

PLATANOS COLLEGE

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at, Platanos College. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

2025 – 2026

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Review procedures

This Policy is to be reviewed annually or as necessary with notification being given to the Board of Trustees on the results of any review.

If any amendments to the Policy are required as a result of a review, then these will be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration and acceptance of the amendments.

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| Date reviewed: | 29 August 2025 |
| Date of next review: | 28 August 2026 |

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Definition

Platanos College recognises that all children have learning needs and that for some these individual needs become Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND). The School SEND Policy is based upon government guidelines. A child will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language of the home is different from the language in which he/she is taught.

A pupil has special educational needs if he/she:

- Has sufficiently greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders her/him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools.
- Is under compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for the pupil.

Special educational provision means:

- Provision which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for the child's age.

Principles

The key values and beliefs of our SEND Policy are:

- Equal value and respect for all.
- Equal opportunities for all.
- Recognition of individual differences with special regard for children with SEND.
- Development through the provision of appropriate learning opportunities.
- A constant search for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Commitment to the spirit and statutory requirements of legislation, including partnership between pupils, parents/carers and other professionals.
- We recognise that there is a continuum of SEND which should be reflected in a continuum of provision and that good practice goes to the very core of good teaching and learning.

Legal Framework

This Policy is based on the national framework which includes a number of principles, strategies and laws:

- The SEN and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act provide the statutory framework upon which this Policy is built.

- The general principle that children with SEND should, where this is what parents/carers want, normally be educated at mainstream schools was enshrined into law in 1993.
- The Salamanca Statement drawn up by UNESCO and supported in the United Kingdom adopts “as a matter of law or policy the principles of inclusive education, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise”.
- The 1997 Government publication ‘Excellence for all Children – Meeting Special Educational Needs’ set out a strategy to improve standards for pupils with SEND.
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. This sets out schools’ responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools’ responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN coordinators (SENDCOs) and the SEN information report.

Aims

The aims of our SEND Policy are the following:

- Promote high standards of education for children with SEND.
- Encourage children with SEND to participate fully in our school community.
- Take an active part in decisions about their education.
- Show good practice in making SEND provision for children.
- Work with other statutory and voluntary bodies to provide support for children with SEND.

Objectives

Our SEND objectives are the following:

1. To provide pupils with SEND with a safe and secure environment.
2. To ensure pupils’ SEND are identified at the earliest possible opportunity. This will involve the SEN Co-ordinator, an Educational Psychology service and other staff.
3. To implement and further develop a whole school policy on SEND which forms an integral part of the school’s development plan. Governors will be reviewing the policy annually and reporting on it to parents.
4. To ensure that pupils with SEND have maximum possible access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum, and to monitor the progress of pupils disappplied from any part of the National curriculum.
5. To teach pupils with SEND together with their peers for as much of the time as possible.
6. To support teachers, departments and faculties in their work on curriculum development with particular reference to issues of differentiation, curricular access and entitlement.
7. To implement a coherent and comprehensive assessment procedure for identifying, meeting, recording and reviewing needs. We aim to follow the procedures set out in the SEND Code of Practice and to build these into the faculty and pastoral systems operating in the school.

8. To adopt the partnership approach as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice and to liaise and work closely in partnership with parents/carers and involve them fully in all decisions regarding SEND provision.
9. Pupil participation.
10. To provide a variety of support to help all staff to take responsibility for meeting the needs of all pupils in their classes.
11. To work closely with the Pastoral Team to meet the needs of pupils who have both SEND and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs.
12. To promote staff development in relation to SEND by ensuring that SEND-related issues permeate all aspects of staff development in the school.
13. To co-ordinate the involvement of outside agencies.
14. To implement the school's aims and objectives and the SEND Code of Practice making maximum use of available resources.
15. To remove all barriers to inclusion.
16. To constantly monitor and evaluate Special Educational Needs provision.

