retain overall responsibility for ensuring that SEND and equality arrangements are implemented effectively and that leaders have sufficient information to evaluate provision.

3. Aims

- identify pupils' needs as early and accurately as possible;
- secure high-quality teaching and an inclusive curriculum before and alongside additional intervention;
- use the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle consistently;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and applicants where required;
- involve pupils and parents/carers meaningfully in decisions;
- ensure staff understand the needs, strategies and safety arrangements relevant to pupils they teach or supervise;
- work with health, education, social care and other professionals where appropriate;
- support successful transition into, through and beyond The Mount;
- recognise the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities experienced by some pupils with SEND; and
- evaluate provision by its impact on participation, progress, wellbeing and outcomes rather than by the quantity of adult support provided.

4. What we mean by SEND

A child or young person has SEN where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision. Disability and SEN overlap but are not identical. A disabled pupil does not automatically have SEN, and a pupil may have SEN without being disabled.

The four broad areas of need used by the School are:

Communication and interaction	Cognition and learning	Social, emotional and mental health	Sensory and/or physical
Speech, language and communication needs; social communication differences; autism-related needs.	General or specific learning difficulties affecting acquisition or application of skills.	Needs affecting emotional regulation, relationships, attention, attachment, mental health or behaviour.	Hearing, vision, sensory-processing, mobility or physical needs affecting access and participation.

The broad areas are not diagnoses and should not be used to place children into rigid categories. A pupil may have needs across several areas and the underlying cause of difficulty should be explored.

5. Factors that are not SEND by themselves

Attendance and punctuality, English as an additional language, being looked after or previously looked after, family circumstances, disadvantage, health/welfare issues or lower prior attainment do not by themselves establish SEND. Equally, these factors must not be used to explain away an underlying SEND need.

Behaviour is communication and may indicate unmet SEND, safeguarding, trauma, mental-health or other needs. Persistent or sudden changes in behaviour should prompt assessment rather than an assumption of deliberate non-compliance.

6. Identification and high-quality teaching

The School will use early identification through response to teaching, but diagnosis is not dependent upon a child first failing. Information from parents, previous settings, teachers, the child and professionals may identify needs at any point.

Teachers remain responsible for the progress and development of pupils in their class, including where teaching assistants or specialists provide support.

- focused lesson design and clear learning intentions;
- high pupil involvement and engagement;
- appropriate questioning, modelling and explanation;
- opportunities for dialogue and supported independence;
- adaptation of teaching, resources, environment and communication;
- appropriate scaffolding and reasonable adjustments;
- regular assessment of understanding and progress; and
- encouragement and authentic praise.

The School increasingly uses the language of high-quality/adaptive teaching rather than relying solely on the older phrase 'quality first teaching'. Differentiation may be appropriate, but adaptation should preserve ambition and curriculum entitlement.

7. The graduated whole-school approach

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the School will take action to remove barriers and put effective provision in place. SEND support follows a four-part cycle in which decisions and actions are revisited with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs.

7.1 Assess

The class teacher and SENDCO analyse the pupil's needs using appropriate evidence: attainment/progress, observation, developmental information, attendance, behaviour, pupil and parent views, previous provision and relevant professional advice. Assessment will seek to distinguish SEND from other barriers while recognising that barriers can coexist.

7.2 Plan

The teacher, SENDCO, pupil and parents/carers agree outcomes, adjustments, interventions, strategies, responsibilities and review arrangements. Staff who work with the pupil must have access to the information they need.

7.3 Do

The class teacher remains responsible for the pupil on a daily basis. Additional group or one-to-one support supplements rather than replaces effective classroom teaching.

7.4 Review

The effectiveness and impact of provision are reviewed on the agreed date. Decisions are informed by progress toward outcomes, participation, independence, wellbeing and the views of the pupil and parents/carers.

8. The Mount's levels of provision

The School will use the familiar Wave 1–3 language as an internal planning shorthand, but it does not represent a statutory hierarchy and should not delay support.

