



DOWNSEND

SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

POLICY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

1. Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the identification and management of children with special educational needs (SEN) at Downsend School. It is intended to provide a consistent framework and to ensure that all children have their needs met, allowing them to work towards their full potential. It should be read in conjunction with the school's policies for teaching and learning as, together, these form a statement of the principles underpinning all the work of the school.

Downsend School is a caring, academic prep school for boys and girls from 6-13 where attention is paid to the planning of the curriculum, both to extend the most able and to support the individual needs of pupils with identified learning difficulties within the mainstream setting. It is fed by the 3 Pre-Prep schools on separate sites and local primaries and other Pre-Preps. The school is mixed and aims for 11+ and 13+ entrance to Senior Schools, via Entrance exams and Common Entrance. The school is non-selective at Pre-Prep entry; external pupils applying for entry into the prep school will be assessed before entry.

Downsend has a busy, challenging environment in which children are encouraged to develop independence and determination to do well while enjoying their lives at school.

Admission of a pupil with special educational needs is at the discretion of the Headmaster. This is either from the Pre-Preps into Year 2 or after an entrance exam. Individual children will normally spend a day in the classroom with their year group and be assessed by the class/form teacher and/or other staff. This may involve the use of specific tests. Children who have been identified as having SEN prior to applying for Downsend may have a more detailed review of their suitability for the school. Any specialist reports are checked and parents fully consulted to make sure that it is realistic to expect that their needs can be met by the school. The head teacher will discuss the needs of the individual child with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). If the school is able to meet those needs, and the child meets entry requirements, then the child may be accepted.

2. Principles

We are committed to providing equal access for all children to the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled. At Downsend we recognise that we must consider the individual needs of all children when planning our curriculum so far as is reasonably practicable and compatible with the provision of the efficient education of other pupils. This document includes all Key Stages in the school.

To achieve this commitment:

- a) We aim to employ the best practice when devising support for SEN.

- b) We recognise a continuum of special needs: any child may experience a special need at any stage of their education. Our aim is to raise the expectations and achievements of all children.
- c) Early intervention: We recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational needs. We aim to address special needs as soon as concerns are raised so that learning experiences are appropriate to children's current needs and future difficulties are minimised. We seek to develop practices and procedures that are designed to ensure that all children's special educational needs are identified and assessed, with the curriculum being planned to meet their needs. We recognise that good practice can help prevent some special educational needs arising at all, and can minimise others.
- d) We recognise that responsibility for SEN is a whole-school issue and lies collectively with all staff, supported by the SENCO and the Senior Leadership Team. We aim to equip all staff to effectively meet a wide range of children's needs. Lessons provide differentiated activities to meet these needs.
- e) All children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education. We believe that SEN should be addressed by using a variety of groupings, settings and differentiation strategies to ensure full curricular access for all children.
- f) We believe in the involvement of the child and the importance of taking their views into account. They should be actively encouraged to participate in discussing the purpose of learning tasks, in personal target-setting and in evaluating their outcomes. Our SEN provision aims to actively involve children in this process in the light of their age and understanding.
- g) We recognise that parents and carers have a vital role to play in supporting their children's education. We aim to work in close partnership with parents and carers, valuing their opinions and contributions, and to support them in their child's learning and development. We will fully inform them about SEN provision for their child(ren), and take their views into account in respect of their children's needs.
- h) Wherever possible, we intend to work in partnership with other agencies (e.g. health professionals) and with parents and carers, sharing information and assessment reports, where appropriate consent is given and taking action to implement recommendations.

Aims

The aims of our Special Educational Needs provision at Downsend School are:

- to recognise that some children have difficulties which call for special educational provision;
- to apply a whole school policy to meet each pupil's individual needs following the guidelines of *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 to 25 years 2014 (SEND Code 2014)*, *Children and Families Act 2014* and the *Equality Act 2010*;
- to give every child with SEN the best possible access to our broad and balanced school curriculum;
- to acknowledge the role parents and carers have in their child's learning;
- to continue to develop staff training;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process; and
- to enable all children to have access to all elements of the school curriculum.

3. Definitions

Definitions of Special Educational Needs

Downsend refers to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities as having special educational needs. These children have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers in the school or they may have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities of the school.

Children who have difficulty in learning solely because their first language is not English are not considered SEN, although their needs will be provided for at Downsend. EAL provision is, nonetheless, timetabled via the SEN department.