Implementation of objectives

1. To provide pupils with SEND with a safe and secure environment.

The design of the new building at Platanos College aims to provide ease of safe physical access to all parts of the site while supporting the school's inclusive approach in terms of the academic, pastoral and social experiences of all pupils. It is hoped that the best practice in architectural design which the building exemplifies will support pupils with special educational needs as well as mainstream pupils.

Spaces are designed to be clear, calm and ordered with layouts that reduce confusion. A variety of environments is provided, including 'withdrawal' spaces within communal areas as well as classrooms and breakout spaces of various sizes and layouts. Both male and female toilets are provided with disabled access units throughout the building.

Wheelchair access is provided to all parts of the building and site with disabled parking, adequate dropping off points, level entrances, step-free routes and lifts. The building accommodates safe means of escape for all building users.

The building makes the most of natural light and fresh-air ventilation and the acoustics are designed to facilitate quiet individual study. ICT provision to support learning is present in all parts of the building.

2. To ensure that pupils' SEND are identified at the earliest possible opportunity.

The areas of SEND that the school aims to identify at the earliest possible opportunity include:

- Social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Communication and interaction.
- Cognitive and learning.
- Sensory or physical – related to senses and body movement.

All the information from the mentioned sources below (including screening interviews and school records) are collated by the SEND department. Significant information on the pupils is then circulated to all relevant staff. This includes relevant senior leaders, administrative staff involved with the SEND provision, subject teachers, learning support staff, pastoral staff and other professionals and agencies.

Primary school pupils, who have been deemed as having or identified as having additional needs and who choose Platanos College as their secondary school are all interviewed in the Spring and Summer terms and SEND-related information is collected at this point. In the Summer term all these pupils are visited at their primary schools by staff from Platanos College.

Each pupil is interviewed, as is their class teacher and a range of information is collected on them. Identifying pupils' special educational needs and becoming familiar with successful strategies already developed by the primary school is an important part of this procedure. The information gathered is collected and helps to inform placement in ability teaching groups. Pupils with SEND are identified and support plans or monitoring strategies are established for the start of term in September.

In addition to being visited at their primary schools, all pupils coming to our school in September are invited to the school for an induction day. This day is also used to help identify pupils who will require extra support when they arrive in September.

The school is informed of prospective Year 7 pupils with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans during the Spring term prior to their starting in September. These pupils may be visited at their primary school by a member of the SEND department in order to ensure that adequate preparation can be made for their introduction into the school. In addition, the SEN team aim to attend all Year 6 annual reviews where possible.

During the Autumn Term, the *school records* from the primary school are sent to Platanos College. These are read by the SENCO and other relevant staff to understand and identify any potential new areas of need: social, mental, emotional, communication, interaction, cognitive and learning, sensory and physical. This provides additional SEND related information.

The SENCO and the Educational Psychologist for the school will screen the in-coming Year 7 for any pupils who are known to the local psychology service or *Children and Mental Health Care Services (CAMHS)* or *Children Looked After Mental Health Services (CLAMHS)* and, in particular, for any pupils who are in the process of being fully assessed.

Pupils sit Cognitive Ability Tests and the results form part of each pupil's individual profile. The school gathers some medical information that relates to a pupil's SEND during the process described above.

The school has a range of support staff who support pupils with EHC plans and a planning meeting is normally held in the Summer Term to prepare for their entry in September.

Staff who interview pupils transferring to Platanos College other than at normal secondary transfer will pass any SEND-related information to the SENCO if they are not part of the meeting. A further interview may then take place with a member of the SEND department. Provision is made for mid-year admissions to sit a numeracy and literacy assessment and other baseline tests as appropriate.

Pupils who have been permanently excluded from another school will be inducted into the school by the appropriate pastoral team who will liaise with the SEND department.

3. To implement and further develop a whole school policy on special educational needs which forms an integral part of the school's development plan.

The policy for SEND is reviewed and evaluated annually. The responsibility for ensuring this review takes place rests with our Trust Board. The annual report to parents must include a review of the effectiveness of the school's policy for SEND. This includes evaluation of:

- Systems for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs
- The provision made to meet pupils' special educational needs
- The record keeping for special educational needs
- The allocation of resources to and amongst pupils with special educational needs

4. To ensure that pupils with SEND have maximum possible access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum, and to monitor the progress of pupils disapplied from any part of the National Curriculum.