Wave 1 – universal/high-quality provision	Wave 2 – targeted support	Wave 3 – specialist support
Adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments within ordinary classroom provision: for example seating, accessible text, writing aids, visual support, movement/sensory strategies or adapted tasks.	Time-limited or ongoing targeted group/individual support such as literacy, numeracy, communication, motor or emotional-regulation intervention, selected according to assessed need.	Specialist assessment/advice/intervention, for example educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, mental-health or other specialist services.

Leaders select interventions according to evidence and individual need.

9. SEN Support, One Page Profiles and support plans

Where the School decides, in collaboration with parents/carers, that a pupil requires SEN Support, this will be recorded on the School's SEND register.

One Page Profiles are used to capture strengths, needs, pupil voice, helpful strategies and key information. They are reviewed at least termly or more frequently where necessary.

Where needs are more complex, a more detailed support plan may record outcomes, provision, resources, responsibilities and review arrangements. The previous policy specifically tied this to an older Kirklees 'My Support Plan' guidance document/page reference; the School may continue to use current Kirklees planning tools where useful without making the policy dependent on an obsolete page reference.

Targets should be specific and meaningful, but provision should not become a narrow target-chasing exercise. Plans should address access, independence, participation, wellbeing and longer-term outcomes as appropriate.

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

Where a pupil has significant or complex needs and is not making expected progress despite relevant, purposeful action, the School will work with parents and professionals to consider whether a request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment is appropriate.

Parents and young people also have statutory rights to request an EHC needs assessment. The School will provide evidence requested by the local authority and cooperate with the statutory process.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the School will understand the legal status of the particular placement and funding arrangement and will cooperate with reviews and provision requirements applicable to that pupil. The class teacher remains responsible for teaching and progress.

The School will not describe an EHC plan as automatically creating identical duties for every independent school placement; the precise duties depend upon the statutory status and circumstances of the placement.

11. Role of the SENDCO

- oversee day-to-day operation of this policy and coordinate provision;
- advise staff on identification, graduated support and reasonable adjustments;
- maintain the SEND register and ensure records are current;
- work with the Headteacher/Director on Equality Act responsibilities and accessibility;
- liaise with parents/carers and record significant meetings/decisions;
- liaise with EYFS providers, schools, educational psychologists, health/social-care professionals and other agencies;
- work with the Designated Teacher/DSL where a looked-after or safeguarding-involved pupil has SEND;
- support transition into and out of the School;
- observe/assess pupils where appropriate and advise teachers/TAs;
- coordinate targeted provision without displacing class-teacher responsibility;
- advise on appropriate resources, staff development and access arrangements;
- identify patterns of need and report provision, outcomes, risks and training needs to leaders;
- work closely with the DSL where SEND and safeguarding concerns overlap; and
- ensure staff receive essential information about individual adjustments, communication and safety needs.

12. Pupil and parent/carer participation

Parents/carers are partners in the graduated approach. The School will listen to their knowledge of the child, explain concerns and evidence clearly, and involve them in planning and review. Agreement is sought wherever possible, but the School remains responsible for making appropriate educational and safeguarding decisions.

Pupil voice will be obtained in a way that is accessible to the child. A child's communication difficulty, age or disability must not be treated as absence of a view; staff should adapt how views are sought.

13. Reasonable adjustments and accessibility

The School has an anticipatory duty not to discriminate unlawfully against disabled pupils and to make reasonable adjustments where required. Reasonable adjustments may relate to teaching, communication, routines, assessment, behaviour systems, uniform, physical access, technology, supervision, trips, clubs or other aspects of School life.

The need for an adjustment will be considered individually. Cost, effectiveness, practicability, resources, health and safety, the interests of others and available alternatives may be relevant to reasonableness, but blanket statements that the School cannot support a category of need are not appropriate.

See also the Accessibility Plan and Admissions Policy.

