

ESNE 21

SEN Policy

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Approval Date (original):	September 2014
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Review Date:	September 2026
Next Review Date:	September 2027

1. About King Edwin School

King Edwin School is an independent special school within Spark of Genius North East, part of CareTech. The school supports children and young people with a range of social, emotional, educational and complex needs. Provision is person-centred and seeks to promote dignity, participation, independence, choice, aspiration and positive outcomes.

Admission and placement arrangements are set out in the Admissions Policy. Pupils are generally placed by local authorities and will normally have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, or may be undergoing an EHC needs assessment. A placement at an independent special school is not described as alternative provision merely because mainstream provision has not been suitable.

2. Purpose and aims

The purpose of this policy is to explain how King Edwin School identifies and responds to special educational needs, delivers provision, removes barriers to learning and participation, works with pupils, families and partner agencies, and monitors the impact of support.

The school aims to:

- maintain high expectations and an ambitious, accessible curriculum for every pupil;
- secure provision that reflects each pupil's EHC plan, strengths, needs, communication profile, aspirations and outcomes;
- use assessment and an assess-plan-do-review cycle to identify barriers and evaluate the impact of support;
- involve pupils and parents/carers meaningfully in planning and review;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required by the Equality Act 2010;
- work collaboratively with local authorities, health, social care and other professionals;
- prepare pupils effectively for adulthood, further education, training, employment, independence, community participation and good health; and
- ensure safeguarding is integral to all SEND practice.

3. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy has been revised with regard to the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the school, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, as amended;
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (the SEND Code of Practice), in the version in force;
- Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments;
- Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), in the version in force;
- current Department for Education guidance for independent schools and SEND; and
- relevant JCQ / awarding organisation requirements where examination access arrangements or reasonable adjustments apply.

4. Definitions

4.1 Special educational needs

A child or young person has special educational needs where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. The school will use the statutory definitions and principles in the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice.

4.2 Disability

SEND and disability are related but are not interchangeable. A pupil may have SEN without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability, and a disabled pupil may require reasonable adjustments whether or not they have SEN or an EHC plan.

4.3 Special educational provision

Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for others of the same age, interpreted in accordance with the statutory framework applicable to the pupil.

5. Principles of SEND provision

- Every pupil is entitled to high expectations, an ambitious curriculum and support that enables progress from their starting point.
- Provision will be person-centred and responsive to strengths, needs, communication, preferences, aspirations and agreed outcomes.
- Pupils and parents/carers will be supported to participate in decisions and reviews.
- Support will focus on removing barriers to learning, participation, communication and preparation for adulthood.
- Staff will avoid assumptions based solely on a diagnosis or label.
- Provision and interventions will be reviewed for impact, not simply for whether they have been delivered.
- Safeguarding and equality duties will be considered throughout SEND decision-making.

6. Identification, assessment and the graduated approach

The school will use available information to understand each pupil's profile and barriers to learning. This may include the EHC plan, previous educational records, baseline and ongoing assessment, attendance and engagement information, behaviour and wellbeing information, professional reports, safeguarding information where appropriate, and the views of the pupil and parents/carers.

The school will use an assess-plan-do-review approach:

Stage	Expected practice
Assess	Identify strengths, needs, barriers, starting points and relevant evidence, including pupil and parent/carer views.
Plan	Agree intended outcomes, teaching approaches, adjustments, provision, responsibilities, timescales and how impact will be measured.

Do	Deliver the agreed teaching, support, interventions and adjustments consistently, with the class/subject teacher retaining responsibility for the pupil's learning.
Review	Evaluate progress and impact, seek views, decide what should continue or change, and escalate concerns where provision or outcomes are not sufficient.

Review of provision will not be limited to the annual EHC plan review. Support will be adjusted when needs, risk, progress or circumstances change.

7. Curriculum, teaching and access

The curriculum will take account of each pupil's EHC plan, age, aptitude, prior attainment, communication needs, disability and barriers to learning. The school will seek to combine appropriate adaptation with ambitious expectations.

- Teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils they teach, including where pupils access additional support.
- Teaching approaches, resources, communication, assessment and the learning environment will be adapted where appropriate.
- Support staff will be deployed purposefully to promote learning, participation and increasing independence rather than unnecessary dependence.
- Assessment information will be used to identify next steps and evaluate progress towards curriculum goals and EHC plan outcomes.
- Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for qualifications will be considered in accordance with current awarding organisation / JCQ rules and normal way of working requirements where applicable.
- Leaders will monitor consistency between the intended curriculum and its implementation across subjects, classes and any off-site settings.

8. Education, Health and Care plans

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the school will use the plan as a central source for planning and reviewing provision. The school will maintain clear records showing how identified needs, outcomes and specified provision are translated into day-to-day teaching, support, adjustments and pupil plans.