It is the policy of the school to enable pupils with SEND to have access to a broadly based and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum. The emphasis, wherever possible, will be to apply National Curriculum programmes of study. The principle that all teachers are teachers of SEND applies and subject teachers ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum through careful planning and differentiation. Pupils in some Nurture classes are disapplied from those areas of the National Curriculum relating to the study of a Modern Foreign Language in order to allow for additional English and Maths lessons. The progress of pupils in these classes is monitored very closely in order to judge the success of this strategy.

The school aims to use EHC plans, IEPs, annual reviews and six-weekly assessment and reporting process to provide a framework in which to document, modify and review access. In this way we will ensure that a pupil's entitlement is delivered and progress monitored.

5. To teach pupils with SEND together with their peers for as much of the time as possible.

At Platanos College it is the policy and practice to educate pupils with SEND in whole groups. There are times, however, when some pupils with SEND will be withdrawn for special teaching.

Pupils may be withdrawn for additional literacy, mentoring, counselling, intensive behaviour programmes provided by the Inclusion Team, either alone or as part of a small group.

6. To support teachers, departments faculties in their work on curriculum development with particular reference to issues of differentiation, curricular access and entitlement.

We recognise that our pupils have an entitlement to a balanced and broadly based curriculum, which includes the National Curriculum. Meeting individual needs, both through National Curriculum programmes of study and through other aspects of the whole curriculum, is the starting point for curricular planning.

Staff will work together to plan a properly balanced and relevant curriculum which can be modified, reviewed and adjusted to the needs of the pupils. To assist in this, members of the Special Needs department give input into staff training days, deliver INSET and contribute to committees. Department members also assist subject teachers in producing differentiated materials.

7. **To implement a coherent and comprehensive assessment procedure for identifying, meeting, recording and reviewing needs. We aim to follow the procedures of assessment as set out in the SEND Code of Practice and to build these into the faculty and pastoral systems operating in the school.**

Pupils entering the school with special needs are identified as outlined in Admissions Arrangements above.

Identification and Assessments Arrangements, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Pupils are placed on the SEN register as a result of tests and assessments, observations, planning, staff consultation and discussions at multi-agency meetings which include the teachers, pastoral team, Mentors, SENCO, staff from the Inclusion Team and representatives from the outside agencies.

Pupils on the SEND register will be given an Individual Education Plan containing a maximum of four (4) targets.

A minimum of two (2) targets are learning targets relating to numeracy and literacy needs. Pupils identified as having behavioural difficulties will be given two (2) behavioural-related targets.

Progress towards the achievement of targets will be monitored by the relevant support worker.

The IEP will also highlight the strategies that all staff concerned with the pupil can apply resources, details of review, possible parental contributions and pupil responsibility. The IEP will be circulated to pupils, parents, teaching and support staff. The IEP will be reviewed after completion of a course of action.

Reviewing a pupil's progress

The following decisions may be made:

- To maintain IEP and review at a future date and remain at SEND Support.
- To amend IEP and remain at SEND Support.
- To ask the LA for a statutory assessment.

Statutory assessment

A very small number of children fail to make progress at SEND Support. For these children, the school and the LA may consider the need for Statutory Assessment. The Code of Practice gives clear time-scales which the Local Authority has to adhere to. After a request for Statutory Assessment, the LA must reach a decision as to whether to agree a Statutory Assessment within the required time-scale. If the LA agrees, reports will be requested:

- Advice from parents/carers
- Educational advice from school
- Medical advice
- Advice from Educational Psychology Services
- Any other services involved

The information gathered at SEND Support by the school and outside agencies form an important part of the evidence which the LA uses in making its decisions as to whether Statutory Assessment is necessary. So do parental, medical, psychological and any other relevant advice.

SEND EHC Plan

Once all the advice requested for a Statutory Assessment has been received, the LA must decide whether to draw up an EHC Plan. The LA may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs is such as to require the LA to determine the child's special educational provision through an EHC Plan.