Children with SEN at Downsend will need educational provision in addition to that made generally for their peers. They may have Dyslexia or Dyspraxia, social and communication difficulties or some mild Speech & Language difficulties. We liaise with the Physical and Sensory Support Services to support children in the school who have visual or hearing impairments.

Definition of Disability

‘A person (P) has a disability if –

- (a) P has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

Equality Act 2010 Chp. 1 para 6.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school’s head teacher, the SENCO and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities. Teaching such children is therefore a whole school responsibility.

The role of the SENCO

SEN arrangements are coordinated by the SENCO whose role includes:

- overseeing the day to day operation of the school’s SEN policy;
- carrying out observations and assessments of individual pupils to help support and provide for them;
- liaising with and advising teachers and TAs/LSAs, managing these where appropriate, offering specialist advice and support so that they can apply targets and make provision for identified pupils;
- coordinating 1:1 and group learning support. Keeping the head teacher informed about provision, training needs, pupils’ needs and changes to statutory requirements;
- tracking pupils’ progress using Targets and other records;

- maintaining the school's electronic SEN register and overseeing other records for all pupils with SEN;
- identifying and monitoring areas of need and provision across the school, reporting to the head teacher;
- advising on the purchasing of appropriate teaching materials to meet the identified needs of particular individuals or groups of children;
- liaising with parents of children with SEN, keeping notes of these meetings;
- contributing to and promoting in-service training of staff both in-house and external as well as networking with other SEN coordinators in Cognita schools;
- liaising with external agencies including the Educational Psychology Service, Health and Social Services, voluntary bodies and the schools to which pupils transfer;
- In conjunction with the School's Assessment Policy and Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) regulations, ensuring that suitable examination and other assessment arrangements are made for pupils who have difficulties with the usual procedures, ensuring that appropriate resources are made available; and
- managing the SEN team of tutors, LSA's and other specialists.

It follows from this that the SENCO has planned time to administer the school's SEN arrangements.

The role of the teachers

- identify pupils of concern and liaise with SENCO;
- keep notes on SEN pupils in the system;
- plan differentiated work for pupils on who have an Identified Need;
- liaise with SENCO to plan work for pupils having additional support;
- to review and write Targets when required (supported by SENCO if required);
- direct support from Learning Support Assistants, if appropriate;
- each member of staff is expected to keep up-to-date with information about SEN children that they teach; and
- liaise with the parents of identified pupils.

The role of the Headmaster / Head of School

- ensure that the SENCO and other staff have sufficient time allocated to carry out their teaching and administrative roles;
- liaise with SENCO regularly regarding individual children;
- discuss staff training needs with SENCO;
- in discussion with SENCO arrange sharing of good teaching practice;
- look at resource requests for the Learning Support Department; and
- share information on SEN with the school's Cognita Education Officer.

5. Processes

Identification

At Downsend we believe that children are entitled to have their needs identified, assessed and addressed at the earliest possible stage. If the school is aware that a child has special educational need before they enter school, every effort will be made to liaise with the early education setting, other agencies and the parents.

Identification occurs as and when need arises. Initially the teacher and SENCO will discuss the child's needs and information will be gathered. Downsend is open and responsive to expressions of concern by parents, and takes account of any information that parents provide about the child.

At Downsend there is an established procedure for referring a child to the SENCO and for further investigation/screening following expressions of concern and monitoring. All teachers are aware of this procedure which is accessible electronically.

Monitoring Children's Progress

At Downsend, the progress of pupils is monitored using Pupil Asset, and by regular formative & summative assessment. Subject teachers keep records of achievements and provide differentiated work if appropriate. Where the teacher is concerned about a child's progress, the following procedures should be followed.

Pre-SEN Category: Teacher Concerns

In order to meet the needs of individual children and gain additional support from other agencies, it is necessary for the subject teacher to monitor the progress of the pupil closely in the first instance, before providing a range of intervention strategies and support to meet the needs of the child.

The child's parents should be kept informed of the teacher's concerns and be encouraged to contribute their knowledge and understanding of the child and raise any concerns they may have.

Records of observations, knowledge of a child's strengths and weaknesses, intervention strategies used and concerns expressed must be maintained.

Using this evidence, the subject teacher might come to feel that the strategies in use are not resulting in the child learning as effectively as possible. In these circumstances, the SENCO should be consulted.

The starting point will be a review of the strategies used and the way these might be developed. This review might lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the class. Consideration should then be given to helping the pupil through the Identified Need Stage.