Where the school considers that provision specified in an EHC plan cannot be delivered, is no longer appropriate, or requires additional resources or specialist input, the concern will be escalated promptly to the Headteacher / SEND Lead and the placing local authority. The school will not wait for the next annual review where urgent action is required.

9. Annual reviews of EHC plans

The local authority is responsible for securing review of an EHC plan at least every 12 months. King Edwin School will cooperate with the local authority and will organise or contribute to the review process as required.

- The pupil and parents/carers will be supported to participate meaningfully.
- Relevant professionals and agencies will be invited or consulted as appropriate.

- The review will consider progress towards outcomes, continuing suitability of provision, any change in needs or circumstances, and whether amendments are required.
- The review will consider preparation for adulthood from Year 9 onwards, and earlier where appropriate.
- The school will provide the local authority with the review report and recommendations within the applicable statutory timescale following the meeting.
- The local authority remains responsible for deciding whether the plan should be maintained, amended or ceased and for notifying the parent or young person of its decision within the statutory process.

10. Pupil participation and partnership with parents/carers

King Edwin School will work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers. Communication will be accessible, respectful and proportionate to the pupil's age, understanding and communication profile.

- Pupil voice will be gathered in a way the pupil can access, including visual, assistive or alternative communication where needed.
- Parents/carers will receive information about progress and have opportunities to contribute to planning and review.
- The school will record, where appropriate, how pupil and parent/carer views have influenced decisions.
- Where views differ, the school will explain the evidence, duties and rationale informing its decision and identify the appropriate route for further discussion or complaint.

11. Multi-agency working, therapies and off-site provision

The school will work with local authorities, health, social care, therapists, careers professionals, colleges, employers and other agencies as appropriate to the pupil. Roles, responsibilities, consent and information sharing will be clear.

Where a pupil accesses college, work experience, therapeutic provision or other external/off-site education, arrangements will be planned, risk assessed, monitored and reviewed. Responsibilities for safeguarding, attendance, curriculum, supervision, transport where relevant, communication and information sharing will be clearly understood. The school will remain alert to whether the placement continues to contribute positively to the pupil's education and EHC plan outcomes.

12. English as an additional language

English as an additional language (EAL) is not, in itself, a special educational need. Where a pupil has EAL alongside SEN or disability, the school will seek to distinguish language acquisition needs from special educational needs and will consider both when assessing, teaching and planning support.

13. Equality, disability and reasonable adjustments

The school will comply with applicable Equality Act 2010 duties. Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils will be considered on an individual and anticipatory basis where the duty applies, so that substantial disadvantage is avoided as far as reasonably possible.

- policies, practices and procedures;

- teaching, assessment and curriculum delivery;
- communication and information;
- auxiliary aids and services where required;
- the physical environment and access arrangements; and
- participation in school activities.

The school's Equality and Diversity Policy and Accessibility Plan provide further detail. Decisions about significant adjustments should be recorded and reviewed where appropriate.

14. Safeguarding and SEND

Safeguarding is integral to SEND provision. Staff will recognise that children with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities, including communication barriers, bullying, isolation, difficulties recognising or reporting abuse, and the risk that indicators of harm are incorrectly attributed to a child's condition or behaviour.

- Staff must not assume that changes in behaviour, mood, presentation, attendance or communication are explained by SEND.
- Safeguarding concerns must be reported in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE.
- Communication and reasonable adjustments should be used so pupils can understand safeguarding information and access trusted reporting routes.
- SEND information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary for safe and effective support.

15. Preparing for adulthood and transition

From Year 9 onwards, EHC plan reviews must include a focus on preparation for adulthood. Transition planning will begin earlier where the pupil's needs make this appropriate.

- education, employment and training;
- independent living and practical life skills;
- participation in society, community life, friendships and relationships;
- maintaining good health;
- careers information, advice and guidance; and
- planned transitions between classes, settings, colleges, services or adult provision.

The pupil's aspirations and preferences will be central to transition planning. The school will work with families, local authorities, careers professionals, colleges, employers, health and social care partners and other relevant services to support successful transition.

16. SEND leadership, staff expertise and professional development

The school will designate an appropriately experienced member of staff to lead and coordinate SEND provision. Because King Edwin School is an independent special school, leaders will check which statutory SENCO designation and qualification requirements apply to the school rather than assuming requirements for maintained mainstream schools automatically apply. Where a statutory qualification requirement applies, the school will ensure it is met within the required timescale.

- The SEND Lead will coordinate provision and review, advise colleagues, support multi-agency working, monitor outcomes and contribute to strategic school improvement.