An EHC Plan follows a prescribed format and contains information relating to the child's need, the special educational provision (see objectives) that the educational provision should aim at, the special educational provision the LA consider appropriate to meet the needs and the objectives and the arrangements to review the progress, the placement, the child's non-educational needs and non-educational provision the child might be entitled to.

All pupils with EHC Plans will have their needs and the provision to meet these needs reviewed annually. The pupil and his/her parents/carers will be invited to attend the review as well as other appropriate individuals, i.e. Discipline and Pastoral Manager, LA representative etc.

8. To work in partnership with parents/carers and to involve them at all stages of the assessment process.

The SEND department aims to present the work done by the school in meeting SEND in a provision and non-threatening way. The school aims to include parents/carers at all stages of the assessment procedure and to keep them informed of the support being provided for their children and the progress being made. Where possible we seek to include parents/carers in the process of helping to meet the needs of their children.

Staff at Platanos College aims to involve parents/carers positively when they find cause for concern with a pupil and involve them in the planning and reviewing meetings during the assessment process.

The school operates an open and clear policy. Parents and carers can approach the school whenever they have a concern and time will be made to discuss their concerns. The SENCO holds details of local and national support groups and helps to establish contact.

9. Pupil participation.

The SEND department fully embraces the principles of pupil participation.

Children who are capable of forming views have a right to receive and be made aware of the information.

Pupils are fully involved in the formation of learning and behaviour targets. Pupils also contribute largely to the review of their targets through self-evaluation. Pupils' views are also sought when evaluating the effectiveness of provision put in place to address their needs.

Arrangements for considering complaints about the school's SEND provision

The need for home and school to work closely in order to meet pupils' needs is central to this policy. Arrangements are in place which should ensure that parents are consulted at all stages about the ways in which the school aims to meet the needs of the pupils. This should remove the possibility of misunderstandings and conflicts. However, if a parent is unhappy with anything the school is doing when dealing with their child's special educational needs, they should first talk to the SENCO, or to the child's Form Tutor, Discipline and Pastoral Manager or subject teachers. These teachers will raise the matter with the SENCO who duty it is to clarify matters and resolve the difficulty. The SENCO will also be able to give the parent the names of local voluntary organisations and parents' groups which might be able to help. If the parent remains unhappy about the situation after the SENCO has taken steps to resolve the matter, the parent can discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

The DfE has produced a helpful guide for parents and copies of this are available.

If the complaint relates to decisions taken by the LA as part of the Statutory Assessment process there is an external complaints procedure available to parents/carers. Details of this are available from the SENCO.

10. To provide a variety of support to help all staff to take responsibility for meeting the needs of all pupils in their classes.

Nurture classes

There are a number of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 who find it difficult to access the mainstream curriculum, mainly because of low literacy difficulties. In order to address the needs of these pupils in a consistent manner, nurture classes have been established. In the nurture classes pupils are taught in smaller class groups. The classes are kept small to enable teachers to pay greater attention to the individual needs of pupils. The classes are housed in a base-room to reduce disturbance from pupils having to move from class to class. Inclusion in these classes is subject to regular review.

In-class support

As far as possible, support to pupils is delivered in the classes where they are being taught rather than by withdrawing them from classes. The SEND Team can offer a range of types of help depending on need. They might target particular individuals or groups of pupils, help with differentiating teaching materials, team teach or split the class into smaller groups.

11. To work closely with the Pastoral Team to meet the needs of pupils who have both SEND and Emotional and Behaviour needs.

Pupils with SEND may also receive support from the Pastoral Team. Members of the SEND department will work closely with the Pastoral Team and liaise on all issues including behavioural and emotional needs of each pupil.

12. To promote staff development in relation to SEND by ensuring that SEND-related issues permeate all aspects of staff development in the school.

Members of the SEND department work closely with departments and faculties to help them to develop SEND policies which permeate all aspects of their work and which all members of the department adhere to. They can also work with departments and faculties on reviewing their development plans.