14. SEND and safeguarding

Children with SEND and/or disabilities can face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers to recognising or reporting abuse. KCSIE 2026 requires staff to recognise, among other matters, that pupils may not recognise that they are being abused or exploited; indicators can be wrongly attributed to disability; they may experience disproportionate bullying or isolation; and intimate/personal care can create additional vulnerability.

A change in behaviour, attendance, communication, continence, eating, sleep, emotional presentation, injury pattern or engagement must not automatically be attributed to SEND. Staff should apply professional curiosity and report safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

Clinical or medical incidents may also raise safeguarding concerns depending on context. The SENDCO and DSL will share information appropriately where a pupil's needs affect risk assessment or safety planning.

15. Child-on-child abuse, bullying and harmful behaviour

Pupils with SEND may be both more vulnerable to victimisation and at risk of having harmful behaviour misunderstood. The School will respond to bullying, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, discriminatory abuse, violence and online harm through safeguarding procedures while considering communication, developmental level, disability and support needs.

SEND is never an excuse for abuse, but sanctions and safety plans must be individual, proportionate and accompanied by appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

16. Attendance and emotionally based barriers

Absence can be both a consequence and an indicator of unmet SEND. The Attendance Lead, SENDCO and DSL will work together where patterns suggest anxiety, sensory barriers, bullying, medical needs, exploitation, family stress or other barriers.

The School will make reasonable adjustments and provide support aimed at improving access and attendance. A temporary part-time timetable will be exceptional, time-limited, agreed with parents and regularly reviewed; it must not be used to manage behaviour or avoid making SEND provision.

17. Behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion

Before significant sanctions, leaders will consider whether SEND/disability contributed to the behaviour, whether agreed provision/adjustments were implemented, whether further assessment is needed and whether the proposed response is lawful and proportionate.

The School will not use informal exclusion, repeated send-homes, reduced attendance or pressure to withdraw as a substitute for supporting SEND. Permanent exclusion/termination decisions must follow the published policy, contractual arrangements, Equality Act duties and safeguarding considerations.

18. Admissions and transition

SEND or disability will not itself prevent admission. The Admissions Policy requires individual consideration of needs, reasonable adjustments and the School's ability to make safe, suitable provision. Admissions/taster processes will themselves be adjusted where necessary.

On entry, the SENDCO will seek relevant records and liaise with previous settings where appropriate. Safeguarding files transfer separately through DSL arrangements. On leaving, educational/SEND information will be transferred securely and promptly so the receiving setting can plan continuity.

19. EYFS and early identification

For children in the EYFS, the School/Nursery will work within the current EYFS statutory framework, including requirements concerning identification and support for children with SEND and partnership with parents and other professionals.

Assessment will take account of development, communication, sensory/physical needs, health, family context and the child's experience across settings. Early concerns should lead to support and review rather than a 'wait to fail' approach.

Where intimate care, eating/drinking, sleep, seizures, allergies or other medical needs intersect with SEND, appropriate plans, training and safeguarding arrangements must be in place.

20. Supporting pupils with medical conditions

The Mount recognises that pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so they have full access to education, trips and physical education. Some may be disabled under the Equality Act 2010 and some may also have SEND.

The School's Medical Needs/Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy sets out healthcare planning, medication, emergency arrangements and staff responsibilities. SEND and medical plans will be coordinated where both apply.

21. Access arrangements and assessments

Where a pupil has difficulty accessing normal assessment procedures, the SENDCO will coordinate appropriate arrangements in accordance with the rules of the relevant assessment or examination. Access arrangements must reflect the pupil's normal way of working where the applicable rules require this and must not provide an unfair advantage.

Records and evidence will be maintained where required. The previous policy's statement that all pupils with access arrangements must sign a Data Protection Form is removed as a blanket SEND requirement; any data-processing documentation will follow the School's current privacy/data-protection arrangements.