- Staff will receive training appropriate to their role and the needs represented in the school population.
- Training may include autism, SEMH, communication, literacy, sensory needs, adaptive teaching, safeguarding pupils with SEND, equality and reasonable adjustments, EHC plan implementation and preparation for adulthood.
- Leaders will evaluate whether professional development results in improved practice and pupil outcomes.

17. Resources and commissioning

Resources for SEND provision will be planned with regard to EHC plan requirements, pupil outcomes, accessibility, specialist advice, staffing capacity, safety and the effectiveness of support. The Headteacher will oversee use of delegated resources in accordance with organisational financial arrangements.

Where the school considers that available resources or commissioned provision are insufficient to deliver an EHC plan or meet a material change in need, this will be raised promptly with the placing local authority and relevant commissioning partners, with evidence of the issue and the action required.

18. Roles and responsibilities

18.1 Proprietor / governance arrangements

- provide oversight of compliance with the Independent School Standards and applicable SEND, equality and safeguarding duties;
- ensure leaders have appropriate systems, staffing and resources to implement this policy;
- receive appropriate assurance about the quality and impact of SEND provision; and
- hold leaders to account for identified improvement actions.

18.2 Headteacher

- ensure this policy is implemented and integrated with curriculum, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, equality and school improvement;
- ensure EHC plan provision and reasonable adjustments are appropriately overseen;
- ensure concerns about provision are escalated to commissioners/local authorities where necessary; and
- ensure staff have access to appropriate training and specialist advice.

18.3 SEND Lead

- coordinate SEND provision and EHC plan processes within the school;
- advise and support staff;
- maintain oversight of pupil plans, reviews and multi-agency working;
- monitor progress, provision, adjustments and transition arrangements; and
- report themes, risks and improvement priorities to senior leaders.

18.4 Teachers and support staff

- understand the needs and EHC plan requirements of pupils they teach/support;
- deliver agreed teaching, provision and adjustments consistently;
- use assessment to inform next steps;
- record and communicate concerns promptly;

- support pupil participation and increasing independence; and
- follow safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

19. Monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance

The SEND Lead and senior leaders will evaluate SEND provision using a range of evidence. Monitoring may include:

- progress towards EHC plan and curriculum outcomes;
- quality and consistency of pupil support plans and specified provision;
- attendance, engagement, participation, suspensions/exclusions where relevant, and safeguarding information;
- reasonable adjustments and accessibility;
- quality and timeliness of EHC plan reviews;
- pupil and parent/carer voice;
- impact of interventions, therapies and off-site provision;
- transition and preparation-for-adulthood outcomes;
- staff training and confidence; and
- consistency of curriculum implementation across subjects and settings.

Monitoring will lead to action. Where evidence identifies a recurring barrier, inconsistency or insufficient impact, leaders will specify what must change, who is responsible, the timescale and how improvement will be evaluated.

20. Concerns and complaints

Parents/carers, pupils and professionals are encouraged to raise concerns early with the relevant member of staff, SEND Lead or Headteacher. Formal complaints will be considered under the school's Complaints Policy. Safeguarding concerns must be raised through safeguarding procedures. Concerns about the content, maintenance or amendment of an EHC plan remain matters for the local authority and the statutory SEND process, although the school will provide information and cooperate as required.

21. Related policies and documents

- Admissions Policy
- Accessibility Plan / Accessibility Strategy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Careers / Preparing for Adulthood arrangements
- Curriculum Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Medical Conditions / Administration of Medication Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

22. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a relevant change in legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory requirements, organisational policy, inspection learning or the needs of the school community. The next scheduled review is September 2027.

Appendix 1 - SEND provision review checklist

Review question	Evidence	Action / owner
Are EHC plan outcomes and specified provision reflected accurately in day-to-day plans?		
Are agreed reasonable adjustments implemented consistently?		
Is pupil voice accessible and evidenced?		
Have parents/carers been involved appropriately?		
Is teaching ambitious and adapted without lowering expectations unnecessarily?		
Are interventions and therapies having measurable impact?		
Are safeguarding vulnerabilities and communication barriers understood?		
Are off-site arrangements safe, purposeful and monitored?		
From Year 9, is preparation for adulthood sufficiently specific and outcome-focused?		
Are actions from previous reviews completed and evaluated?		

Appendix 2 - September 2026 revision note

This revision retains the school-specific purpose and core content of ESNE21 while consolidating duplicated wording, strengthening statutory and regulatory references, clarifying the status of 2026 SEND reform proposals, strengthening EHC plan and annual review processes, clarifying equality and reasonable-adjustment duties, expanding safeguarding and preparation-for-adulthood expectations, and adding clearer governance, leadership, monitoring and complaints arrangements.

The policy also avoids presenting the SENCO qualification rules that apply to particular categories of school as automatically applicable to this independent special school. Leaders should check the current statutory position for the school whenever appointing or designating SEND leadership.