Progress

The principle test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. Where progress is not adequate, it is necessary to take some additional, or different, action to help the pupil learn more effectively. Whatever the level of pupils' difficulties, the main test of how far their learning needs are being met is whether they are making adequate progress.

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways; it might, for instance, be progress that:

- closes the attainment gap between the child and the peer group
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- is similar to that of peers starting from the same baseline, but less than that of the majority of the peer group
- matches, or betters, the child's previous progress
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- demonstrates an improvement in the child's behaviour.

SEN Register

At Downsend School we have due regard for the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice 2014 which accompanies the Children and Families Act 2014 and Equality Act 2010.

Our SEN register follows the following stages and children may be moved on or off the register at any point.

a) Monitor

This approach starts with the class teacher using differentiation strategies to meet the individual needs of pupils. A pupil is placed on Monitor if staff have any concerns about them but are currently able to manage their learning within the classroom through group work and differentiated activities. The parents are informed by the class/tutor teacher about concerns at the same time as the SENCO is informed.

A Concern Form should be filled in by the class teacher, subject teachers or any adults involved with the child on a regular basis. The Concern Form should be given to the SENCO who will then discuss it with interested parties and decide on appropriate assessment. The class tutor/teacher will then inform the parents of the concerns and discuss the next steps with them.

b) Identified Stage

A pupil moves to Identified Stage if it is felt that staff in consultation with the SENCO have identified that the child needs additional support. Interventions are necessary that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. Targets are then drawn up by the class/ form teacher for all pupils at Identified Stage which is reviewed at least twice yearly and rewritten in consultation with the parents/carers of the pupil. The review should be organised by the class teacher/tutor. The

Targets may be as part of a group of pupils with similar needs. For younger pupils or for those whose needs are considered short-term the review period may be not as long. In all cases the review period may be flexible. If appropriate the pupil will be asked to assess his/her progress. Where significant progress is made the class and support teacher may decide that the child will come off Targets and be monitored by the teacher and SENCO whilst still receiving any necessary differentiation. The parents/carers will be informed and their views taken into account before the decision is made.

During this time the class teacher should continue with differentiated strategies, including using different tasks as well as varied support provision and revised outcomes, adapting these, in consultation with the support teacher and/or SENCO, so that together they meet the child's needs. Where the child is not demonstrating improvement an in school assessment may be deemed advisable and parental consent is sought. After any assessment has taken place parents are invited into school to discuss the findings as soon as it is reasonably possible to do so.

At this stage it may be necessary to withdraw the child from the classroom, this does not interfere unduly with the child's access to the whole curriculum. Parents/carers must be informed about the Support Stage.

c) Support Stage

Support Stage is the next stage in the SEN support and assessment process, when external services become involved.

After assessment, or the review of Targets, the school and parents might decide to request help from external services. If practicable Downsend will offer consultants who come into school to see the child so that they can give advice to teachers on new targets accompanying strategies. The kinds of advice and support vary according to the needs of the child.

External Support Service Intervention

The SENCO works with the class/form teacher to complete forms for referral to outside agencies and the SENCO provides documentation to support the referral. The school encourages parents to consult with specialists and outside agencies and the school then seeks to ensure that there is good liaison between the school's provision and that recommended or provided by the outside agency. Parents/guardians will be asked to fund any assessments and support that is not covered by local authority action and will be asked to inform the school of the outcome of assessment. A meeting must be arranged with the parents and interested parties in school to discuss the outcomes.

Where the school seeks help from external support agencies, the following points are taken into consideration:

- The support agencies need to see the child's records to establish which strategies have been employed and which targets have been set and achieved.
- The support agencies can advise on new and appropriate targets for the child and accompanying strategies.

- The targets set might require specialist assessment arrangements to gauge progress. If so, outside specialists, for example, Educational Psychologists could be required for this.
- The SENCO, subject teacher, and the external specialists consider a range of teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, and teaching materials, including ICT.
- The external specialist might act in an advisory capacity, assess the child or be involved in teaching the child directly.
- In some instances, improved management, based on advice from health professionals, might reduce the child's special educational need considerably.
- Where tuition involves one of Downsend's visiting specialists, a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) will be drawn up by the external specialist with the help of the subject teacher and SENCO where necessary.
- The non-specialist strategies specified in the PLP should be implemented as far as possible in the classroom setting.
- The delivery of the interventions drawn up in the PLP is the responsibility of the specialist teacher and the SENCO.
- If the SENCO and the external specialist consider that the information gathered about the child is insufficient, and that more detailed advice should be obtained from other outside professionals, then the consent of the parents is sought.
- The SENCO should note in the child's records:
 - what further advice is being sought; and
 - the support to be provided for the child pending receipt of the advice.