22. Criteria for exiting the SEND register

A pupil may exit the SEND register where evidence from the graduated cycle shows that special educational provision is no longer required and high-quality teaching/ordinary reasonable adjustments are sufficient to sustain progress and participation.

The decision will be discussed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil. Removal from the register does not remove Equality Act reasonable-adjustment duties for a disabled pupil and does not prevent re-entry if needs change.

23. Supporting pupils and families

The School aims to ensure families understand their child's provision, review arrangements and routes to wider support. Parents may be signposted to the relevant local authority Local Offer and other appropriate services.

Families will receive information about admissions, transition, assessment access, medical arrangements and other relevant School policies.

24. Alternative provision and external specialists

Where a pupil receives education or intervention from an external provider, The Mount will undertake appropriate due diligence, share necessary information and remain attentive to safeguarding and SEND outcomes. Placement outside the classroom does not remove the School's responsibility to monitor the pupil's education, safety and progress.

External recommendations will be considered carefully but do not automatically determine School provision; leaders will consider evidence, practicality, reasonable adjustments and the pupil's individual circumstances.

25. Monitoring and evaluation of SEND

One Page Profiles and support plans will normally be reviewed at least termly or more frequently where required. The impact of interventions and adjustments will be evaluated, not merely whether they took place.

The Headteacher, SENDCO and Director/Proprietor will evaluate patterns in identification, progress, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, participation, exclusions, parent/pupil views and transition to understand whether provision is effective.

Leaders will be able to explain how SEND provision makes a demonstrable difference to pupils' opportunities, experiences and outcomes, including those facing multiple barriers.

26. Data protection and records

SEND records, whether digital or paper, will be stored securely with access limited according to role and need. Records will be retained and disposed of under the School's current retention schedule and privacy arrangements.

Relevant information must nevertheless be available to staff who need it to teach, supervise or safeguard the pupil. Data protection must not be used as a reason to withhold necessary safeguarding or safety information.

27. Workforce development

Induction for teachers and support staff includes SEND systems, responsibilities and essential information about individual pupils. The SENDCO will identify staff-development priorities and maintain professional knowledge through appropriate networks, training and current guidance.

Training will include, according to need, adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments, communication, autism/neurodiversity, literacy/numeracy needs, SEMH, sensory/physical needs, intimate care, medical needs, safeguarding and behaviour.

28. Monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant legislative/statutory-guidance change, inspection learning, a serious case, substantial change in provision or identified weakness.

Policy compliance is only one element of effective SEND practice. Leaders will also maintain evidence that adjustments and provision described in plans are actually implemented and reviewed.

Appendix A – SEND review checklist

- What are the pupil's strengths and views?
- What is the precise barrier/need?
- What evidence supports the assessment?
- Could safeguarding, attendance, health, EAL or another factor be contributing?
- What high-quality teaching/adaptation is already in place?
- What reasonable adjustments are required?
- What additional/special educational provision is required?
- Who will deliver it, how often and for how long?
- What outcome/impact are we seeking?
- How will independence and participation be supported?

- What do parents/carers say?
- What does the pupil say and how was their communication supported?
- Does the DSL/medical lead need to contribute?
- Review date and evidence of impact:
- Next action: continue / adapt / specialist advice / EHC assessment consideration / exit register.

Appendix B – SEND and safeguarding professional-noticing prompts

- Is this change genuinely explained by the pupil's SEND, or are we making an assumption?
- Has the pupil's attendance or punctuality changed?
- Is there new withdrawal, aggression, sexualised behaviour, distress, self-harm or change in eating/sleep?
- Could bullying, child-on-child abuse, exploitation or online harm be involved?
- Does the pupil understand what safe/unsafe behaviour or abuse looks like?
- Can the pupil communicate a concern in the method we are offering?
- Does intimate/personal care create additional vulnerability?
- Are injuries or clinical incidents consistent with what we know?
- Are family circumstances or caring responsibilities creating additional barriers?
- Does the DSL need this information now?