In faculty workshops members of the SEND department will assist subject teachers with schemes of work and methodologies which promote differentiation. Members of the SEND department assist faculties and departments to develop formative assessment and efficient record keeping as a planning tool and give INSET on SEND-related matters.

13. To co-ordinate the involvement of outside agencies.

Pupils with SEND may receive support from the SEND and Pastoral teams. These staff members are employed by the school and have specific briefs with regard to pupils with EHC Plans.

Members of the SEND department liaise with support agencies from outside the school and engage their help when the school has exhausted its own resources.

We also seek to develop the use of external agencies to support both pupils and staff at classroom, departmental and whole school levels. We liaise with outside agencies when they have been involved with a pupil who is transferring to Platanos College from another school.

Teachers and facilities from outside the school include:

- Educational Psychologist service
- Child and Mental Health Care Services (CAMHS)
- Children Looked After Mental Health Services (CLAMHS)
- School and NHS nurse service
- Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Local Special Schools
- Family liaison officer
- Lambeth Autism Advisory Service
- Autism Education Trust
- Counselling services
- Off-site provisions
- The Lambeth PRU
- Raising Achievement Plans
- Other statutory and voluntary agencies

The SEND department works closely with all of the above agencies and staff. This is frequently in conjunction with pastoral teams in the school. Where appropriate, members of the SEND department will attend case conferences and planning meetings with these agencies and link with pastoral staff in the school.

14. To implement the school's aims and objectives and the SEND Code of Practice making maximum use of available resources.

It is very rare for a pupil to receive support across the curriculum and throughout the week. Special educational needs are context specific which means that in general pupils will require support in some areas or for some tasks and for a limited period of time. It is important therefore that the support available is sufficiently flexible to meet these criteria. Types of support are detailed below, but it is an important feature of any support that it is target orientated and subject to regular review.

The staged assessment process is one way in which support is targeted and delivered to pupils. The individual education plans detail the objectives of the support and have a built-in reviews process.

Class Profiles are another tool in allocating resources. Class profiles are compiled by teachers using available data. Class profiles help identify and record the needs of all pupils within the school. They also provide a profile of these needs on a class by class basis. In addition they help monitor the progress and performance of individuals and groups and inform the assessment process.

Once the level of a pupil's difficulties has been assessed and strategies implemented, the following methods of support may be used:

- In-class support. An extra teacher goes into a class and may support the whole class, a group of pupils in the class, or an individual pupil in the class.
- Withdrawal teaching. Here the extra teacher may take a group of pupils out of their class to another classroom and work with them. Sometimes the work that pupils do in withdrawal classes is the same as that being done by the rest of the class. At other times the withdrawal group may be for concentrated work on things like reading, writing or study skills.

Teachers from the SEND department are also involved in assessing the needs of individual pupils or class groups, (checking pupils' reading abilities for example). They then work with other teachers in the school to develop successful ways of working with pupils who are having difficulties with their learning.

Teachers from the SEND department work closely with parents/carers and keep them informed about the progress of their children and explain to them the purpose of any extra help that their children are getting.

The SEND department also works closely with people and groups from outside the school such as the external psychological services, the social services, School Health Service and so on, who can offer support to our pupils.

For a very few individuals the support needed has to come from the LA and to get this the child's needs are assessed and they receive an EHC Plan. The EHC Plan indicates the type of support they deserve and the Local Authority is responsible for providing it. In these cases the SEND department is closely involved with the parents/carers in the assessment process.

15. To remove all barriers to inclusion.

This is the responsibility of all members of the school, led and driven by the Inclusion Lead. Potential barriers, which could be specific to different individuals, are identified as part of the pupil profile and structured support is put in place to overcome these barriers. This may be a combination of classroom and pastoral support.

16. To constantly monitor and evaluate Special Educational Needs provision.

Monitoring and evaluation will take place through feedback and impact assessments on a regular basis. Regular reporting by the SENCO/Senior Manager to the Headteacher and Trust Board will take place in order to continuously refine the SEND provision.