Specialist Staff

At Downsend the visiting specialists (literacy specialist teachers, maths specialists, a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a specialist physiotherapist and a counsellor) withdraw children from lessons for one or two half hours, or one hour each week. All interested parties (parents, child's form teacher/tutor/subject teacher, SENCO etc) will be involved in the decision as to whether the child will benefit from these extra lessons. The specialists arrange their own timetables and deal directly with the parents of the children they are teaching. The SENCO will arrange the initial contact and will be kept informed of the child's progress by the appointed specialist.

Where Support Stage intervention proves successful, the child may revert to Identified Stage. Again the views of the pupil and parents/carers will be taken into account and parents/carers wishes will be respected.

d) Statutory Assessment and statementing

For a very small number of pupils, progress Support Stage may still not adequately support their needs. At this point parents can request a Education, Health and Care Assessment (EHC) from the Local Education Authority, preferably with the support of the teachers and SENCO and following consultation with the Head Teacher. The SENCO, with the advice of the class and other teachers, will fill in all the forms sent by the authority and will liaise with the parents and the authority about assessment criteria.

The school will be asked to provide educational advice about the pupil, drawing on record keeping for differentiation, Identified and Support Stages. Intervention remains in place during the assessment process.

All those involved with the pupil must continue to keep detailed records. If possible the SENCO or support teacher should observe the pupil in the class situation once a term and give written feedback to the class and subject teachers on the needs of the pupil. These reviews should be discussed with the parents during target review meetings.

This may result in an EHC Plan. A pupil with EHC Plan will have their progress reviewed every six months with teachers/SENCO/ parents/ outside agencies and the LEA. All those involved with the pupil must continue to keep detailed records. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to collate these records and to maintain the pupil's file.

Procedures relating to the SEN register

Records

At Downsend, we acknowledge the importance of keeping records to meet the needs of individual pupils. The following procedures are followed:

- Class teachers have responsibility for keeping records of concerns, intervention and progress in the class (see handbook).
- The SENCO is responsible for ensuring that comprehensive records are kept properly and available as needed.
- If the school refers a child for EHC Assessment to the LEA/other Advisory Body, a record of the child's work, including the resources or special arrangements already used are made available.
- Downsend use an agreed style for Targets at Identified and Support Stages.
- On transfer to another educational establishment, the school provides a summary of support to the receiving school. Such records include all the key information held by the SENCO.
- Copies should be kept in the school for future reference.
- A record of the child's progress and behaviour is kept in the child's Pupil Record.
- Targets are kept by the SENCO. Copies are kept in the pupil's file. For all years the Targets are on the school intranet system and may be downloaded in hard copy form by the class teacher/specialist subject teacher.
- School based assessments are stored by the SENCO and/or on the intranet in the child's individual profile on SIMS. It is the responsibility of the class/subject teachers to read any relevant assessments and to put into their class teaching the recommendations that have been made.
- It is the responsibility of the SENCO to draw the attention of the teachers to the assessments.
- It is the responsibility of the class/subject teachers/key worker to familiarise themselves with the reports and Targets.
- Any other records, Educational Psychologist's reports, Speech therapy etc are kept by the SENCO in the SEN office and on the intranet in the child's individual profile on SIMS.

- The register of pupils with special educational needs is on the staff intranet and all records are updated by the SENCO when appropriate. The SENCO emails all staff drawing their attention to the list when it is updated.

Targets

Targets are used to plan the support for a pupil which is additional to, and different from, that available to all. It focuses on key individual targets and includes information about:

- three or four short term targets set for or by the pupils,
- success criteria
- outcome for each target;
- when the targets are reviewed; any outcomes, next steps and revised targets may be detailed.

Targets should be **SMART**:

- short;
- measurable;
- achievable;
- realistic; and
- have a defined time.

Targets are based on a cycle of planning, intervention and review. As far as possible this is met within the classroom, in some instances with permission from parents we can help to organise provision for a Learning Support Assistants to work within the classroom alongside their pupils. This one to one support is paid for by parents.

The Targets are kept under review at all times and may be adjusted accordingly. Each is formally reviewed, generally twice a year. Parents are also consulted, either formally in a meeting or informally. Teachers are similarly consulted, as is the pupil. Parents are sent a copy of the Targets with a covering letter.

Regular opportunities are available on a formal or informal basis for parents/carers to discuss their child's progress. Parents are able to discuss their concerns with the SENCO whenever they need to.

Curriculum access for pupils

Special needs provision is planned, monitored and reviewed by the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO), who reports to the Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team. The SENCO and support staff work closely with class teachers through meetings and written communication about pupils as part of the school's assessment procedures, to ensure that learning is differentiated according to the needs of the pupil.

The class or form teacher and the SENCO will discuss provision to ensure that the pupil's access to the wider curriculum is not unduly affected by additional support provision. These discussions should include use of the SENCO timetabled administrative time to meet with class/subject teachers and for the SENCO to observe SEN children on a regular basis with the class or subject teacher's agreement.

Assessment for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

For a very small number of pupils, interventions at School Support level may not ensure adequate progress in spite of the “assess, plan, do, review” process. At this point school and parents can consider requesting an Education Health and Care Plan assessment from the Local Authority.

The SENCO, with the advice of the class and other teachers and any appropriate external specialists, will fill in all the forms sent by the authority and will liaise with the parents and the authority about assessment criteria.

The school will be asked to provide educational advice about the pupil, drawing on record keeping for differentiation and School Support. School Support intervention remains in place during the assessment process.

All those involved with the pupil must continue to keep detailed records. If possible the SENCO should observe the pupil in the class situation once a term and give written feedback to the class and subject teachers on the needs of the pupil. These reviews should be discussed with the parents during ISP review meetings.

This assessment process may result in an Education Health and Care Plan being put in place. A pupil with an EHCP will have their progress formally reviewed annually by teachers/SENCO/ parents/ outside agencies and the LEA. All those involved with the pupil must continue to keep detailed records. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to collate these records and to maintain the pupil’s file.

Further information regarding Surrey’s EHCP process is available on the council’s website at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send/changes-to-send-support-in-2014

A graduated response to learning difficulties

The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. There should not be an assumption that all children will progress at the same rate. A judgment has to be made in each case as to what it is reasonable to expect a particular child to achieve. Where progress of the individual child is not adequate it will be necessary to take some additional or different action to enable the pupil to learn more effectively. Whatever the level of pupils’ difficulties, the key test of how far their learning needs are being met is whether they are making adequate progress.

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance, be progress which:

- closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers;
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider;
- is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers;

- matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress;
- ensures access to the full curriculum;
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills; and
- demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour.

Behaviour and SEN

Pupils with behavioural difficulties are included as having special educational needs even if they do not have learning, or physical or sensory difficulties. Downsend is a large school, with extensive facilities, and its pupils need to be able to cope with the logistical complexities that are associated with movement around the site. For this reason, places will only be made to pupils who, in the opinion of the Headmaster, will be able to cope with the logistical and behavioural demands placed upon them.

Integration

Children with SEN are fully integrated within the school as a whole. All staff and children know which children receive support but the atmosphere is one of encouragement and understanding.

Examination Procedure

Access arrangements, such as seeking extra time for examinations, are allowed according to the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) regulations.

Personal Development

Considerable attention is paid to the child's overall development and progress. It is the school's aim to fully integrate each child into full school life and to develop the child's self-esteem in the classroom and through school activities.

Future Schools

A designated Senior Teacher advises all parents as to the pupil's future school placement when this becomes appropriate. Information is sent to the future school highlighting the pupil's needs. No documentation will be sent to the future school without the parents' permission. Parents are informed by letter that they are responsible for providing future schools with copies of any specialist assessments or reports carried out.

6. Testing

Assessment

Suggested tests include the following. However a guiding principle is that the tests used must be up to date and manageable. It is not intended that all these tests be used with all pupils. Their use depends on the pupil's identified needs, but the school seeks to establish standardised scores as well as gaining diagnostic information.

- I. Initial assessment on entry or soon after includes:
 - basic background details about the pupil. This may include a taster sessions;
 - more detailed background including parents' questionnaires and details of the pupil's medical history;
 - taster days prior to entry.



2. Older children:

- taster days prior to entry;
- assessments of the pupil's reading age and maths ability using a test which provides a standardised score;
- informal assessments by the Class Teacher.